

PRELIMINARY ITINERARY

Namibia Program – African Ecology and Conservation

May 16 – June 04, 2010

Note

- The itinerary and dates are subject to minor changes without prior notice.
- Leave a copy of your itinerary with family or friends so that you can be located in case of an emergency.

Typical daily schedule while in Namibia

6:40am app.	Sunrise
7:00am	Breakfast
8:00am	Start with the day's activities or depart for the next destination
1:00pm app.	Lunch is approximately 1 hour
5:00pm app.	End of day's activities
5:20pm app.	Sunset
7:00pm	Dinner
8:00pm	Some days include an evening session
BLD	Denotes meals that are included in the price

Sunday, May 16 **Depart from the USA**

You have to check in about 2 to 3 hours prior to departure. Please check your air ticket for departure times. Meals will be served during the 15 hour overseas flight.

Monday, May 17 **Air travel – Arrive in Windhoek**

We will stay in Johannesburg in-transit for a short while before continuing to Windhoek. This is a short 1¼ hour flight and a light meal will be served. We will be collected at the airport and transferred (½ hour drive) to the Chameleon Backpackers Lodge in Windhoek

(<http://www.chameleonbackpackers.com>). Additional meals on that day will be at your own expense.

Tuesday, May 18 Windhoek

Today will be spent in Windhoek for orientation, getting accustomed to Namibian culture and for last minute shopping. If time allows we will visit one of the natural history or cultural museums. Lunch and dinner will be on your own account. (B)

Wednesday, May 19 Windhoek - Gobabeb Training & Research Centre

Today is the start of the real adventure. We will drive in a south-westerly direction traversing the Khomas Hochland before descending down the escarpment on an impressive mountain pass. There is a good chance of seeing some wildlife along the way such as oryx, springbok, mountain zebra and klipspringer. As we reach the bottom of the escarpment the spectacular desert landscape unfolds before us. We continue to Gobabeb, situated along the Kuiseb River where we will camp for the next three days. (BLD)

Thursday – Saturday, May 20 – 22 Gobabeb Training & Research Centre

For the next three days we will conduct field work including planning and setting up the surveys, collecting insects, conducting vegetation surveys and monitoring daily climatic changes. On the last day the field data will be analyzed and presented to the group. The field work will be supplemented by lectures and a video. We will also participate in a field excursion to some Welwitschias, silt deposits. A night walk will reveal some nocturnal critters. There will also be ample opportunities to walk in the desert and to climb the high dunes. (BLD)

Sunday, May 23 Gobabeb - Swakopmund

Today we will travel to Walvis Bay on the Atlantic coast. After a short lunch break on the beach we will continue towards Swakopmund. On the way we will discuss ecotourism and conservation. For the next two nights we will stay in the municipal bungalows (chalet type accommodation). Clothes can be washed at the nearby Laundromat. (BLD)

Monday, May 24 **Free day in Swakopmund**

Today gives you an opportunity to participate in the many optional adventure activities on offer. Examples of activities are a dolphin cruise, sea kayaking, dune riding with ATVs, horse riding, sea fishing, scenic flights and more. The guide will discuss all the possible options with you to enable advance bookings before arriving in Swakopmund. Note: all optional activities and excursions are subject to availability and are made at your own expense and risk. A very good museum, the Namibian National Marine Aquarium and the Kristall Gallery are also worth visiting. Swakopmund, with its colonial German architecture and culture also offers quality restaurants, coffee-bars, bakeries, gift shops, book shops and supermarkets. Lunch and dinner will be at your own expense. (B)

Tuesday, May 25 **Swakopmund - EHRA**

Departing after breakfast, we will head north along the coast to Henties Bay. From here we turn inland and traverse the gravel plains of the northern Namib Desert towards the highest mountain in Namibia, the Brandberg Mountain. Just north of the mountain lies the camp of EHRA where we will camp for the next two nights. (BLD)

Wednesday, May 26 **EHRA**

We will drive through the general area searching for desert elephants. On the way, we will visit some local communities who frequently come into close contact with the elephants and learn more about human-wildlife conflict. Some ongoing projects of EHRA will also be visited. (BLD)

Thursday, May 27 **EHRA – Okaukuejo, Etosha N.P.**

The largest part of today will be spent travelling to the Okaukuejo Camp. We will first travel north towards Otjovasando, the most western gate into the Etosha N.P. From here we will travel through the western section of the park, which lies outside the main tourist area. If luck is on our side, we may encounter elephants, lions and many antelope on the way. Visiting some waterholes en route, we will arrive in the late afternoon at the Okaukuejo Camp.

The nearby floodlit waterhole offers a great opportunity to observe many of the wildlife and bird species of the area. There is a good chance of seeing elephants and the rare black rhinos towards the evening. (BLD)

Friday – Saturday, May 28 - 29 Okaukuejo Camp, Etosha N.P.

Friday - In the morning we will be accompanied by a staff member to the border fence to learn more about fence management. In the afternoon we will drive to the pan and a natural spring where various aspects of the ecology and park management will be discussed.

Saturday – The morning will be spent collecting population data of springbok, whereafter the data will be analyzed and discussed. There will be an optional game drive in the afternoon. (BLD)

Sunday, May 30 Okaukuejo Camp, Etosha N.P.

Today is a free day where students have the choice of staying in camp and relax, or go on game drives. In camp you can watch hundreds of animals visiting the nearby waterhole. There will also be a morning and an afternoon game drive. (BLD)

Monday, May 31 Etosha – Cheetah Conservation Fund

In the morning we will visit the Etosha Ecological Institute to learn more about park management including antelope populations, elephants, predators, diseases, vegetation, hydrology, tourism and other topics. After lunch, we will travel to the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF). On the way, we will stop in the town of Otjiwarongo to buy some groceries before heading to CCF. (BLD)

Tuesday, June 01 Cheetah Conservation Fund

In the morning we will watch a cheetah run (exercise). Thereafter we will visit the information center to learn more about cheetah biology, conservation and predator/human conflict. The remainder of the day will be spent learning more about game counting and game ranching. The afternoon will include a field excursion to a game ranch and participation in a game count. (BLD)

Wednesday, June 02 **CCF - Windhoek**

In the morning we will discuss savanna ecology and bush encroachment, including a field excursion. We leave after lunch for Windhoek and stay again at the Chameleon Backpackers Lodge. Dinner on Wednesday will be on your own account. (BL)

Thursday, June 03 **Windhoek – Depart for the USA**

The group will be dropped-off at the airport at about 10:00am for the return flight. (B)

Friday, June 04 **Arrive in the USA**

The flight from Johannesburg arrives in the USA in the early morning. Meals will be served on the airplane.