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# DISCOVER EDEN

A LEARNING  
ADVENTURE

2022

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## ECOLOGY PROGRAM DATES

27 May to 14 June / 17 June to 5 July / 8 July to 26 July  
29 July to 16 August / 17 August to 6 September

### PROGRAM COST

\$3 490 - US Dollar / €2 980 - Euro

Only 8 spaces are available in each group, to give you the best experience possible! We work on a first come first served basis, so book early to avoid disappointment!

[Complete the application form](#) to register your interest.

## ABOUT THE ECOLOGY PROGRAM

The Discover Eden Conservation Ecology program is specifically designed for those who are either studying or working in the ecological sciences, including zoology, botany, environmental science, animal science, or biological sciences.

This activity packed program addresses topics such as ecology, biodiversity, conservation, sustainability, game reserve management, ornithology, marine biology, herpetology, and botany amongst others. Meet professionals out in the field and learn from their vast experience.

Food, accommodation, and ground transport are all included in this package.

**Please note:** Due to the unpredictability of nature and the weather, the days and activities stated below may be switched around or substituted to give you the best experience possible.

# COURSE OUTLINE

## DAY 1 ARRIVE

Your friendly Discover Eden Guide will pick you up at **Cape Town Airport** in the Western Cape Province. We will then make our way to our overnight accommodation, at a guest house in a quiet residential suburb not too far from the airport. You will be able to freshen up before dinner and a chat, getting to know your fellow students that are on the tour with you.

## DAY 2 ORIENTATION & TWO OCEANS AQUARIUM

Today you will partake in an orientation where we will explain everything that lies ahead. After the orientation you will go to the **Two Oceans Aquarium** in Cape Town where you will be taken on a special 'behind the scenes' tour of the aquarium by one of the aquarium biologists after which you will have time to explore the aquarium at your own pace. You will have the rest of the afternoon to explore the famous **Victoria and Alfred Waterfront**, one of South Africa's most visited cultural and historical attractions.

## DAY 3 KIRSTENBOSCH BOTANIST & BOTANICAL GARDENS

You will spend a full day with a botanist in the **Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens**, also known as the most beautiful gardens in South Africa and acclaimed as one of the great botanic gardens of the world. You will get a full tour of the gardens and receive lectures on different aspects of botany and the special vegetation found in the Cape area.



## DAY 4 EWT & CAPE LEOPARD TRUST

You will spend the morning with scientists from the **Endangered Wildlife Trust** (EWT). Topics that could be addressed include wildlife and energy, estuary conservation and cheetah metapopulation management. In the afternoon you will head off to attend a lecture on the Cape mountain leopard to hear about the efforts taken to conserve this rare animal. The lecture is presented by The Cape Leopard Trust.



## DAY 5 WITH MARINE BIOLOGISTS

Get to know the ins and outs of the special southern cape oceans by spending a day immersed in marine learning. Expect some introductory lectures and some hands-on in the water field work! The team of marine biologists will get you up to speed on some of the long-term projects they run, before kitting you out and getting you nice and wet!



## DAY 6 CAPE NATURE PENGUIN COLONY

Today you will make your way to Gansbaai. On the way you will stop over at a **coastal nature reserve** where you will be given a talk by a marine specialist about **marine conservation** relating to endangered seabirds. The site is also a natural penguin colony! Afterwards you will spend the afternoon partaking in your first activity with the marine biologists in Gansbaai. You will be spending the next 2 full days in Gansbaai with them.



## DAY 7 GAANSBAAI & SHARKS!

The next 2 days will be spent with marine biologists who work for an organisation that is heavily involved with marine conservation in their area. You could take part in activities such as a shark cage dive, shark tagging on a research boat or from shore, a snorkelling survey or a dissection, an estuary survey or other relevant conservation-based activities. Apart from these activities you will also be receiving lectures from the biologists. (Please note these activities are dependent on weather, tides and availability).

## DAY 8 PENGUIN & SEABIRD SANCTUARY AND SOME MORE SHARKS

In the morning you will be visiting a world class **African penguin and seabird sanctuary**. Here you will be given a tour of the centre and given a talk by one of the conservationists about the endangered African penguin and other sea birds that they have under their care. You will assist in the morning routine at the centre and watch the penguin feeding. In the afternoon you will once again be spending your time with the **marine biologists**.

## DAY 9 TRAVEL DAY WITH A STOP IN KNYSNA

Spend the day travelling along the scenic **Garden Route** to Plettenberg Bay. Stop over for lunch in the famous coastal town of Knysna, home to the Knysna Heads, a pair of majestic sandstone cliffs that separate the Knysna Lagoon from the sea. There should also be time for a walk on the beach after you arrive at your overnight accommodation.



## DAY 10 REPTILE SANCTUARY & TALK WITH DISCOVER EDEN CO-FOUNDER

Time to get to grips with some scaly friends! A half-day well-spent learning about the various **reptile species** in this part of the world at a renowned snake park. Learn how to handle and examine these slithery specimens from the region's top **snake experts**. After lunch, sit and chat about **careers in conservation** with Mark, as he shares his experiences of mentoring ecology students for over 20 years.



## DAY 11 NATURES VALLEY TRUST

Today you will meet the team from the Natures Valley Trust. NVT is a community driven NPO working at the **cutting edge of integrated conservation** in South Africa set in the pristine Natures Valley area. Learn all about the different projects they are involved in and also take part in some **conservation activities** such as a marine debris survey, a coordinated water bird count (CWAC), and beach breeding bird surveys amongst other relevant conservation activities.



## DAY 12 BIRD RINGING & SWIM WITH SEALS

In the morning you will meet with the team from Natures Valley Trust again to take part in a **bird ringing** exercise. Get to grips with the local feathered specials and learn how to handle birds correctly. In the afternoon we head out to sea again, this time for a close encounter with the charismatic and playful **Cape Fur Seals**. Visit these playful creatures at a large breeding colony and enter their world for a **snorkel with them**.



## DAY 13 RAPTOR CENTRE & HIKE AT ROBBERG NATURE RESERVE

Spend the morning at a bird of prey centre where you will be given a guided tour of the centre and learn about the **rescue and rehabilitation** of these incredible creatures. Hike the magnificent **Robberg Peninsula** and learn about its unique geology, history and ecology. Spot Great White Sharks from land and see the seal colony you visited yesterday from a completely different perspective. Run down some rolling dunes, get dive bombed by Kelp Gulls, and finish with an optional sundowner watching the sun set over the bay.



## DAY 14 FIRST DAY ON THE GAME RESERVE

After a relaxed breakfast you will be making your way to a game reserve where you will be spending the next few days learning all about the conservation efforts it takes to successfully run and maintain a game reserve.



## DAY 15 TO 18 WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ON A GAME RESERVE

You will spend the next few days living on the game reserve learning about and helping out in **conservation efforts** on the reserve. These efforts could include aspects such as the monitoring of certain species, checking of camera traps, bird identification and ringing, vegetation management, habitat utilization and identification of animal tracks to mention a few. Track dangerous game on foot and learn about cutting edge conservation efforts taking place.



## DAY 19 DEPARTURE

Today is a sad day as we have to say goodbye. After breakfast we will take you to George Airport where you will start to make your way back home. We are sure this experience will benefit you throughout your career and will never be forgotten.

