



WildlifeCampus

Nature Calls



The Blue-Headed Agama

By David Batzofin

African Folklore

Hospitality Jobs

Travel Buggz Adventures

Recommended Struik Guides

The African Bush: Sight

By Amy Holt

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Cover image: Baboon by Jonathan Acx

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About us



WildlifeCampus is a world-renowned online nature school. We are **FGASA recognised**. With over 23 years of experience in the online space, we have successfully trained more than 30,000 students from 161 countries.

Our courses are considered to be the most comprehensive in the online space.

We take pride in being **leaders in online wildlife education**, offering an authentic and unique E-learning experience, high-quality content, value for money, and exceptional service.

There are no barriers to entry, course deadlines, or set semesters. Students can register and begin any course at any time. Those who have completed our courses have reported that the knowledge gained has significantly enhanced their careers and enjoyment of the bush.

Many of our students are now employed in the wildlife, hospitality, and tourism industry.



www.wildlifecampus.com



info@wildlifecampus.com



WhatsApp: +27 69 177 9345



YouTube

TikTok



WildlifeCampus Study Options

FEATURES	PURCHASE COURSES	MONTHLY SUBSCRIPTION	LIFETIME SUBSCRIPTION
COURSE ACCESS	UNLIMITED ACCESS TO THE COURSE/S YOU PURCHASE FOR LIFE.	ACCESS TO ALL OUR COURSES <u>WHILE SUBSCRIBED</u> .	UNLIMITED ACCESS TO ALL OUR COURSES FOR LIFE.
HOW DOES PAYMENT WORK?	YOU CAN PAY FOR YOUR COURSE/S IN ONE PAYMENT, OR TAKE A MONTHLY PAYMENT PLAN.	R300 PER MONTH FOR 24 MONTHS (YOU CAN CANCEL ANYTIME-NO CANCELLATION FEES).	R 18 000 ONCE-OFF PAYMENT.
ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATE COSTS	NONE. THE CERTIFICATE FEES ARE INCLUDED WITH YOUR PURCHASE.	R250 PER CERTIFICATE REDEEMED.	NONE. THE CERTIFICATE FEES ARE INCLUDED WITH YOUR PURCHASE.

A note

From our team



Dear Students,

Welcome to a new and exciting year at WildlifeCampus!

Where the environment and wildlife face unprecedented challenges, the need for passionate and knowledgeable individuals has never been greater.

Our courses are designed to equip you with the skills and insights you need to make a real difference.

Whether you're just starting or continuing your journey, we are here to support you every step of the way.

Remember, learning is a lifelong journey — never stop growing, never stop questioning, and never stop making an impact. The knowledge you gain will not only expand your understanding, but will also help shape the future of wildlife conservation and safari hospitality

Wishing you a year filled with curiosity, inspiration, and invaluable learning experiences.

Let's make this year one of growth, discovery, and meaningful change.

For the love of nature,
The WildlifeCampus Team

The show must go on!

The origin story of WildlifeCampus

01

**By co-founder of
WildlifeCampus and
Anchor CEO**

Peter Armitage



Missed the **previous parts of this story**? [Click here](#) to open the WildlifeCampus magazine where this exciting journey starts.

One of the most entertaining shows was when the content was at its worst. We had no incoming images from Mala Mala and the Pilanesberg and Saba's vehicle has a flat tyre at Mashatu. Most of that night's show featured Saba changing the tyre and showing the viewers some of the skulls that were lying on the ground. Her personality and knowledge of the bush carried us through.

While we had pre-produced material to save us in a disaster like this, there was no need to cut the live feed. This proved to viewers that the show was live and this is what happens in the bush.

Richard directed the shows very creatively and Graham managed the field teams with aplomb. He could often be heard saying firmly "you will have an animal on screen in seven minutes. I do not care where it is, or what it is, but there will be one on screen." The teams delivered and there was an excellent response to the show.

Peter Henderson was very enthused by what had been produced down in Johannesburg and he received many congratulations as he watched the show with the BBC commissioners in London. Our dream was coming true.

“AfriCam radio” - April 2001

An integral part of the new content plan was radio and by now AfriCam had a radio station broadcasting more than half the day. The DJ’s included David Holt-Biddle, David Batzofin, Dave Walters, Angie McClelland, Boo Prince and Tim Neary.

The crowd favourite was without a doubt Dave Walters, who formed a very strong link with the AfriCam community.

With the radio DJ’s telling viewers what to watch when, the AfriCammer was now getting a really rich experience.

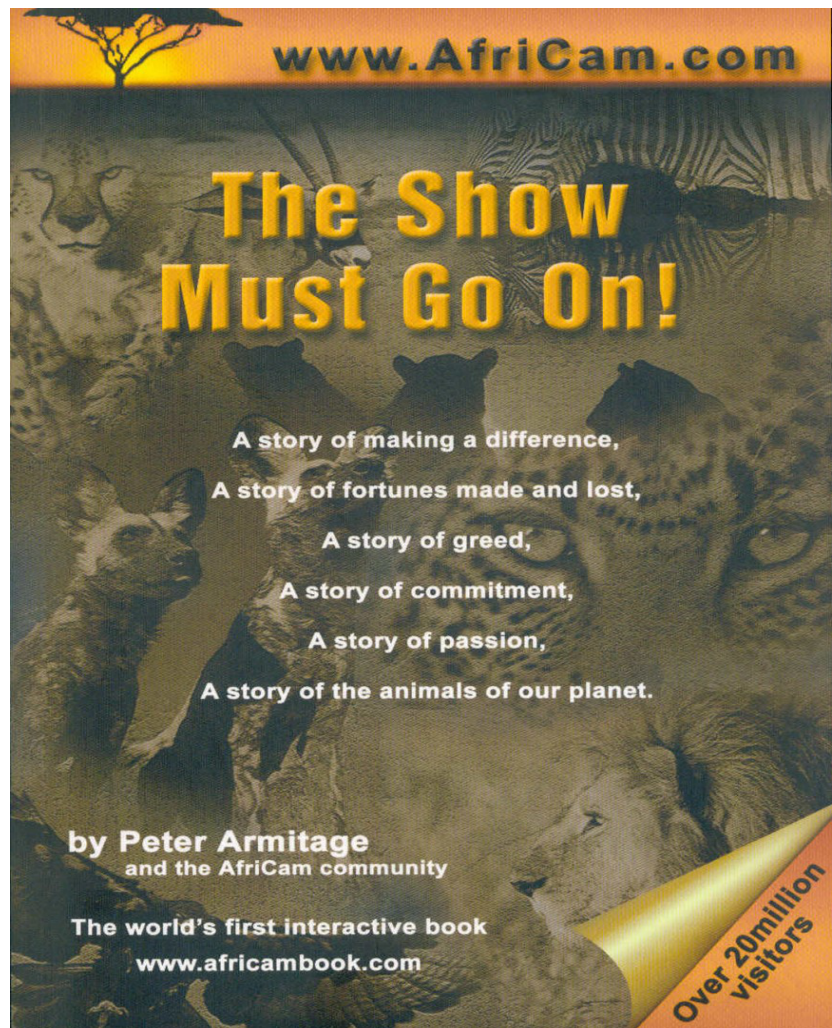
“Don’t worry, we understand” - April 2001

I had never done this before and I was more nervous than they were. “You have to remember there is nothing personal about this. You have all been stars, but in order for the business to survive, unfortunately some of you have to go. I guess that probably does not make you feel any better.”

I was genuinely upset about having to do this and I felt the tears welling up in my eyes. In my 12-year working career I had never had been in the situation of firing people who did not deserve it.

For the last two years AfriCam had been hiring people. It was a great place to work, with a phenomenal quality of individuals. But here I was now staring at five staff members, all of whom had performed well, who had to be retrenched. I enjoyed the hiring, but I was not going to enjoy the firing.

“Don’t worry Peter,” Naomi said. “We understand, we know it is not your fault.” I was a little taken aback – I was firing them, but I was the one who was getting reassured.



“The Show Must Go On by Peter Armitage and the AfriCam community.”

The passion, adrenalin and success of the Live & Wild show had allowed us some temporary respite from the pressures inherent in the business. But now it was back to the reality of a business under immense pressure.

“Bill says no”

Peter Henderson was finding it difficult to say no to AfriCam. An e-mail on 14 March 2001 had said that “the TVBus investment committee has declined any further investment in AfriCam.” Two days later he was saying that he was still on board. Eventually in the month after the show, Peter came down to South Africa with henchman Bill Hood. I explained to both of them that they had gone back on every promise they had made and had left us looking like idiots. Now they needed to deliver.



“Peter, at the very least transfer the remainder of the money for the Live & Wild show. I gave the go-ahead to the staff on the basis of your written promise to transfer R2m. You only ever transferred half and now I have creditors baying at the door,” I complained.

“I tell you what, we will transfer R1m tomorrow,” Peter said, understanding the situation.

“No,” said Bill, glaring at Peter. “TVBus will not be transferring one more cent. You will have to wait until you get paid by the BBC.”

It was at that moment that I started to really understand the dynamics of the relationship. There was no doubt that Peter should never have signed the initial contract with AfriCam. He was not in a position to fulfil on the terms, but was betting on the business listing and making his money before he needed to deliver. But in spite of this and the unacceptable behaviour that followed, he really did believe in AfriCam and wanted it to survive. He defended it to Bill and his team and was emotionally committed – AfriCam had that effect on many people.

For Bill Hood, it was far more clinical. His own TVBus was looking like imploding and he had accompanied Peter to Johannesburg to stop him making any more promises that he could not keep. We had also been told that TVnewsweb, the other primary business in TVBus, was in big trouble.

“We now need to work together to find a new investor,” Peter continued.

This was nonsense, I thought. Here was our investor telling us he would work with us to find a new investor. I had been looking for investors since I started in the job and now we would have to start all over again. This was a goddamn mess. How could I run a business, when all I ever did was try and attract new investors.

When Peter had invested, the business was worth over US\$20m and the valuation was heading upwards. He had secured one TV show for the business in 16 months, we had creditors of R5m that we could not pay and the business was probably worth less than US\$2m. I was immensely frustrated, but we knew we had nothing to fight back with. We did not even have the funds to embark on a legal battle.

“I will discuss it with the other board members and get back to you,” I told Peter and Bill before they left.

Paul, Graham and I were dejected. We started to question why we were doing this and for the first time it was not fun any more. We were in a deep hole. Paul and Graham had started a wonderful concept with wholesome intentions in 1998. Ever since then the business had been manipulated and contorted by greed, lies and misconceptions. The reality was also that the business had also failed miserably to generate revenue. We just were not getting advertiser support and our millions of viewers showed very little appetite to transact with us.

We met with the other shareholders and Tiffany presented the facts about TVBus. “Their commitment was US\$15m over three years and to date they have injected a total of exactly R8.1m (US\$1m). R2.7m of that has gone into AfriCam Classic and R5.4m into broadband and broadcasting.”

That is an enormous amount of money to spend, I remember thinking. Most of it had been spent bidding time. For most of the year 2000, Peter was paying a hefty payroll for a lot of highly qualified staff members who sat waiting for the strategy to unravel. If he had just given us that money to start with, we would have invested it intelligently and not been in the situation that we were now in.

“Well he has spent 6% of what he is contractually obliged to spend, so he should have a 6% share in the business,” David de Bruin motivated.

“That is generous,” said Saul. “He should give us the money. He has fucked this up for all of us.”

We met with an aggressive lawyer from Werksmans who initially wanted us to sue Peter, but we quickly realised that he would hide behind the corporate veil of TVBus, which was probably insolvent by now. “Settle with the guy,” he eventually advised. “See if you can get any more money, but if not, get his equity down to as close to zero as possible.”

We suggested the 6% stake to Peter telephonically and after a few days of negotiation Peter and Bill agreed. Clearly they were happy to be avoiding legal action. Our great dream of a TV investor had fizzled out with a whimper – the end result was a 6% stake in the business, after a protracted fight.

“Oh and one more thing,” Peter said on the phone. “UK Horizons have reneged on the second series of Live & Wild. They loved the first, but the guy who signed the contract has left and moved to Sky. The new guy has cancelled all existing distribution deals and will look at all proposals from scratch.”

“Taking stock” - May 2001

Peter, his TV ideas and his cash, were for all practical purposes now gone. We had to see if we could salvage a business out of what was left.

At the next Board meeting we took stock of where we were and I presented a document entitled “AfriCam as a business”. The new development of the site, which would enable subscription was months behind. We had switched from Aqua Online to Dimension Data, but the results were not much better. Our new launch date for the subscription package was 25 May 2001. The Board was tired of hearing about the imminent launch of subscription and just nodded as I talked.

Our advertising revenues were also looking precarious. With the collapse of the Nasdaq, US advertising dollars were starting to dry up and our NBCi advertising contract, which had been our bread and butter, ended in two months time. They also still owed us US\$150 000, but were not prepared to pay us until we signed a new contract. The terms were not favourable – they could sell any of our inventory, but had no obligation and did not guarantee any payment. The great NBCi had now fired over 90% of its staff and the gifts of Porsche Boxsters for their staff were looking like the ultimate corporate folly.

Matthew Tomaszewicz, our US salesman, also still had a blank scoresheet and Keith Wallington was applying increasing pressure on him. “This is why,” I explained to the Board, “we need subscription to work. Ultimately we are only going to survive if the viewers actually place a value on the service that is being provided to them.

If they do not consider it valuable enough to pay US\$6 per month, then we have to reconsider whether this is a viable business.”

We all agreed that AfriCam radio and the control room would have to go – they just had no potential to generate the revenue to cover their costs. We also needed to consolidate our game drives into two major locations: Djuma and Mala Mala. This would reduce the total cost without decreasing the quality of the content.

By this stage Paul Clifford had also relocated to the US to run the business from that part of the world, which was costing AfriCam US\$10 000 per month. To save money it was essential that Paul came back to SA, which he did in spite of the disruptions for his wife Helen and children Jamie and Casey. John Dunne was also now working in the US and it was decided that his contract would have to be terminated. John did not give up without a fight. “I was born for AfriCam, this is the perfect job,” he argued. He eventually accepted the news when I explained to him that his US\$6000 salary in the US was the equivalent to six of our employees in SA.

The subsidiaries were all to be down-scaled or closed down. They had not been given time to survive, many were only a few months old, but we had to concentrate on our core business.

The lottery was self-funded, so it could continue. Originally David Raw had made a commitment to fund the lottery, but after an argument about whether the funds would be injected as equity or shareholders’ loans, he withdrew. Steve Quantrill had secured another investor, Deryck Ethelstone, who injected US\$1m into the lottery to get it launched. Ironically, this equalled Peter Henderson’s full investment in the AfriCam business.

It was agreed that further retrenchments were required. First up was the AfriCam Radio and control room staff. Andy had an exceptionally good relationship with the staff members and had primed them about what was coming. Richard had also warned them over the prior weeks of the fact that the jobs that they were doing were probably not sustainable. His e-mail started with the memorable phrase, “The lighthouses are few and the rocks are many ...”

Prior to delivering the bad news to the staff, Radio CEO Tim Neary explained his plans to save the radio station to me, but he gave me no comfort that there was any revenue potential whatsoever. Advertisers were just not interested.

Course content Update

**We have completely updated our
Safari Hospitality courses!**



Updated version available now!

**Updated version available on
Friday 24 January 2025!**

Our Front of House Lodge Operations and Game Lodge Management Courses have been updated to offer you the **industry's most up-to-date**, in-depth information.

By combining Front of House Lodge Operations with Game Lodge Management, you will gain a comprehensive understanding of guest relations and behind-the-scenes operations, to seamlessly manage every aspect of the lodge experience.

Whether enhancing your service standards or ensuring your lodge aligns with conservation goals, this course combo is your key to standing out in the competitive safari hospitality industry.

Invest in your future and take the next step towards becoming a professional in this exciting field.



The African bush: Sight

By WildlifeCampus student

Amy Holt

Our sense of sight allows us to observe and interpret the world around us. As Albert Einstein said, 'Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.' Please pay attention to the African bush as it showcases the rich tapestry of nature. Here, there are lots of sights to stir something deep within, from the thrill of a leopard walking past to the awe-inspiring presence of elephants.



Ahead of you lie hundreds of minuscule prints left by a group of mongooses, who are darting around in the undergrowth, frantically searching for food. Banded mongooses are identifiable by their distinctive banding across their backs. They may be small, but mongooses are known to stand up to lions when confronted and threatened. By bunching together and moving as a group, it creates the appearance of a single large animal. The banded mongoose's cuteness is deceptive...these animals have a dark side. Studies have found banded mongooses will expel close relatives from their group and kill them if they won't leave. When female banded mongooses are in oestrus, they will engineer conflicts with rival groups to gain sexual access to males outside their group. This act of violence is vital for the genetic health of the group and helps reduce inbreeding. During the fighting, many males from the group lose their lives, while the females benefit from the conflicts. This is similar to

human wars where leaders often exploit individuals to reap the benefits of conflict while avoiding the costs.

The African bush is bursting with colours that will certainly delight the eyes. Glossy starlings have iridescent feathers that shimmer with hues of blue, green, and purple. The colouration depends on what direction the light hits the feathers. The keratin layers in the feathers reflect different wavelengths of light differently, creating an iridescence effect. The brilliant blue of a kingfisher's feathers is created by Tyndall scattering. Not only do the keratin layers reflect light, but small air spaces interfere and also scatter the light. The scattering of the shorter wavelengths results in the electric blue feathers of kingfishers. Lilac-breasted rollers display a spectacular array of colours, including a green head, lilac throat and breast, a turquoise body, and deep blue wing feathers.

Rollers get their name due to the incredible aerial stunts they use during mating. The violet-backed starling, as the name suggests, has a stunningly bright purple back with white underneath. These birds are sexually dimorphic, which means only the males are colourful. This colouration helps them to attract a mate.

The bizarre-looking *Kigelia africana* bears distinctive fruit that resemble large sausages, hence its common name, the sausage tree. Be careful where you sit, as these fruits can be up to a metre long and weigh ten kilograms. The sausage tree has deep maroon-coloured, bell-shaped flowers that hang from long stems in clusters. These flowers usually bloom at night to attract bats as pollinators.

Waterbuck are instantly recognisable for their white 'toilet seat' marking on their rump. This acts as a 'follow me' sign for young waterbuck to keep up with the group in dense bush. As the name suggests, waterbuck are highly dependent on water and are found within two kilometres of a water source. The long hair around their neck is hollow and helps to keep the head above water when swimming. They also release an oil over their hair, which repels water and helps keep their coat dry.

As the day draws to an end, it is time to spot some nocturnal creatures. The sharp eagle eyes of your tracker or guide can help you spot a bushbaby hidden amongst the branches of a tree. Bush babies are unmistakable thanks to their cute appearance of large, round, amber-coloured eyes, big ears, and bushy tails. The large eyes provide them with exceptional night vision. The eyes are so big, they cannot move them in their sockets. Instead, their head is continuously active while they are searching for prey. The bat-like ears allow bush babies to track their prey at night. They are able to move their ears independently of each other. The tail of a bushbaby is longer than the length of its body and head. It helps the bushbaby to propel through the air. They can clear nine metres in seconds. Bush babies improve their grip while moving around by urine washing, which involves coating their hands and feet with urine. As they move, they leave a trail of urine-scented footprints. This allows them to know which branches are safe to jump on when returning to their nests.

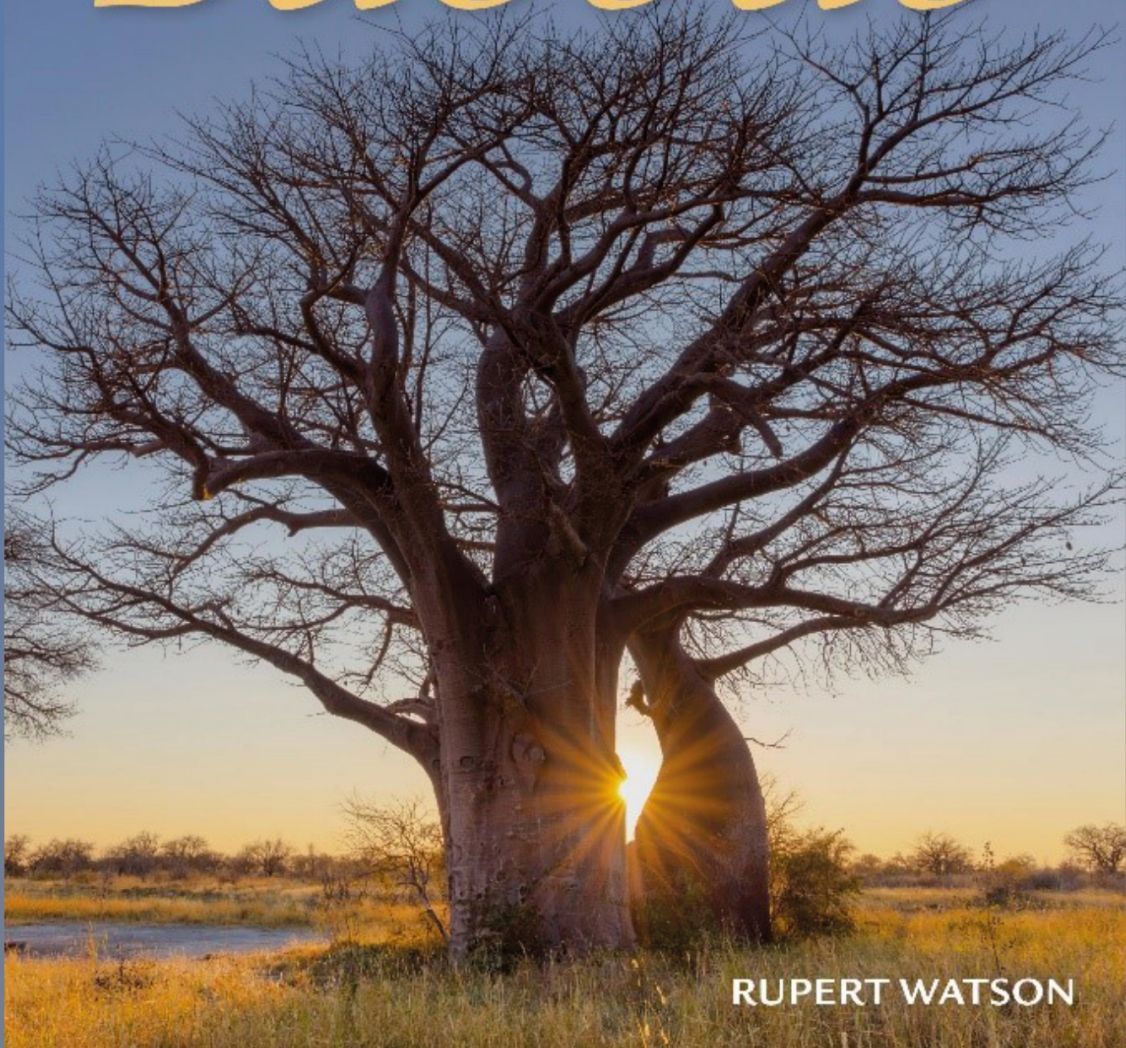
Look up and be mesmerised by our galaxy, the Milky Way, and its countless constellations. The Southern Cross, with its two bright pointers, Alpha and Beta Centauri, is one of the most iconic constellations in the southern hemisphere. Orion's Belt is a distinct belt of three bright stars—Sirius is the brightest star in the night sky and is found near Orion. Scorpius looks like a scorpion; it is a curved line of stars and includes the red giant Antares.

Can you spot the Big 5 of the African sky? The Coal Sack is a dark nebula located near the iconic Southern Cross and is one of the nearest dark nebulae to Earth. Nebula is Latin for cloud. This immense cloud of very cold gas and cosmic dust is made from the remains of exploding stars. The dust is so dense it blocks most of the visible light from the stars behind the cloud, creating the deep blackness. The Southern Pleiades is an open cluster, which is a group of stars of similar age that are all born within the same giant cloud of gas and dust. Open clusters typically only last for a few hundred million years, and then they eventually wander off from their birth cluster into the expanses of our galaxy. The Southern Pleiades is a very young cluster, approximately 13.7 million years old. The Carina Nebula is a bright nebula—an active star birth cloud where stars are bursting into life. Their intense radiation illuminates the cloud and makes it glow spectacularly. The Carina Nebula spans a distance of about 260 light-years, making it one of the largest star-forming regions in our galaxy. Omega Centauri is a globular cluster that appears as a faint fuzzy star to the naked eye. Through binoculars, it looks like a glowing snowball and is packed full of ten million stars...impressive, right? These stars are tightly bound by gravity, which gives them their roundish, spherical appearance. The southern Milky Way is magnificent when viewed through binoculars... billions of billions of distant stars create a hazy glow that adds beauty and depth to the night sky. Gazing up at the African night sky is a perfect way to end a day exploring the African bush.

The African bush has the remarkable ability to awaken all your senses in a single moment... and to be forever vividly imprinted in your memory!



THE
AFRICAN
Baobab



RUPERT WATSON

04





In this absorbing and inspired account of one of the continent's oldest botanical wonders, Rupert Watson explores the life and times of the majestic baobab, an ancient tree that has outlasted every plant and animal around it.

The narrative, supported by exquisite photography, effortlessly blends natural history and personal observation, while also drawing on extracts from the journals of early explorers. There are intriguing accounts of the baobab's eccentric growth and reproductive habits, its present-day distribution, and its wide impact on everyday African life. Watson also takes a close look at the relationship between humans and baobabs, and the tree's myriad uses over the ages, from shelters to medicinal and spiritual applications.

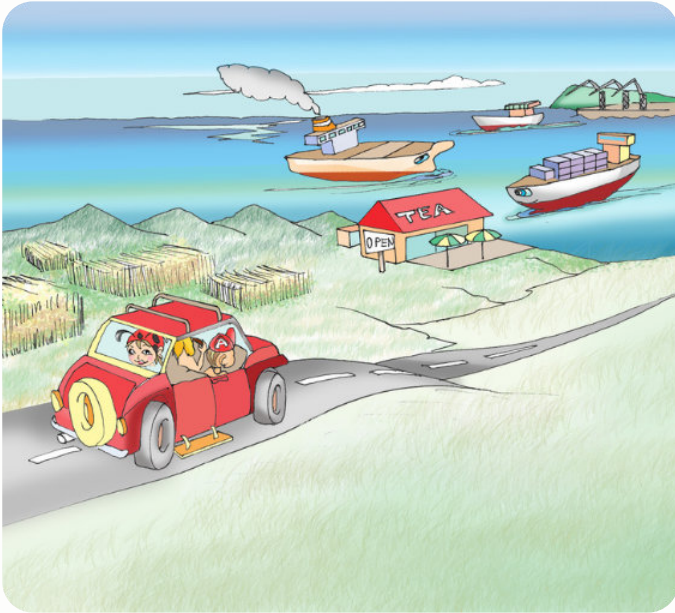
The African Baobab is a revised and expanded edition of the original book, published in 2007.

After qualifying in the United Kingdom as a lawyer, Rupert Watson moved to Kenya, where he has lived and worked for the past 45 years. A passionate writer, he has written on natural history and travel for a wide range of publications including New Scientist, The Independent and The Times. Early 2020 saw the publication of his book Peacocks & Picathartes: Reflections on Africa's birdlife, with Struik Nature. He maintains an active interest in conservation and is Chair of the East African Natural History Society.

**Get your copy of
The African Baobab
here!**

The Travel Buggz Adventures

The Travel Buggz seaside holiday is coming to an end. Will they see any animals on their last day ?



The Buggz spend another glorious day at the beach until the afternoon winds come up and their tummies grumble for food.

“Let’s explore the coast,” Bella suggests.

The coastal drive is fun as they count all the ships lining up to go into the harbour.

Soon they spot a tea garden along a winding road up a mountain.

“Let’s stop for lunch, it looks enchanting,” says Bella.

Greeted by two friendly sheep, the Travel Buggz jump out of the car.

“There is a big fat pig,” Lucy points.

“It’s a pot-belly pig!” yells Aiden running off to see the ostriches.

While they sit on the patio looking over the beautiful mountains and sip milkshakes, chickens flap at their ankles and a cat plonks itself on Bella’s lap.

After tea, the Buggz take a tour to watch the ladies making pottery in the factory next door.

“Our week has ended,” Bella wakes the Buggz on their last morning.

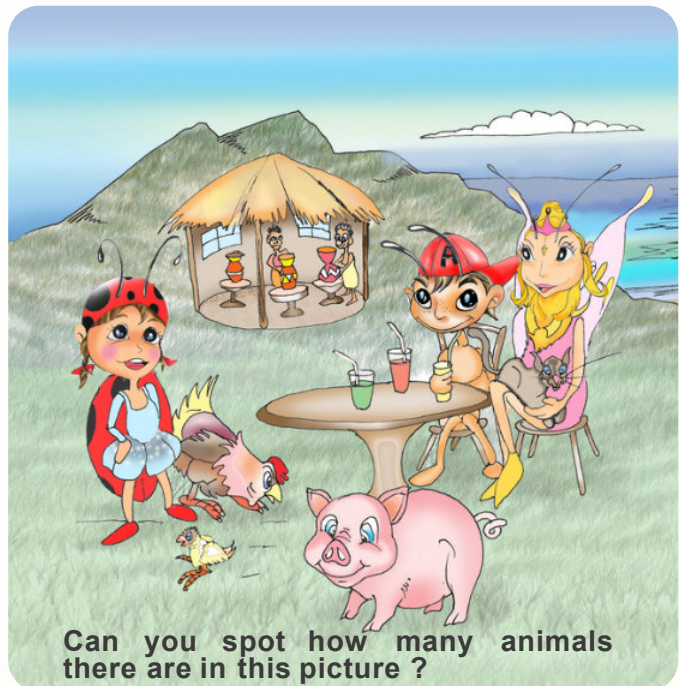
Sipping coffee and dunking rusks, they watch surfers riding the waves before packing.

“Look there, what is that in the sea?” questions Lucy.

Aiden grabs binoculars, “oh wow,” he exclaims, “It’s a pod of dolphins.”

“What an awesome sighting before we go home” Bella says.

“That’s why it is called The Dolphin Coast,” says Aiden as they wave goodbye to the ocean.



The Travel Buggz help save the Rhinos

“Look at that beautifully painted life-size baby rhino model,” Lucy Ladybug points as the Buggz come down the escalator in the shopping centre.

“It’s stunning, let’s find out what’s happening”, Aiden Ant bounces off.

“Big blue ears, hearts and flowers, the cutest horn.

It’s colourful and there’s rhino goodies we can buy too,” says Lucy.

“This model has been hand-painted by Alyssa Carter and Clement Mkhize to raise funds for rhinos,” Bella Butterfly reads.



“Can I tell you what we’re doing”, a young girl asks.

“Ooh, it looks like such fun,” Lucy giggles, “let’s buy some rhino biscuits”.

“My name is Alyssa, and I am working hard to make people aware of the awful killing of our rhinos for their horns. I am raising funds to donate to the SANParks Honorary Rangers to protect these beautiful animals.”



“My heart ached when I learnt about rhinos being killed for their horns,” Alyssa tells the Buggz.

“I wanted help save the rhinos, so I drew this picture and showed my parents”.

Lucy shifted closer to Alyssa, “what did they say?”.

“They offered to support my idea. We put our thinking caps on and printed stickers of my drawing which we put on chocolates and sold them”, Alyssa beams with pride.

“This is exciting; can we help?” Aiden tugs on Bella Butterfly.

Find out next month what the Buggz did to help Alyssa save the rhinos

All Travel Buggz story books are also available in Afrikaans and the Kruger edition in iSizulu.

Course content

Spotlight



WildlifeCampus offers the industry's definitive field guiding course. In this online course, you'll learn about conservation, ecology, geology, and other topics that will enhance your knowledge of the natural world. You'll get an in-depth look at wildlife and ecosystems, from geologic formations to habitats and biomes.

Our field guiding (nature guiding) course is designed for students who want to become professional nature guides or learn more about the wonders of the natural world.

This course is suitable for anyone interested in nature and wildlife, whether it's a hobby or a career choice. The course has been designed so that even beginners can easily follow along while providing enough depth for those who are more experienced.

Covering over 3000 pages, this extremely comprehensive course is perfect for:

- > Wildlife enthusiasts who want to learn more about the bush.
- > Those entering the industry or looking to travel/work/volunteer in Africa.
- > Those who want to upskill and add value to their CVs.
- > Those looking to fully prepare for their FGASA theory exams.

African Folklore



Crocodile: the great swallower

By Credo Mutwa

The content that follows is written from transcribed tapes recorded by the late Credo Mutwa, one of Southern Africa's most celebrated Sangomas. The content therefore is not scientific but rather represent the feelings, beliefs and experiences of this exceptional man.

These stories are written in precisely the same way that Credo Mutwa tells them, with all their original colloquialisms and styles.

07

In southern Africa amongst people of many tribes, who speak many languages and dialects, the crocodile is called by a name that means 'the great swallower.' In the language of the Zulu people, the crocodile is called Ingwenya. Amongst the Sotho-speaking and Tswana-speaking people, the crocodile is called Kwena. And both these words have to do with swallowing.

In olden days, and even now, the crocodile is the most feared creature next to the hippopotamus. The crocodile, according to the religion of our people, is symbolic of utter mercilessness and utter evil. A crocodile is used by African shamans, as well as by African sculptors and woodcarvers, as the symbol of treachery, of deviousness and mercilessness.

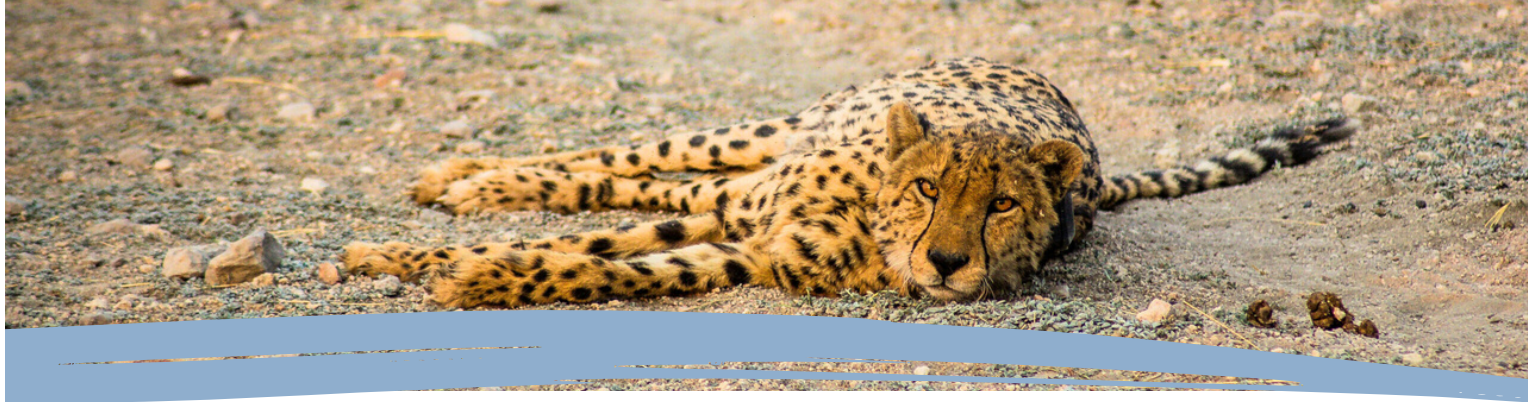
But there are cults in Africa that view the crocodile as one of the lords of initiation. And one of the most spiritual experiences that can happen to an African is to be taken by a crocodile while crossing the river, and dragged to the creature's lair, which is in a tunnel that starts in the river and goes onto dry land twenty or thirty or even a hundred yards away from the river.

This tunnel has got two entrances - one in the water and one on dry land, and there are Africans (myself included) who have survived this experience. The crocodile seizes you and pulls you into his lair. And then it leaves you there, waiting for you to die and decompose.

And sometimes, if you shout for help while inside the crocodile's lair, when the creature is gone, people will hear you and pull you out. This is what happened to me in the land known once as North Rhodesia.

And when you have escaped from a crocodile's lair in this way, you are viewed as somebody who has died and come back to life and you are told that you must work for the gods as a healer.





WILD DREAMS JOB VACANCIES

Wild Dreams is a prominent company in the hospitality industry, specialising in recruitment and consultancy. We mainly focus on the safari lodge sector, as evident from our clientele. Our clients range from small lodges that accommodate only a few individuals to well-known large lodge groups with properties scattered throughout Africa.

At Wild Dreams, we are always on the lookout for field guides with various levels of experience. Additionally, we have positions where guiding knowledge is required, but the role is more focused on front of house or management responsibilities.

As a company, we prioritise conservation and actively support wildlife sanctuaries. We are deeply involved in community work and collaborate with numerous non-profit organisations in the wildlife and conservation field.

While we believe that most of you may find the aforementioned positions interesting, we also have constant vacancies in areas such as reservations, maintenance, and chef roles. To access these job opportunities, you can scan the provided QR code to visit our main jobs page. If you come across a job that catches your interest, you can submit your application online. However, if you don't find a suitable job at the moment, you can still upload your application directly into our database.

Furthermore, we have dedicated pages offering interview advice and CV tips. We even provide a free CV template that you can download. Our founder, who is a certified career coach, is deeply passionate about assisting individuals in finding their dream jobs.

Wishing you a successful job search!
The Wild Dreams team.

www.wilddreams.co.za



A sort of African legend of the blue-headed agama in the monkey thorn.

By David Batzofin



As you read this we are probably half way through January 2025.

But what happened to 2024? Who knows and does it really matter? Did you manage to do all that you set out to do in January 2024?

If you did, then give yourself a pat (or two) on the back. If you were unsuccessful, then put it on a list for 2025...or don't as it will probably make not difference to anyone other than yourself if yo succeed or fail.

Unless you were about to propose and decided not to... then yo better correct THAT mistake or move to a new country.



David is an award-winning blogger whose work can be found at www.travelandthings.co.za

I ended my year with some exciting travel destinations and some special sightings... as far as I am concerned anyway.

This was one of those encounters...

Recently, I found myself sitting and working on a deck at a lodge on the banks of the Elands River, I looked up from my laptop to find a blue-headed agama peering at me.

This particular reptile has the habit of nodding its head, hence, for the short time we spent together, I named him Noddy.

And the reasons for them nodding their heads?

They nod to display hostility, protect their territory, and indicate social space.

It might also be an anti-predator strategy, making them look aggressive towards a potential predator.

Agamas are not just any lizards.

Oh, no. They have a special claim to fame: the head of the male is a vibrant shade of blue that rivals the clear African sky.

Noddy's mission, should he choose to accept it, was simple—he had to eat all the pesky insects and bugs that lived in and around the monkey thorn trees that festooned the property.

Having my laptop open in front of me, I googled the species and was surprised to find that without his help, the tree would be overrun with beetles, ants, and moths, and that might weaken the tree.

Fact #1: Blue-headed agamas, are fantastic at controlling insect populations because they're omnivorous. They prey on insects, beetles, and even the occasional plant leaf, keeping the ecosystem balanced.

But Noddy was not just a one-trick lizard. He was fast, lightning-fast!

While watching him seemingly focus on nothing in particular a grasshopper unwittingly crossed his path.

Quick as a flash, he zipped across the ground and nabbed it mid-hop.

Fact #2: Blue-headed agamas have long, strong tails that help them balance and run quickly.

Fact #3: Male blue-headed agamas turn bright blue during the mating season to attract mates. The bluer they are, the more attractive they seem to the female of the species!

And it seemed to work, for as I sat and watched, he emerged from behind a branch clutching a female by the scruff of her neck.

The bright blue, having done its work was already fading as they mated.

Fact #4: Blue-headed agamas are fearless and agile climbers, capable of scaling rocks and trees to catch prey or avoid predators.

Seeing that he and I 'met' at the end of a long day for us both... me catching up on writing some articles and Noddy seemingly chasing insects and the like, it was time for us both to take a break and just enjoy the time together.

Fact #5: Like all reptiles, blue-headed agamas rely on the sun to regulate their body temperature. Sunbathing is essential for their health and energy, which is probably what caught my attention in the first place.

And if you ever find yourself near a monkey thorn and see a flash of brilliant blue, remember that might just be Noddy, keeping things in balance, one bug at a time.



The Travel Buggznext adventure is just around the corner - why don't you guess what they will be up to and colour in the picture.



The Travel Buggz stories are a series of children's story books about the adventures of the author and her two children. If you would like copies of any of the ten titles, contact : sandy@travelbuggz.co.za. +27 82 908 7125



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