BIRDS of KRUGER - South Africa
This 15 Day Photo Safari is based exclusively in South Africa’s Kruger National Park. The main focus of this safari will be to capture the incredible bird diversity found in the park. The aim is not to tick species off a list, instead we will be out to take the best photos we can, often stopping for the same species if we feel we can get a better photo and improve our existing images. It is all about quality - not quantity. Of course birds are not the only animals found in this great park and we will take time to photograph the many other species too.

You will fly east towards the Kruger and land at Phalaborwa Airport where you will be met and transferred to a local bed & breakfast in the town of Phalaborwa. Early the following morning you will be met by Stu and drive the short distance to the Phalaborwa Entrance Gate into the Kruger National Park. Over the next 14 days you will travel the length of the Kruger National Park, which is the size of Israel or the state of Massachusetts! Starting in the far north, we will gradually move south exploring the many different habitats and eco-zones that make the Kruger such an exciting location.

October is a good time in the park as this is when the migrant birds return and nesting activity begins. Using our photographic safari vehicle as a mobile hide we explore some of the most beautiful river systems in Africa. Enormous Jackalberry, Nyala, Sycamore Fig and Sausage trees line the banks of the Luvuvhu, Shingwedzi, Mphongolo and Letaba Rivers, all perfect habitat for birds. Interestingly a lot of excellent bird photos are often achieved right inside the grounds of the different camps we stay at. Walking around the camps and shooting from tripods is very productive as the birds have become habituated to the presence of people.

Making our way down the length of the park we stay at 4 different camps, each with their own special atmosphere and different photographic opportunities.

If you are serious about photographing birds then this trip is for you. Kruger offers an excellent opportunity for you to gather an impressive portfolio in an authentic wild environment.

At the end of the safari you will fly from the Kruger back to Johannesburg where the tour will end.

Due to the often tricky nature of bird photography there will only be 2 spaces available on this safari in 1 private vehicle. This will offer you plenty of space for equipment and guaranteed access to both sides of the safari vehicle. Stu Porter will lead the tour and will offer photo tuition and guidance. Each photographer will have the complimentary use of a professional tripod, Wimberley version 2 tripod head and a Visual Echoes panning plate.

On previous trips we have consistently managed to achieve in excess of 120 good photographs of different bird species. Our bird sightings lists regularly exceed 170 different species. Along with an impressive portfolio of birds, you will also have a good chance to see and photograph the following: Lion, Leopard, African Wilddog, Cheetah, Elephant, Cape Buffalo, White Rhino, Hippo, Spotted Hyena, Jackal, Crocodile, Giraffe, Waterbuck, Greater Kudu, Bushbuck, Nyala, Zebra, Wildebeest, Chacma Baboon, Vervet Monkey, & Warthog.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DAY 1</strong></td>
<td>Depart from Johannesburg's OR Tambo International airport (mid morning) and fly to Phalaborwa Airport arriving after midday. Road transfer to local Bed &amp; Breakfast (overnight for 1 night in Phalaborwa)</td>
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<td><strong>DAY 2</strong></td>
<td>You will be met early by Stu and will proceed by road to the entrance gate of the Kruger National Park. Full day driving to the Northern most Camp in Kruger photographing along the way (overnight at Punda Maria camp for 4 nights)</td>
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<td><strong>DAY 3</strong></td>
<td>Morning &amp; Afternoon game drives from Punda Maria Camp</td>
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<td><strong>DAY 4</strong></td>
<td>Morning &amp; Afternoon game drives from Punda Maria Camp</td>
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<td><strong>DAY 5</strong></td>
<td>Morning &amp; Afternoon game drives from Punda Maria Camp</td>
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<td><strong>DAY 6</strong></td>
<td>Move South to second location in Kruger photographing as we go (overnight at Shingwedzi Camp for 3 nights)</td>
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<td><strong>DAY 7</strong></td>
<td>Morning &amp; Afternoon game drives from Shingwedzi Camp</td>
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<td><strong>DAY 8</strong></td>
<td>Morning &amp; Afternoon game drives from Shingwedzi Camp</td>
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<td><strong>DAY 9</strong></td>
<td>Continue to move further south to third location in Kruger photographing as we go (overnight at Letaba Camp for 3 nights)</td>
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<td><strong>DAY 10</strong></td>
<td>Morning &amp; Afternoon game drives from Letaba Camp</td>
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<td><strong>DAY 11</strong></td>
<td>Morning &amp; Afternoon game drives from Letaba Camp</td>
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<td><strong>DAY 12</strong></td>
<td>Continue South again towards Southern Kruger and our fourth and final location - photographing as we go (overnight at Skukuza Camp for 3 nights)</td>
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<td><strong>DAY 13</strong></td>
<td>Morning &amp; Afternoon game drives from Skukuza Camp</td>
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<td><strong>DAY 14</strong></td>
<td>Morning &amp; Afternoon game drives from Skukuza Camp</td>
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<td><strong>DAY 15</strong></td>
<td>Final morning game drive and then road transfer to Skukuza airport for your flight back to Johannesburg arriving in Johannesburg in the mid afternoon. Connect with your international flights home. (DEPART from JOHANNESBURG)</td>
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**INCLUDED**

- Flight from JHB to Hoedspruit and from Skukuza back to JHB
- All road transfers as detailed in the itinerary
- 1 night Phalaborwa B&B (D&B)
- 13 nights Kruger National Park (*self-catering*)
- All park entrance fees
- Private use of photographic safari vehicle with qualified field guide
- Bottled still water
- Professional photographic tuition
- Complimentary use of a professional tripod, wimberley version 2 tripod head and visual echoes panning plate
- Meals as indicated below

(B = Breakfast  L = Lunch  D = Dinner)

**EXCLUDED**

- All food - see FAQ's for more details
- Curios & personal gifts / items from shops
- Tips / gratuities for camp / lodge staff and for your driver / guide
- Internet usage (if available)
- Personal medical, travel & equipment insurance
- Visa fees
- International flights
- Any extra nights of accommodation before or after the safari - we can arrange these for you and add it to your statement
On this Photo Safari we will be staying at the public rest camps inside the Kruger National Park. All the rest camps are well equipped and have comfortable en-suite accommodations with 24 hour electricity.

We will be booking the self catering units which are supplied with a stove, fridge, microwave and all the crockery and cutlery need to cater for ourselves. The camps have well stocked shops where we can stock up on bread, milk, fruit and other essentials. The camps also have the additional option of very good restaurants where we can enjoy sit down meals.

For the entire safari we will make use of my own WILD4 Photo Safari Vehicle which acts as a perfect "mobile hide".
Wild4 Photo Safari Vehicle - Letaba Rest Camp

Self Catering Cottage at Punda Maria Rest Camp

Wild4 Photo Safari Vehicle with adjustable shooting platforms

Wild4 Photo Safari Vehicle - on the Birds of Kruger Safari there will only be 2 photographer seats available

KRUGER National Park Accommodation & Vehicle 13 nights

TRANSPORT & LODGING
FAQ's relevant to this specific safari

> How long are the flight & road transfers?

The safari begins with a flight from Johannesburg to Phalaborwa Airport. This is a 1 hr 30 min flight. Your road transfer from the airport to your overnight B&B is 10 mins. From the B&B to the entrance gate of the Kruger park is 15 mins. When you depart from Skukuza airport your flight back to Johannesburg will be 1 hr 15 mins.

> How does the “SELF CATERING” aspect of this safari work?

This safari is exclusively based within the Kruger National Park which has well stocked shops and restaurants at each camp we stay at. Instead of adding on an estimated amount for food for the trip, it makes more sense for participants to buy the food that they personally need and they can therefore control their own budget a lot better. We do include a starter food pack which will last for a week or so. This will be food that we will bring in to the park such as milk, bread, cereals, preserves, coffee, tea, cookies, fruit and granola bars. We usually begin the morning with a quick breakfast of cereal and toast with tea / coffee. This we have before we leave camp. Each participant will be allocated a small cooler bag in which they pack their own food for the game drives. This can include a sandwich, fruit or whatever you feel like. We often spend the entire day out in the field so you would need to take along enough food to keep you going. Bottled still water is provided by us. Dinners can be a choice of eating in our accommodation using the self-catering utensils that are supplied by the camps, or clients can enjoy a sit down dinner at the camp restaurant or even a take away meal. This will all be at your own expense. Having dealt with photographers for many years, one thing we have in common is that the photography is more important than food. You will not starve on this safari but meals will not be a fancy occasion.

> What are the luggage restrictions?

On all our safaris it is preferable to use a soft duffel type bag for your main luggage (not hard suitcases) as these are easier to pack into vehicles and planes. The normal luggage restrictions as far as weight goes are 20 kgs for hold luggage and 8 kgs for Cabin Luggage. We all know that as photographers 8 kgs is not enough! However you will find that the size of the bag is more important. A normal Think Tank type camera bag (airport accelerator) should carry the amount of equipment you need for your safari. When checking in, politely explain that it is expensive camera equipment and cannot go in the luggage hold. Usually they allow you on with no problem as long as the bag can fit either in the overhead locker or under the seat in front of you. If for any reason you are refused to board your camera bag (this seldom happens) then they will ask you to “sky check” your bag. Here you take your bag to the plane and leave it at the bottom of the stairs where it will be taken to a special storage space (not in the hold) for the duration of the flight. When you disembark at the end of the flight, your bag will be waiting for you.

> Can I hire Camera Equipment from you?

YES, I do have 2 x Canon 500mm f4 IS version 1 lenses for hire - please ask us for the latest hire rates. On this specific photo safari each participant will have the complimentary use of a tripod (with ballhead), a Wimberley Version 2 tripod head as well as a Visual Echoes Panning Plate.

> What “stable shooting platforms” do you offer?

I firmly believe that having a stable shooting platform on the safari vehicles is a crucial element to the success of a photo safari. You need to be comfortable when shooting so that you can concentrate on the image and not how to balance a telephoto lens on a wobbly monopod or your knees! We will often sit and wait patiently for long periods of time for a shot to present itself - being comfortable is paramount.

In the Kruger National Park we make use of my own WILD4 safari vehicle which I have modified with adjustable plates on either side of the vehicle (again with beanbags attached) on which you can rest your lens and shoot from a comfortable position. I personally like to use the Visual Echoes Panning Plate whilst using a beanbag as it allows a smooth panning motion from left to right and it lifts the focus ring of the lens off the bean bag, allowing you to focus manually if necessary.

> Are we able to go off road to get closer to the animals?

KRUGER NATIONAL PARK - NO OFF ROAD DRIVING is allowed in any of South Africa’s National Parks. Personally I never find that this has a negative impact on the photographic experience, in fact it makes one appreciate wildlife even more and how we should have a respect for it. Despite not being allowed off road, you will be pleasantly surprised at what the Kruger produces in terms of different photographic opportunities.

> What do you expect the weather to be like?

October in the Kruger National Park is a changeable weather month. As it is the end of the dry season and the start of the wet season, any kind of weather can be expected. This is actually what we need for good bird activity as the rains awaken the insect life and this new food source attracts the migrant birds back and initiates the breeding behaviour of many birds.

> What clothing & equipment would be relevant?

Warm clothing is useful in the early mornings and evenings. I would recommend a warm fleece as well as a wind breaker jacket. Long trousers, a beanie (woollen hat) is remarkably useful too. As far as camera equipment goes, we have a more detailed kit list which we will send out to you at time of registration. However as this safari is focussed on bird photography, a long telephoto lens of 400mm as minimum is essential. Teleconverters are also essential.

> Is there a laundry service available?

Yes there is a laundry service available for a nominal fee. (Laundry is for your own account)

> How do we recharge camera batteries and laptops?

All the accommodations you will be staying at on this safari will have electric points for recharging your batteries and laptops.
FAQ's relevant to this specific safari

> Is there internet access / mobile phone reception?
Krugers National Park does not have any internet or wifi access. The camps do offer cell / mobile phone reception.

> How early can we leave camp and how late can we return?
Krugers National Park has strict gate opening and gate closing times which we will have to adhere to. The gates open at 5:30 am and close at 18:00 in October.

> What is a typical day "in the field"?
Krugers National Park
Meet at 05:00 for a small breakfast (cereals, toast, preserves, yoghurt, fruit, coffee / tea & cookies)
Depart camp at 05:30 taking packed snacks and lunch with us. The itinerary for each day is very flexible on this safari. We can choose to stay out the entire day or return to camp for a midday break. We also often walk around in the camps where birds are often prolific and very habituated to humans. A tripod and Wimberley head will be useful for this. We normally meet for dinner between 18:30 and 19:00

> What is the recommended Tipping Policy on this safari?
Tipping is a safari tradition in Africa and it is expected in some form or other. You are welcome to stick to your regular personal tipping policies but we politely recommend you try to follow our guidelines regarding tipping as it helps to set a standard. Firstly, even though it is expected, it is not compulsory. If you feel that you have not been given excellent service then you do not have to tip. I personally feel that if somebody goes above and beyond their job description then it is polite to tip them and I am more than happy to do so.

Please ask us to send you our detailed recommended tipping policy for this specific photo safari. It will also be in your Arrival Information Document, which will be sent to you 2 weeks before the start of your photo safari.
I was born and raised in Africa. From a young age I spent many family holidays enjoying Africa’s diversity of wildlife and wild places. As a family we have lived in Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia and South Africa, which we now use as our home base from which we personally organise and lead authentic small group photographic safaris.

In 1999 I became a qualified FGASA Field Guide and THETA Tourist Guide and in 2003 I obtained a BA (Hons) Degree in Wildlife Photography at Blackpool & the Fylde College, an associate college of Lancaster University in the United Kingdom.

The combination of these two passions helped me to achieve my long-held dream of operating my own photographic safari tour company.

My images have been published in Outdoor Photography, Getaway, Africa Wild, Photo Comment, 50/50 Veld Focus TV show, Fuji Film awards and National Geographic Website. They are also for sale through a number of online stock libraries.

My wife, Justyna, was born and bred in Poland and is a handy photographer herself as well as a qualified tourist guide. Justyna worked on first class cruise liners, the world famous Harrods in London and as a top seller for the UK’s largest travel consolidator. Customer service is just one of her many strong points.

Justyna looks after the office and all the important administration of our business. We have two daughters, Molly and Jenny and my parents, John & Ann offer us tremendous support and help out with background logistics and catering whilst in the Kruger National Park.

We are a small family business with a sincere and genuine passion for our company and our clients.

Through our experiences, we have built a strong product that offers our clients the best opportunities to photograph African wildlife.
After 14 years of leading many successful tours, we feel strongly that the following principles and photographic details are crucial to the success of a photo safari:

> Quick response to clients' enquiries and personal attention to each client's travel needs

> Specialisation in small groups of only 3 to 6 photographers per tour

> Never more than 3 photographers per safari vehicle

> Careful planning of logistics to ensure maximum time in the field

> Use of locations that, through experience and over time, have consistently offered excellent photo opportunities

> All scheduled tours are personally led by myself

> Specially designed photographic platforms on the safari vehicles we use at all locations

> 24/7 tuition available, tailored to the individual needs of the client. In the field workshops and WILD4 tuition booklet provided

> Regular use of the same local driver / guides, who are familiar with the needs of photographers through our training manual and who operate to our specific guidelines

> An ethical approach to wildlife photography and genuine respect for the animals we photograph and the environment they live in.

Sticking to the above principles and details has been the number one reason why we have a high percentage of repeat clients and clients who approach us via word of mouth.
BOOKING PROCEDURE:

> First contact us to confirm that there are spaces available on the photo safari that you are interested in.
> Once confirmed, you will need to complete our Photo Tour Booking Form and we will send you details of how to make the deposit payment.
> To secure your place on the safari we will need a completed Photo Tour Booking Form per person as well as proof of payment of the tour deposit.
> You will then receive a statement from us indicating that you have paid your deposit. The statement will also detail the outstanding amount and the due date for this payment (90 days prior to departure). We will also send out the following documents:
  - Wild4 suggested clothing & equipment lists
  - Wild4 plug & voltage info
  - Wild4 pre-safari camera setup
  - Wild4 Photographic Safaris tuition booklet

Please note that it is compulsory for you to take out your own travel insurance to cover unexpected trip cancellation, medical, personal and photographic equipment. WILD4 will not be held responsible in any way for the loss of or damage to any photographic equipment or personal belongings, nor for any medical expenses. Our medical insurance will only cover you for evacuation from the field to the closest most appropriate medical facility, at which point your medical insurance would take over.

CANCELLATION POLICY:

We must receive a formal written notification of your cancellation. Deposits are non-refundable.

If for any reason a participant ends a tour early or does not make use of a service that has been included in the price of any scheduled tour, tailor-made tour or tour extension, no refund for this unused portion or service will be made.

Tour fees are not transferable.

All tour deposits are non-refundable.

Full payment of the tour fee is due 90 days prior to the departure date. We must receive written notification of your cancellation, at which time the following fees apply:

- 89 to 60 days before departure: 75% of tour fee
- 59 or fewer days before departure: 100% of tour fee