

Animal Welfare.  
Worldwide.

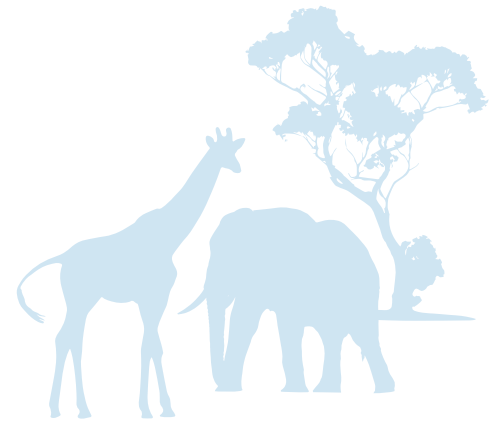


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# ANIMAL FRIENDLY WILDLIFE TRAVEL GUIDE

# CONTENTS



- **Why do we need to #TravelKind?**
- **Twelve tips to #TravelKind**

## **#TravelKind True Sanctuary Destinations**

- **LIONSROCK Big Cat Sanctuary**
- **Drakenstein Lion Park**
- **Panthera Africa**
- **Jukani Wildlife Sanctuary**

## **#TravelKind Wildlife Destinations**

- **Addo Elephant Park**
- **iSimangaliso Wetland Park**
- **Mountain Zebra National Park**
- **Marakele National Park**
- **Kruger National Park**

## **About FOUR PAWS**


FOUR PAWS is the global animal welfare organisation for animals under direct human influence, which reveals suffering, rescues animals in need and protects them.

Founded in 1988 in Vienna by Heli Dungler and friends, the organisation advocates for a world where humans treat animals with respect, empathy and understanding.

The sustainable campaigns and projects of FOUR PAWS focus on companion animals including stray dogs and cats, farm animals and wild animals – such as bears, big cats and orangutans – kept in inappropriate conditions as well as in disaster and conflict zones.

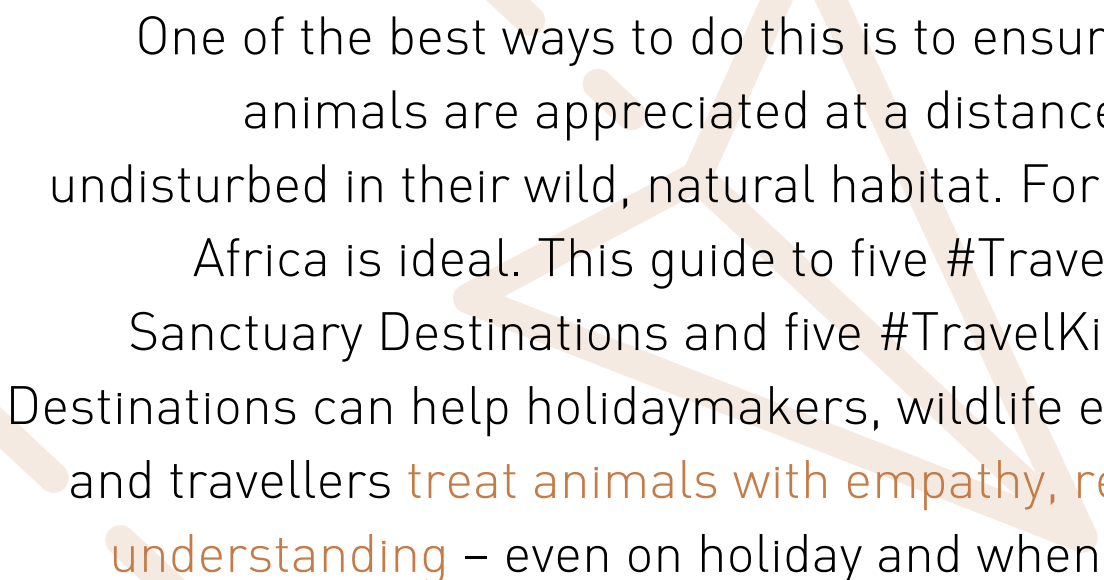
With offices in Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Kosovo, the Netherlands, Switzerland, South Africa, Thailand, Ukraine, the UK, the USA and Vietnam as well as sanctuaries for rescued animals in eleven countries, FOUR PAWS provides rapid help and long-term solutions. [www.four-paws.org.za](http://www.four-paws.org.za)

# WHY #TRAVELKIND?



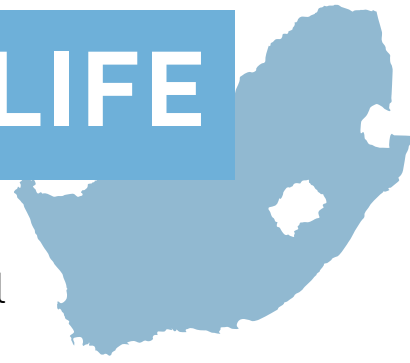
The years 2020 and 2021 were filled with challenges and hardships for many. To prevent pandemics, similar to Covid-19, from reaching the scale it has, we must change the way we treat our planet.

**Travellers are travelling again to reunite with families and to explore different parts of the world. This time round it is with a greater awareness to ensure this is done in an ethical and responsible way that does not exploit animals and so furthering risk of disease transmission. *We need to #TravelKind.***

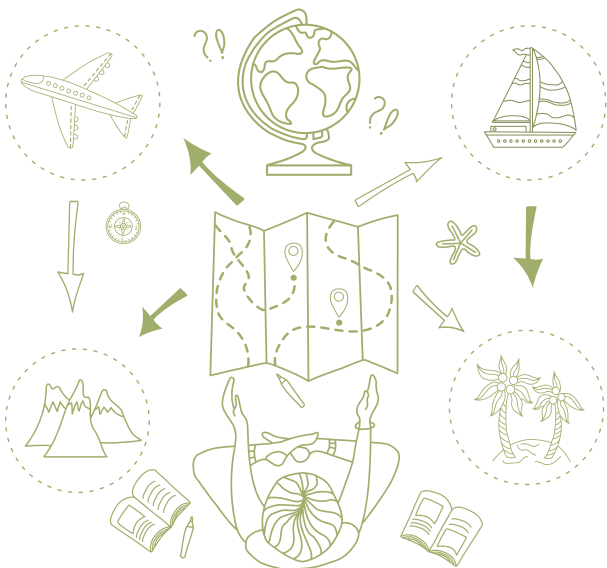


One of the best ways to do this is to ensure that wild animals are appreciated at a distance while left undisturbed in their wild, natural habitat. For this South Africa is ideal. This guide to five #TravelKind True Sanctuary Destinations and five #TravelKind Wildlife Destinations can help holidaymakers, wildlife enthusiasts and travellers *treat animals with empathy, respect and understanding* – even on holiday and when travelling.

# SOUTH AFRICAN WILDLIFE



South Africa is a leading tourist destination and home to stunning beaches, breath-taking mountains, rich cultural experiences, famous winelands and ten UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Arguably one of the biggest drawcards for tourists is the wildlife. The country harbours 10% of the world's bird, fish and plant species, and 6% of its mammal and reptile species. In addition, there are over 800 bird species in South Africa. Tourists travel far and wide to observe the country's big cats, elephants, rhinos and abundant marine life.



South Africa is a perfect location to view wildlife in an ethical way. Many tourist attractions however still allow interactive activities with wild animals. These are deceptively cruel and rely on exploitation of animals to make money. Visitors should be aware of this and rather adhere to animal welfare principles to treat all animals with respect and empathy.

# TOP TIPS TO #TRAVELKIND

To #TravelKind means to visit destinations where no animal is exploited or harmed.

This means avoiding poorly kept zoos or any other captive facilities that keep animals in cruel conditions that are not species appropriate.

**To support and follow this travel philosophy, you will have to do research before visiting animals in captivity to ensure your destination is cruelty-free.**

**Which red flags should you be looking for?**

Up close and personal interactions with wild animals are an easy sign that a facility is not driven by conservation principles and is likely to be exploitative. Wild animals that were handled by humans, can never be released back into the wild and are only kept for entertainment purposes. The explanation that they are kept in captivity for conservation reasons is a ruse to exploit them.

**Travellers and wildlife enthusiasts do not need to buy into this exploitation if they stick to these 12 tips:**



# 12 TIPS TO #TRAVELKIND

## The Do's and Don'ts of animal-friendly travel



While photographing wildlife in nature respect their space . Do not support businesses charging for photos with animals.

1

2

Enjoy animals in the wild where they belong and support companies that offer ecotourism trips or non-invasive photo safaris. Avoid destinations that offer trips that include trophy hunting and hunting of any kind.



Wild animals are not pets looking for belly scratches. Holding or petting wildlife is never kind to the animal despite your best intentions. Such close contact with wild animals could cause harm to their environment or to the animals themselves.

3

Feeding wild animals harms their ability to find food naturally and teaches them to get dangerously close to humans.

4





Sometimes travellers might become concerned when they see animals in so-called sanctuaries or poor-quality zoos being maltreated. If you are worried about the welfare of any of these animals, report it immediately to your tour operator or a local animal welfare organisation so that swift action can be taken.

5

6

Elephants are wild animals and can only be tamed by inhumane methods. Don't visit businesses offering rides or any interactions with them.



Do not buy curios or souvenirs made from animal parts. The illegal trade in wildlife parts and products include items made from exotic leathers, fur, ivory, and include ornamental objects, food items, and traditional medicines. Buying these products encourages animal exploitation and poaching of animals from the wild.

7

Working donkeys, mules and horses are commonplace in some countries. If you are worried about such an animal's welfare, please report it to a local welfare organisation or tour operator.

8



Do not support cruel animal exhibits or shows like circuses, performances with marine mammals or any kind of show involving wild animals. These animals are kept in inappropriate conditions and their performances are the result of dubious training methods based on domination and violence.

9



Take care in the presence of animals, even if they seem like they are in need. Strays or wild animals are often fearful of humans. When approached, they can pose a threat. Rabies is a big problem in some countries. Remember that it can be transferred to humans.

10

If you are bitten, wash the wound with soap and water, and seek medical attention immediately.

Avoid eating at places that sell dog or cat meat, bush meat, and the meat of endangered species, such as shark fins and turtle meat. Before ending up on a plate, animals might have experienced cruel slaughter practices which can pose a health risk to humans.

11



Many countries have extended their options for vegetarian and vegan travellers. Be on the look-out for specialised establishments or plant-based items indicated on menus. It also helps to learn words like 'vegetarian' or 'vegan' in the local language.

12

# TRUE SANCTUARIES

## The 4 True Sanctuaries in South Africa recommended by FOUR PAWS

The True Sanctuaries is a group of wildlife sanctuaries in South Africa who have united to pave the way for animal welfare and ethical big cat tourism.

These four sanctuaries are the only ethical way to view big cats in captivity in South Africa. The facilities house animals that have been rescued from suffering in establishments and situations such as inadequate zoos, cruel private keeping, illegal trade, circuses and more.

Wild cats are sentient, intelligent, and powerful predators. When they become habituated by humans, as they would through interactions such as holding, touching, and feeding, they cannot be released into the wild. True Sanctuaries all have a policy that prevents this kind of interaction. In addition, the group of sanctuaries do not allow breeding, hunting and trading of animals.

Big cats are vulnerable to exploitation, not only via interactions with people, but also in the trade of their bones for use in traditional medicine. With True Sanctuaries this possibility is eliminated. The sanctuaries provide lifelong species-appropriate care, free from suffering. While they provide the model solution for rescued animals, the viewpoint remains humankind should be working to eliminate the need for these facilities by choosing not to fuel wild animal exploitation.



# LIONSROCK Big Cat Sanctuary

## Where: Bethlehem, Free State 2-3 hours drive from Johannesburg

LIONSROCK Big Cat Sanctuary was established in 2006 by FOUR PAWS, the global animal welfare organisation dedicated to revealing animal suffering, rescuing animals under direct influence and protecting them. The sanctuary was opened after it was taken over by the non-profit organisation and transformed from a facility that exploited big cats, to a world-renowned refuge for these animals.

Today, LIONSROCK is home to over 100 rescued animals. The majority of these are lions, but several tigers, leopards, one cheetah and a caracal have also found lifetime care at the sanctuary. The rescued animals have come from Romania, Austria, Bulgaria, Congo, France, Switzerland, Jordan, Iraq and South Africa. Some have been rescued from the captive breeding facilities and others from inappropriate tourism destinations, closed down zoos and wildlife parks.

As per True Sanctuaries principles, there are no interactions with animals permitted at LIONSROCK Big Cat Sanctuary. Instead, there are numerous other ethical activities visitors can take part in. These include a two-hour feeding tour where trained animal specialists feed the animals, while giving detailed, informative talks to the guests. Visitors can also enjoy a sanctuary walk, where guests can join specialists on their rounds visiting the different animals in the sanctuary. In addition to taking travellers around the premises, children from local schools partake in educational visits and learn about big cats in the wild and how they should be treated.

**LIONSROCK**  
Big Cat Sanctuary



[www.lionsrock.org](http://www.lionsrock.org)



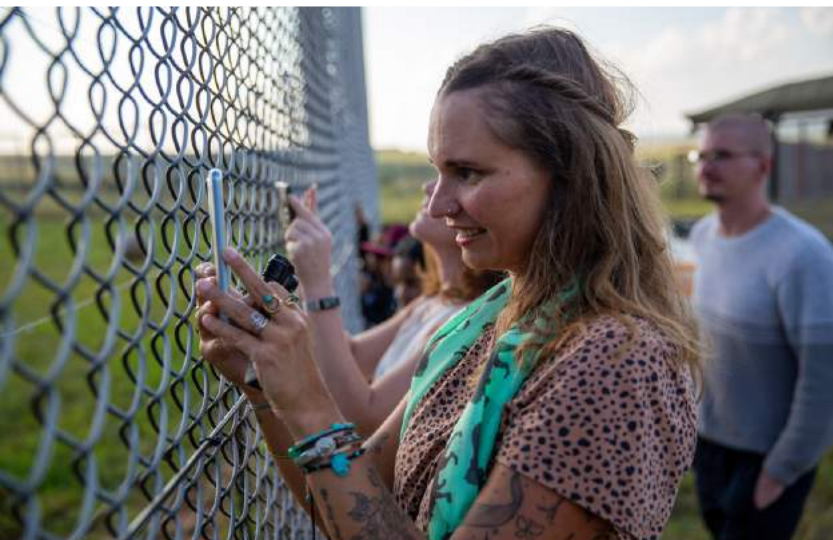
Arrive as a guest and leave with a piece of your heart firmly invested in the big cats of Africa! LIONSROCK is a **big cat sanctuary** established by FOUR PAWS, the global animal welfare organisation for animals under direct human influence, which reveals suffering, rescues animals in need and protects them.

They offer **full-board guest packages**, **specialty packages**, as well as **educational packages**. For day visitors, there are various guided **Sanctuary Tours**. The **on-site restaurant** focuses on hearty, wholesome food, prepared with care and love.

LIONSROCK is also dedicated to upholding the principles of **Responsible Tourism** by working with the local community, adopting green practices, using organic, fair trade and non-animal tested products as far as possible, and recycling and up-cycling at any given opportunity.

Their vision is a world where humans treat animals with respect, empathy and understanding. An **extraordinary destination** for visitors passionate about animal welfare. A complete shift from traditional tourism/hospitality to focusing on their **core purpose, being animal welfare**, as well as an exciting new **emphasis on education**. From their exclusive Sanctuary Tours, overnight Guest Packages to educational information incorporated into the beautiful décor – all ensures visitors will leave rejuvenated & more informed about **true animal welfare**.





# DRAKENSTEIN LION PARK

**Where: Cape Winelands,  
Western Cape**

**1 hour drive from Cape Town**

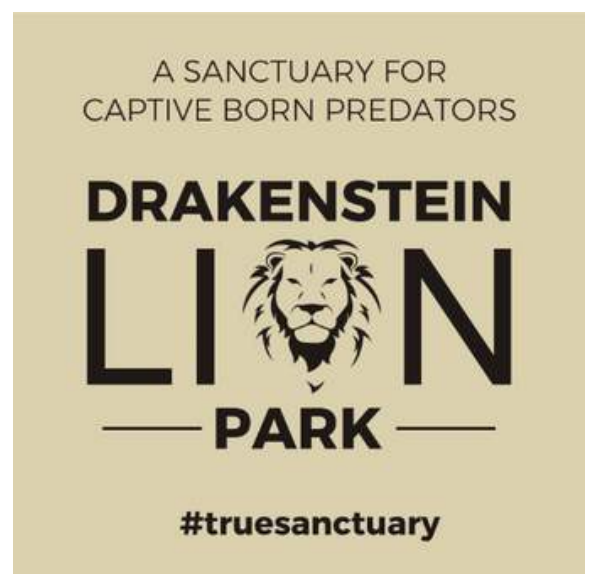
Drakenstein Lion Park was established in 1998 to provide lions in distress with a sanctuary where they could live in safety, free from abuse and persecution, and be treated with the compassion and respect they deserve.

The Park is actively involved in improving the quality of life of lions in captivity, locally as well as internationally, either by offering these animals a lifetime home or working in conjunction with other animal welfare organisations to secure a safe future for individual animals in dire need.

Drakenstein Lion Park comprises 50 acres of sprawling lion habitat and offers interested animal lovers the unique opportunity to stay and volunteer at the sanctuary. Unlike the breeding facilities that offer 'workaway' or conservation stays, these volunteer programs do not exploit animals. Instead, volunteers are given jobs that truly impacts the running of the sanctuary, such as food preparation for the big cats, aiding with visitors, cleaning the lion camps and ensuring the land is free from invasive species and fence construction.

The Park's accommodation affords visitors the South African bush experience as specially designed tents are situated in the heart of the lion sanctuaries and are surrounded by the big cat enclosures.

In addition to lions, tigers and caracals, the sanctuary houses five chimpanzees. These chimpanzees were rescued from similarly abusive situations as the sanctuary's big cats.



# PANTHERA AFRICA

## Where: Stanford, Western Cape 1 hour & 45 minutes drive from Cape Town

Panthera Africa is an **environmentally friendly sanctuary** for any captive bred big cats, where they are protected and can prosper for the rest of their lives.

The sanctuary's main purpose is to be an educational platform to **spread awareness about the condition's big cats face in captivity**, and how animal welfare and enrichment play a vital role in giving them the best captive life possible.

Like other True Sanctuaries, there are **no hands-on interactions with the animals**, instead the facility is a blueprint of how a non-profit sanctuary, focusing on animal welfare and education, can become self-sufficient, and inspire and push the change from unethical to ethical tourism and big cat facilities.



The sanctuary's **110 hectares** is a paradise for rescued big cats, with lots of large trees, a natural spring, and fantastic views of the mountain.

Lions, leopards, tigers, cheetahs, caracals, and black-backed jackals, call the sanctuary home.

# JUKANI WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

## Where: Plettenberg Bay, Western Cape

### 1 hour & 30 minutes drive from George Airport

Jukani's mission is to maintain and manage a sustainable wildlife sanctuary, with the focus on [creating widespread awareness](#) about the plight of large predators in captivity.

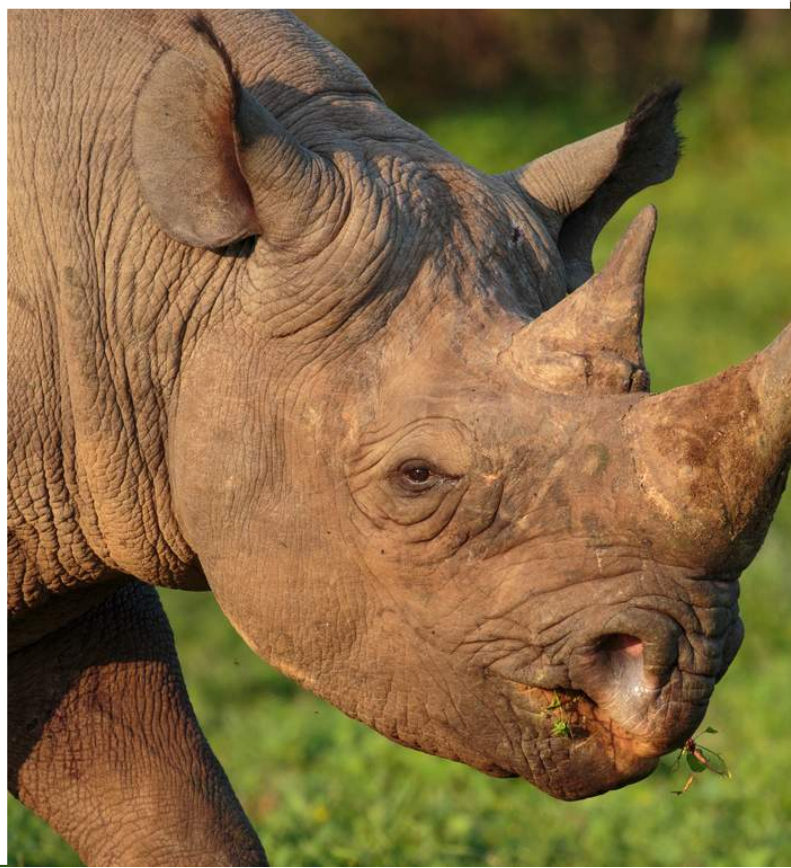
The sanctuary provides care for [animals that cannot be released back into the wild](#). The sanctuary offers 80-minute walking safaris so you can embrace the full spectrum of animals that have found sanctuary at Jukani.

In addition to the native lions that Jukani has rescued, visitors can also glimpse a [rare white tiger](#). The tiger can often be found swimming in the pond. Sadly though, white tigers are often targeted by the big cat breeding industry to be bred commercially and their presence is highly disproportionate to their expected real-life presence.

As with the other True Sanctuaries, Jukani has a [strict 'hands-off' policy](#), and visitors can have the peace of mind that animals are not exploited for entertainment and tourism. In addition to the big cats, other predator species at Jukani include puma, cheetah, wild dogs, and black backed jackals.



# #TRAVELKIND WILDLIFE DESTINATIONS



# Five wildlife destinations in South Africa **FOUR PAWS** recommends

## **Addo Elephant National Park**

**Where: Eastern Cape, 1 hour drive from Gqeberha**

As the name suggests, elephants are the primary drawcard to this national park. Addo is one of the best spots to see these majestic animals in South Africa.

The region's elephants suffered from severe hunting back in the 1900s when its population was decimated until there were only around 10 to 20 individual elephants remaining. Now the park is a haven for one of the world's most iconic animals and there are around 500-600 elephants that roam the park.

In addition to elephants, there are many other species, such as lions, leopards and an array of birdlife that can be found in the park and seen on safari.

The Park is South Africa's third largest national park and covers a wide range of different terrain including savannah, mountains, woodland and rolling sand dunes.

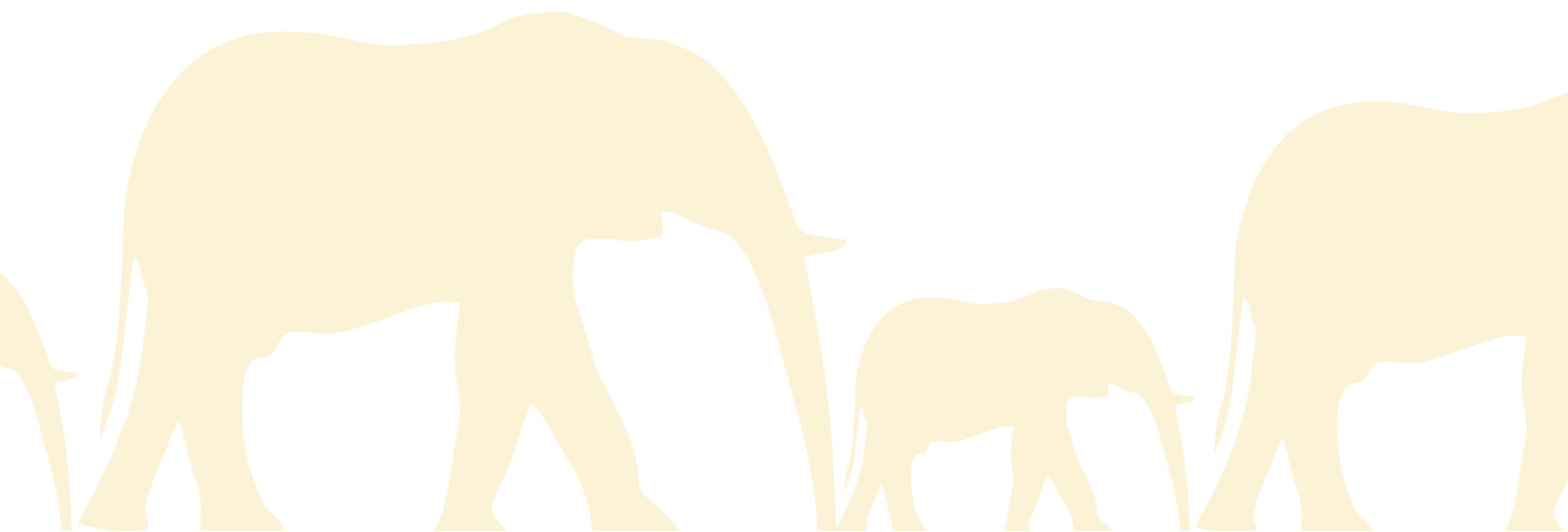
## **iSimangaliso Wetland Park**

**Where: KwaZulu-Natal, 2 hours & 45 minutes drive from Durban**

Found on the shores of the Indian Ocean, iSimangaliso Wetland Park was recognised as South Africa's first World Heritage Site in 1999, and remains a truly remarkable landscape. Translated as 'miracle' in Zulu, the Park's landscape is a rich mix of coastal forest, tropical seas, sandy beaches, and an impressive estuarine system that comprises four lakes.

At the heart of iSimangaliso lies Lake St Lucia, which is Africa's largest estuarine system. The lake is home to 155 fish species and 50% of all water birds in KwaZulu-Natal nest here. In addition, its banks are rich with antelope species and hippos.

The Eastern and Western shores are where the elephants, giraffes, and other wildlife, including members of the Big 5, reside. Hyena and leopard can also be seen on night drives.



## Mountain Zebra National Park

**Where: Eastern Cape, 3 hours & 30 minutes drive from Gqeberha**

In the 1930s, when the Park was established, there were believed to be less than 10 individual animals remaining in the area. The Park was established with the purpose to protect the species. Today their numbers are close to a thousand.

The Park's authorities have worked hard to increase the biodiversity of the area and in 2007 began to introduce the first predators. The Park is now home to cheetahs, lions, and hyenas. In addition, the elusive aardwolf, Cape buffalo, and eland can be found in the Park. South Africa's national bird, the blue crane, may be spotted on safari.

In this park you are sure to beat the crowds and enjoy a more secluded safari and even enjoy walking safaris. There are also opportunities to see remarkable ancient San cave paintings.

## Kruger National Park

**Where: Limpopo and Mpumalanga, 4 -5 hours drive from Pretoria and Johannesburg**

Spanning an epic almost two million hectares, the Kruger National Park is famous for its wildlife and unique landscape. The Park is home to 336 species of trees, 507 species of birds, 114 reptile species and 147 species of mammals, including rare African wild dogs.

Game drives and wilderness trails are the best way to see the Park's wildlife, but there are also guided walks, 4X4 experiences, mountain biking, backpacking trails and birding tours.

The Kruger covers a vast array of different terrains with large expanses of wilderness and it is divided into 16 macro ecozones. The Park is culturally rich, with over 255 recorded archaeological sites, including some from the Stone Age.

The Park offers numerous accommodation options including tented accommodation, guest houses and private cottages.

## Marakele National Park

**Where: Limpopo Province, 3 hours drive from Johannesburg**

Located within the Waterberg Biosphere, Marakele National Park's landscape comprises of dry western zones and the slightly wetter eastern region. This unique location makes it a hotspot for wildlife.

Meaning 'sanctuary' in Tswana, Marakele is home to an abundance of wildlife, including elephants, leopards, many antelope species and rhino to name a few. Most notably, it is home to the world's largest colony of Cape vultures of around 800 pairs. These can be seen on a special tour to the colony.

Marakele consists of a rugged landscape, which encompasses the highest peak of the Waterberg mountains. Escarpments and rocky peaks are the eye-catching remains of a prolonged erosion process.

**REMEMBER TO #TRAVELKIND**



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Worldwide.



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[www.four-paws.org](http://www.four-paws.org)

## South Africa

### FOUR PAWS Animal Welfare Foundation

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