

Conservation and Biodiversity in South African Parks and Nature Reserves

<https://osa.isp.msu.edu/Programs/program/index/105100>

Summer 2013: July 18 August 15, 2013

Program Description

Southern Africa is home to some amazing biodiversity, including: 24,000 flowering plants, 1,500 trees, 900 birds, 324 lizards, 300 mammals, 156 snakes, and 130 frogs. How many can and will you find?

At a time when natural resource managers are asked to consider global contexts of biodiversity and ecosystem approaches to management, this program will expose students to various South African ecosystems and will broaden students' scope of management by taking into account the impacts that land-based activities and international policies have on the natural communities in these ecosystems.

This program, offered by the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, will examine various parks, nature reserves and ecosystems throughout South Africa, including the Kruger to Canyons Biosphere and the Kruger National Park, Pilanesberg "National" Park, the Kalahari desert, De Hoop Nature Reserve, the Fynbos biome and the Western Cape, Platbos Forest, and Table Mountain National Park. The role of nature reserves and national parks as management tools will be investigated as well as a comparing natural area management systems between South Africa and the United States.

Students will be expected to see and record as many South African species as possible, compare species presence and absence between the different regions visited, discuss why species do or do not exist across all locations, and what role management has in species presence or absence. Students will also interact with government officials and land managers and participate in hands-on learning, including bushwalks, habitat sampling, population surveys and other field experiments.

Academic Overview

Students will be required to enroll for six (6) credits in the following course:

FW 480	International Studies in Fisheries and Wildlife	6 cr.
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Additional Requirements

This program is primarily intended for undergraduate and graduate students majoring in biological sciences, environmental biology, natural resource management, wildlife ecology, zoology, or a related field, but students from all academic majors, as well as students from other universities, that are interested in wildlife conservation are encouraged to apply.

Students must be in good academic standing, with a grade point average of at least 2.0 at the time of application. Meeting this minimum grade point average does not, however, guarantee admission. Preference will be given to students with a biological, environmental, natural resource or fisheries and wildlife-related background.

Additionally, students must submit an essay with their application stating why they wish to participate in this program.

It should be noted that not all activities involved in this program are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Applicants' participation may be denied or their participation approval may be revoked if their conduct before departure raises doubts as to their suitability for program participation.

Housing Overview

Accommodations will include tourist-class motel or hostel facilities in Middleberg, Struisbaai and Cape Town; and cabin-style facilities while at the South African Wildlife College and in Kruger National Park, Tswalu in the Kalahari, and Upington. There may be some tented camping while in Kruger National Park and at Selous Bush Camp. All meals are included.

Program Leader Biography

Mr. Jim Schneider is the Undergraduate Program Coordinator and Undergraduate Academic Adviser for the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife. Jim has co-lead 9 programs to Africa: 3 to Kenya and 6 to South Africa. Before coming to MSU, Jim earned degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and the University of Idaho, and has worked at the University of Maine and Pennsylvania State University. He's studied peregrine falcons in Greenland, black bears and prairie chickens in Wisconsin, sage grouse in Colorado, sharp-tailed grouse in Idaho, and white-tailed deer in Maine. Jim is a Certified Wildlife Biologist. Jim finds it extremely rewarding to introduce new students to the wonders of wild Africa, and is very much looking forward to the 2013 program.

Dr. Eugene Moll, has co-led this program to South Africa 3 times since 2009. Dr. Moll is originally for Zimbabwe, but has dual citizenship in South Africa and Australia and presently lives near Cape Town. Dr. Moll is a botanist by training, but is also an amazing all around naturalist. He has been a lecturer on various conservation related topics at The University of Cape Town, University of Western Cape, and the University of Queensland in Australia. Dr. Moll also served as Director of the South African Wildlife College for 3 years. Dr. Moll just recently published "What's that Tree?", a book on trees of South Africa. Dr. Moll's passion for conservation and biodiversity, as well as his interest in educating and working with students is a true asset to this program.

How much does it cost?

The program fee for 2013 is \$4,575 and includes the following:

- * application fee (\$100)
- * deposit (\$200)
- * pre-departure orientation
- * accommodations
- * most meals
- * local transportation
- * accident and sickness insurance
- * field trips

Amounts not included in the program fee for which participants will need to budget include:

- * MSU tuition and fees*
- * airfare
- * beverages
- * books and supplies
- * laundry
- * passport application fee
- * visa application fees (if applicable)
- * pre-departure doctor visits
- * pre-departure immunizations (if applicable)
- * personal spending money

Excluding tuition and fees*, these additional costs are estimated at \$3,005. Students may request a cost sheet which lists both the program fee and an estimate of additional expenses by contacting the Office of Study Abroad at (517) 353-8920.

JIM SCHNEIDER - Undergraduate Program Coordinator
Senior Specialist - Adviser & Certified Wildlife Biologist ®

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