

LOWVELD TRAILS CO.



APPRENTICE

TRAILS GUIDE

COURSE

FOR TRAILS GUIDES
BY TRAILS GUIDES



The most experienced
Trails Guide Course
facilitator team in the
industry.



28 DAYS

12 MARCH &
02 NOVEMBER 2020



PASSION. EXPERIENCE. QUALITY



more about the

Course

The Field Guides Association of Southern Africa (FGASA) accredited Apprentice Trails Guide Course is conducted in the Greater Kruger National Park over a period of 28 days. There is a maximum limit of eight participants per course, ensuring personalised attention from the course facilitators and as much first-hand experience for the candidates as possible. Although the primary objective is to achieve the Apprentice Trails Guide qualification, we place strong emphasis on the ethos surrounding trails guiding, the necessary bush skills required for multi-day trails and holistic environmental interpretation. The course consists of three Phases:

Phase 1 - Advanced Rifle Handling (ARH) & Trails Guide Theory

We spend the first eleven days at a rustic tented camp on the Olifants River in the Balule Private Nature Reserve. Here we commence with the Advanced Rifle Handling (ARH) theory, training and assessment components. We also start with introductory walks during which candidates may begin logging walking hours and dangerous game encounters towards the Apprentice Trails Guide qualification. The majority of the Trails Guide theory will be covered during this phase of the course.

Phase 2 - Primitive Trail

The next four days of the course will be spent out on a 'Primitive Trail' in the Timbavati Private Nature Reserve, without support from a camp or vehicle. Nights are spent sleeping in the open under the stars (no tents), with each participant taking turns at "watch duty", ensuring the groups safety. All food and equipment are carried in backpacks, and we obtain our water by digging in the riverbeds.



Each candidate will have to attain three **SASSETA** Unit Standards through the Professional Firearm Trainers Council (**PFTC**) before commencement of the course and the Advanced Rifle Handling (ARH) component. The three Unit Standards are:

- 117705** Knowledge of the Firearms Control Act.
- 119651** Handle & use a manually operated rifle or carbine.
- 123519** Handle & use a manually operated rifle or carbine for business purposes.

Contact **Firearm Management Services** (Jo'burg) on 083 307 0837 or **Lowveld Guns and Bows** (Hoedspruit) on 015 590 7199 for assistance.





Phase 3 - Walking Hours, Encounters, Trails Guide Theory continued & Exam

From day 15 we are based at our rustic tented camp in the Timbavati Private Nature Reserve. The focus here is to log well beyond the minimum requirement of 50 walking hours and 10 potentially dangerous game encounters. Between walks we concentrate on the remaining Trails Guide theory modules. Once all the lectures have been completed, there will be a brief study period before the FGASA Trails Guide Theory exam takes place.

Track and sign training will be an ongoing component, culminating in a [CyberTracker Track & Sign Assessment](#) at the close of the course.

"Absolutely brilliant - cannot fault the course, and learnt an enormous amount! Incredible experiences and lots of memories to take away. Will definitely book again on another trail. Thank you so much!"
- **Caroline Prior (2019 candidate)**

The course is intense, yet practical, with an average of seven hours spent walking most days.

Our tented camps are basic, but comfortable, providing an authentic and interactive experience.

You will log priceless walking hours and dangerous game encounters under experienced mentors who will guide you through the process of approaching and retreating from dangerous game on foot.

A typical day starts with a wake-up call prior to sunrise. As the birds announce the approaching day, we enjoy coffee and rusks before heading out on a four to five hour walk, as soon as sufficient daylight allows.

We return to camp prior to midday for a well-earned brunch, before the daily debrief, a short lecture, or a few hours free to shower, read or study. Around 3pm we head out again for a two to three hour walk, with intention of gaining more valuable hours and encounters.

Dinner and a crackling campfire await us back at camp, usually followed by an open air shower and an early night after the exertions of the day. At times we will be walking for long periods in rugged conditions, so candidates should be prepared to get hot and dirty, all part of being a Trails Guide operating in Africa's wild areas.





the campus

Our authentic Tented Camp is unfenced and erected under magnificent Jackalberry Trees prior to each course. The entire camp is removed upon group departure, ensuring minimal environmental impact according to our 'no-trace' ethic. 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.

Canvas dome tents house 2 candidates each. A mattress and pillow is provided, but bring along your sleeping bag and whatever other bedding you may require.

Ablutions are simple, yet unmatched. Comfortable seats crouch over pit-fall toilets and canvas bush showers stand under a canopy of trees, open to views of the surrounding bush.

The communal area is around the campfire or at the kitchen area where our cook whips up wholesome meals on a gas cooker and an open fire.

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

What to Bring?

- Sleeping bag (we provide a mattress & pillow).
- Good walking shoes (already worn in).
- Head torch (spare batteries).
- Water bottles (capacity to hold min. 2 litres).
- Backpack.
- Day pack.
- Binoculars and cameras.
- Reference books.
- FGASA Dangerous Game Logbook (only if you already have one).





Brenden Pienaar (left) has always experienced a special magnetism towards natural spaces and their ecological functioning. Consequently, he has made a conscious effort to gain as much experience and understanding of these intricate systems over the past fifteen years to better equip himself for a life dedicated to their interpretation and conservation.

His most valued attributes are systematic problem solving and critical thinking, which he refined during a MSc. in Ecology through the University of Witwatersrand (WITS). However, as a practically orientated individual he thrives on time spent in the bush and is continuously challenging his skills as a naturalist.

Together with a BTech: Nature Conservation, Brenden has achieved the FGASA Professional SKS Dangerous Game, SKS Birding, as well as the Tracker Level 3 qualification (Professional Trailing) through 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. > 11 000 trails guiding hours), he acts as National assessor for SASSETTA, CATHSSETA & FGASA.

Brenden's calm nature and ability to interpret the inter-connectedness of the natural environment makes him a popular trail leader/facilitator. He deeply values the concept and philosophy of wilderness and it's associated attributes.

course facilitators

Wayne Te Brake (right) is a Wilderness Trails Guide with sixteen 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, including Track&Sign Specialist(CyberTracker). He is also a registered National and FGASA assessor.

Wayne 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 >9500 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.



"You will truly be walking with two of the very best Trails Guides in Southern Africa. This is an opportunity not to be missed."

- Lee Gutteridge (Wildlife Author & FGASA Scout)

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.
- Courses take place exclusively in prime big game areas in the open system of the Greater Kruger National Park.
- Fair & competitive Trails Guide Course price.

Included:

- ARH training & assessment (two opportunities).
- Trails Guide theory presentations & discussions.
- Conservation Levies.
- CyberTracker Track & Sign Assessment.
- FGASA Trails Guide Workbook.
- FGASA Dangerous Game Logbook.
- FGASA Trails Guide theory exam.
- Logging walking hours & dangerous game encounters under experienced mentors
- Primitive Trail.
- Primitive Trail equipment (excluding backpack).
- All meals, juice, tea & coffee.

course costs

12 March to 08 April 2020.

ZAR 40 900 incl. VAT

02 November to 29 November 2020.

ZAR 40 900 incl. VAT

50% deposit secures a spot.

Contact admin@lowveldtrails.co.za for reservations.

"Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life."

- Confucius

Excluded:

- Transport to / from Hoedspruit, Limpopo.
- FGASA membership fees.
- Drinks.

