

LOWVELD TRAILS CO.



# TRAILS GUIDE

WORKSHOP

FOR TRAILS GUIDES  
BY TRAILS GUIDES



The most experienced  
mentorship team  
in the industry.



**28 DAYS**

**FOUR DESTINATIONS**

17 SEPTEMBER -  
14 OCTOBER 2020



PASSION. EXPERIENCE. QUALITY



# about the workshop

The Field Guides Association of Southern Africa (FGASA) accredited Trails Guide Workshop is conducted primarily in the Greater Kruger National Park over a period of 28 days. The objective is to provide comprehensive trails guide training and mentorship to fully qualified Apprentice Trails Guides, while facilitating the logging of walking hours and dangerous game encounters required for the lead Trails Guide qualification. Strong emphasis is placed on the ethos surrounding trails guiding, the necessary bush skills required for multi-day trails and holistic environmental interpretation.

The workshop will be facilitated by Brenden Pienaar, Bruce Lawson, Lutz Otto and Wayne Te Brake. This is an unmatched opportunity for Trails Guide candidates to be intensively mentored by four experienced and active FGASA Trails Guides and assessors, all Professional SKS : DG qualified, with no less than 50 000 walking hours between them.

In order to enhance the practical learning experience, a variety of destinations (Selati PNR, Balule PNR, Letaba Ranch Provincial Reserve, Timbavati PNR) will be used, exposing candidates & guests to the full spectrum of potentially dangerous animals and a variety of landscapes.

The workshop has a capacity of 8 participants, split as follows:

## 4 Rifle-Carrying Participants

### Candidates logging towards lead Trails Guide

will be limited to a maximum of four participants per course, ensuring personalised attention from the facilitators and as much first-hand experience as possible.

## 4 Non-Rifle-Carrying Participants

### Candidates logging towards Apprentice Trails Guide

will be able to log these valuable walking hours and dangerous game encounters towards their FGASA qualification as participants.

&/or

### Guests joining to experience

a unique walking holiday, and a chance to go "behind the scenes" and observe how Trails Guides are trained.

All participants will be able to join for the duration of the entire workshop or per destination(s).

Optional Advanced Rifle Handling (ARH) and Trails Guide practical assessments will be offered prior to commencement or when candidates are eligible, respectively.

## Hours & Encounters

There will be an intense 6 - 7 hours spent walking per day for the duration of the course. These average daily hours do not include extra hours spent out on Primitive Trail (4 days) or Backpack Trail (5 days) which collectively could add an extra 36 hours to each candidates logbook. We are therefore confident that each candidate will be able to log up to 100 walking hours as 1st/2nd Rifle, and up to 100 hours as a non-rifle-carrying participant, if present for the entire duration of the workshop.

The estimated number of potentially dangerous game encounters are more difficult to predict, although conducting the workshop at the height of the dry season will facilitate the best possible chances for encounters. Furthermore, utilizing multiple areas with a high density of potentially dangerous game will also ensure the best possibilities for a diverse range of encounters, providing prime learning experiences to the aspiring Trails Guides.



Brenden Pienaar



Bruce Lawson



Lutz Otto

# course facilitators

**Brenden Pienaar** (MSc. Ecology) is a practically orientated individual that thrives on time spent in the field. Together with a BTech: Nature Conservation, he has achieved the FGASA Professional SKS Dangerous Game and SKS Birding qualifications as well as the Tracker Level 3 qualification (CyberTracker). He still actively conducts Backpack Trails in Kruger National Park, but has become passionate about facilitating 'Primitive Trails' & Trails Guide Courses for Lowveld Trails Co. Based on his relevant field experience (incl. > 12 000 trails guiding hours), he is a National assessor for SASSETTA, CATHSSETA & FGASA. He deeply values the concept and philosophy of Wilderness and it's associated attributes.

**Bruce Lawson** has been guiding since 1992 during which he accumulated more than 19 000 walking (trails guiding) hours in a range of Africa's Protected Areas and National Parks . He served on the FGASA Board of Directors for 8 years and was instrumental in developing the Birding and Trails Guiding qualifications. Bruce has spent the past 12 years in the Makuleke Contractual Park in the far northern Kruger National Park training and assessing FGASA Back-Up Trails Guides. He holds the FGASA Specialist Knowledge & Skills Birding (National) and Professional SKS Dangerous Game qualifications, is a Level 3 Tracker (Cybertacker) and is a National assessor for CATHSSETA & FGASA. Bruce's passion lies in leading multi-day Backpack/Primitive Trails in Wilderness areas and introducing people to the wonders of nature and facilitating reconnection between Wilderness and the human spirit.

**Lutz Otto** started leading multi-day wilderness backpack experiences in 1989 across the challenging Mountain landscapes of the Drakensburg and Alps. Since his transition as a Savanna based guide, Lutz has obtained the FGASA Professional SKS Dangerous Game and Tracker Level 3 qualification (CyberTracker). Furthermore, Lutz has accumulated > 10 000 walking (trails guiding) hours. Lutz weaves the fundamentally important conservation narrative into most of his guiding experiences. In 2015 he was awarded the prestigious "Order of the Bateleur" for years of dedicated volunteer work within the conservation field. He is the founding member, and Head Honorary Ranger, of the Letaba Ranch Nature Reserve (Greater Kruger National Park) Honorary Ranger Initiative. We will be fortunate enough to have Lutz show us around his 'back yard' during an exciting 'Backpack Trail' in Letaba Ranch Provincial Reserve. He believes that time in wilderness is an incredible gift, and that if we consciously spend enough time in these places, that they help shape part of who we are and who we continue to become.



Wayne Te Brake

Wayne Te Brake is a Wilderness Trails Guide with more than 16 years worth of experience in the Nature Conservation and Field Guiding industry. Along with his degree (BTech: Nature Conservation), he has obtained the FGASA Professional SKS Dangerous Game, SKS Birding as well as the Tracker Level 3 qualification (CyberTracker), including Track&Sign Specialist(CyberTracker).

Wayne is also a registered National and FGASA assessor.

He has guided throughout Southern Africa and has spent more than five and a half years conducting Field Guide (Trails Guide) Training courses in South Africa. Over the last number of years, the majority of his time has been spent leading Backpack Trails in the Kruger National Park. With the advent of Lowveld Trails Co., Wayne's focus has shifted to guiding 'Primitive Trails' and training young Trails Guides in the Private Nature Reserves bordering the Kruger National Park. He has accumulated >10 000 walking (trails guiding) hours. Wayne is a popular Trails Guide and course facilitator with a deep Wilderness connection. Time spent in the bush with Wayne is always rewarding.



# Camps

There is no WiFi, but you will find  
a stronger connection.

We make use of authentic bush camps during all of our visits to the Greater Kruger National Park. Canvas dome tents or simple bungalows house 2 candidates each. A mattress and pillow is provided, but bring along your sleeping bag and whatever other bedding you may require. The communal area is always set around the campfire or kitchen area where our cook whips up wholesome meals on a gas cooker and an open fire. There is no electricity, Wi-Fi or mobile phone signal, allowing us the opportunity to tune into the rhythm of the bush without any distractions.

Nights out on Primitive Trails will be spent under the stars (no tents) with candidates taking turns to complete 'watch duty'. Nights on Backpack Trail will be spent in small hiking tents carried with us in our backpacks.



## Why choose Lowveld Trails Co.?

- An industry specialist. The only FGASA accredited training provider that conducts Trails Guide Courses exclusively .
- The most experienced Trails Guide Course facilitator team in the industry.
- The hop on/off options are conveniently structured for those already working in the Field Guiding industry (with limited leave).
- Fair & competitive Trails Guide Course price.

### Included:

- Logging walking hours & dangerous game encounters under experienced mentors.
- Primitive Trail.
- Backpack Trail.
- Trail equipment, mattress & pillow.
- Shared accommodation/tents.
- All meals, coffee, tea & juice.
- Lowveld Trails Co. T-shirt.

### Excluded:

- ARH assessment (if required).
- Practical assessment (if eligible).
- Transport to/from Hoedspruit, Limpopo.
- FGASA membership fees.
- Additional drinks.

### Packing Checklist:

Sleeping bag | Sheet | Towel | Walking shoes (already worn in) | Head torch | Water bottles (min. 2 litre capacity) | Backpack (day pack & multi-day pack) | Binoculars & Cameras | Reference books | FGASA Dangerous Game Logbook (only if you already have one) & pen | ID book/Passport |

# workshop costs

## Full 28 day Trails Guide Workshop

17 September to 14 October

ZAR 65 500 per person

Participants also have the option to hop on/off for one or more of the different destinations:

Selati Private Nature Reserve - 17 to 22 Sep

ZAR 12 750 per person

Letaba Ranch Backpack Trail -22 to 26 Sep

ZAR 10 200 per person

Balule Private Nature Reserve - 26 Sep to 2 Oct

ZAR 15 300 per person

Timbavati Primitive Trail - 2 to 5 Oct.

ZAR 4 900 per person

Timbavati PNR Tented Camp - 5 to 11 Oct

ZAR 15 300 per person

Timbavati PNR Tented Camp - 11 to 14 Oct

ZAR 7 650 per person

Contact [admin@lowveldtrails.co.za](mailto:admin@lowveldtrails.co.za) for reservations.

