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NEWS

December 19 2025 - January 30 2026

Hoedspruit, Limpopo email: editor@kruger2canyon.co.za



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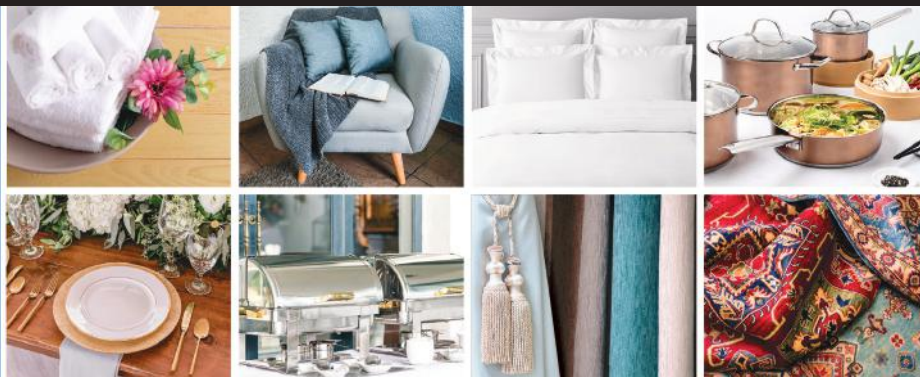
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Eden - Soul of Africa

Three Years in Botswana's Wilderness, Captured in a Book Like No Other

There are books about Africa... and then there are books that take you there. *Eden - Soul of Africa*, the new work by photographer and storyteller Armand Grobler, falls squarely into the second category.

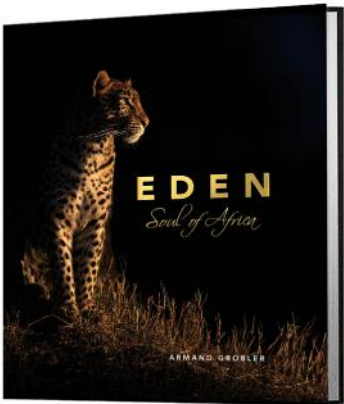
This is not a coffee-table collection of pretty pictures. It is a three-year long immersion - a human being living alone in one of the last truly wild corners of the continent, listening to the land, reading its moods, and allowing its silence to rearrange him. The result is a book that feels less like something you browse, and more like something you enter.

Across the Okavango Delta, the Kalahari's deep desert, and the ancient rock lands of Tuli, Grobler spent twelve months without fences, comforts, or safety nets - just a camera, a notebook, and whatever courage the day allowed. The isolation was real. The encounters were intimate. Lions, hyenas, elephants, wild dogs, and even a lone buffalo bull - "Os" - became part of the daily rhythm of his existence.

The photographs he brought back are staggering: hyenas drifting like ghosts through moonlight, lions threading their way through reeds, elephants pushing through drought and dust, crocodiles rising from water thick with reeds and secrets. But it's the writing - quiet, reflective, at times raw - that stitches the images into something larger than a wildlife book. It becomes a meditation on what wilderness gives us, and what we stand to lose.

Flip through *Eden - Soul of Africa* and you feel the Okavango breathing on every page. The serpentine floodwaters. The cathedral hush of the Kalahari at dawn. The ancient, rain-carved corridors where giants still roam as they have for millennia. Grobler captures the emotional weight of these places - the pulse beneath the dust, the spirit that lingers in the heat shimmer, the memory that something older than civilisation still survives out there.

The book unfolds in sections shaped by the journey itself: beginning with *Welcome to Eden*, a poetic grounding in Africa's raw and timeless essence, before drifting into *River of Dreams*, a deep, intimate immersion into the pulse of Okavango life. From there it moves into *Desert Oasis*, capturing the austere and haunting magic of the Kalahari, and then into *Land of Giants*, a powerful tribute to the monumental landscapes and ancient herds of the Tuli block. The journey closes with *Vanishing Africa*, a sober, reflect-



tive reckoning with the fragility of wilderness and the accelerating erosion of the wild places we cannot afford to lose.

And finally, *Exploring Eden*, Grobler's most personal field notes - intimate encounters, near-misses, and moments that carved themselves permanently into him.

More than 200 pages of cinematic photography are paired with over 22,000 words of reflection, natural history, and lived experience. A foreword by celebrated photographer Hannes Lochner sets the tone: this is work created in the real wild, not behind a vehicle, fence, or lodge veranda.

Grobler's blend of scientific curiosity, poetic instinct, and emotional honesty has already marked him as one of Africa's compelling new voices. *Eden* cements that reputation. It is a tribute to wilderness, a call to memory, and - quietly - a call to action.

This *Eden* is not mythical. It is real. It still breathes. And, as Grobler reminds us, it is worth protecting - not just for the land's sake, but for the part of ourselves that only the wild can reach.

Book Stats: Wildlife Book (Coffee Table Book) - Hard Cover, HPH Publishing, 224 pages, 325 x 265mm, selling at ZAR 1450.00



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Energy vs. Ecosystem: Must Eskom Destroy Limpopo’s Kruger Corridor to Keep the Lights On?

Adam Cruise

Eskom’s proposed transmission line in Limpopo illustrates the cruel paradox of South Africa’s energy dilemma: a coal-dependent grid already fuelling climate change is now being expanded in ways that further destroy biodiversity.

South Africa stands at a crossroads. On one side lies the urgent need to stabilise the country’s electricity supply; on the other is a critically pressing obligation to safeguard biodiversity as a vital prerequisite for continued life on Earth - a commitment enshrined in the 2023 White Paper on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and the Kruger to Canyons Biosphere Reserve, a Unesco-designated conservation area, to safeguard the future for the next generations of all species, including our own.

Now, these two imperatives are colliding head-on.

Eskom, South Africa’s state-owned power utility, is pursuing a 131km, 400kV transmission line through Limpopo’s Mopani and Sekhukhune districts - a plan first conceived in 2012 but repeatedly delayed. Despite missed deadlines and mounting criticism, the project remains on the table. Conservation groups and landowners warn that the proposed routes will slice through some of the country’s most ecologically significant and economically valuable wilderness.

A fragile corridor at risk

This is no ordinary tract of bushveld. It connects the Kruger National Park with other protected areas within the Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area, forming part of a broader wildlife corridor that sustains critically rare species such as African wild dogs, pangolins, vultures and the fabled white lions of the Timbavati.

For local communities, this landscape is more than scenic beauty; it underpins a thriving ecotourism economy, providing jobs and stability in a region where alternatives are scarce. Overhead powerlines would not only scar the landscape that sustains livelihoods, but also fragment the habitats that sustain the regional ecological balance and web of life.

A process under fire

While environmental lawyers point to procedural violations in the environmental review, conservationists highlight the deeper issue: the devaluation of living ecosystems as expendable terrain for industrial progress.

The Global White Lion Protection Trust – a nonprofit that has consolidated nine title



Conservation groups and landowners warn that Eskom’s proposed new powerline will slice through some of the country’s most ecologically significant and economically valuable wilderness (above): Photo: iStock
Linda Tucker (below): Image supplied.

deeds of critical biodiversity land into a contiguous wildlife corridor registered under South Africa’s Protected Areas Act, which carries the highest level of legal protection – was recently informed that this nationally protected nature reserve is in the direct path of Eskom’s proposed line.

“Healthy ecosystems are not a luxury,” says Linda Tucker, CEO of the trust. “They are the key to our planet’s survival. Damaging nature-sensitive areas denies the next generation a healthy future.”

Despite these legal protections, the area now faces what Tucker calls “catastrophic disruption” – an act of environmental injustice serving “the short-term gain at the



A file photo of Assegaia, an apex male in the Timbavati white lion reserve.
Photo: Jason Turner

expense of the Earth”.

The myth of community benefit

Eskom maintains that the powerline will create an energy hub to supply nearby communities. Yet maps tell a different story: the route runs directly between two major mining operations, Merensky and Foskor. Far from rural electrification, the line appears designed to secure energy for industrial expansion.

In so doing it cuts through conservation-designated land within the Kruger to Canyons Biosphere, violating not just ecological imperatives but also the ethical and legal commitments South Africa has made under both national and international frameworks.

Flawed science, fewer choices

Multiple expert submissions to the environmental impact assessment (EIA) have exposed glaring procedural flaws:

- No proper site visits on affected properties;
- “High” risks to raptors and ecotourism, acknowledged in special reports, downplayed in summary documents;
- Viable alternatives - such as underground cabling, renewable integration or upgrading existing pylons - dismissed without thorough analysis; and
- Less-destructive routes, previously identified, ignored.

South Africa’s EIA regulations require the consideration of viable alternatives during the scoping phase. Yet this process appears to have been reduced to a rubber-stamp exercise. Only two near-identical routes are under consideration, both running through biodiversity hotspots.

The 2023 Biodiversity White Paper obliges all developments to avoid biodiversity loss and account for full socioeconomic costs. This project’s disregard of these obligations raises uncomfortable questions: why were less-damaging routes dismissed? Why not upgrade existing lines along the same corridor? Who truly stands to benefit from the tender?

A clash of commitments

The question is not whether South Africa needs energy - it does - but whether energy expansion must come at the expense of environmental integrity.

Critics argue that Eskom’s proposal lacks data and fails to consider modern technological alternatives. In essence, South Africa is risking its ecological heritage for an outdated model of industrial expansion - one that benefits a few while undermining the long-term sustainability of the many.

Cont. on page 4

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Energy vs. Ecosystem: Must Eskom Destroy Limpopo’s Kruger Corridor to Keep the Lights On?



Powerlines lead from Eskom’s Lethabo coal-fired power station in the Free State on 13 April 2023. Photo: EPA / Kim Ludbrook.
A Wild Dog in the Kruger (right).Photo: Hilary Twine

Cont. from page 3

The timing could not be worse. As biodiversity loss accelerates and climate pressures mount, South Africa’s reputation as a conservation leader hangs in the balance. Approving this project would directly contradict the country’s commitments under the GBF, Unesco and its own Protected Areas Act - a triple blow to its global environmental credibility.

Under the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, nature reserves must maintain their “ecological integrity”. Large-scale habitat destruction or infrastructure violating a reserve’s management plan is explicitly prohibited. The proposed powerline - traversing a legally declared reserve - is therefore in clear conflict with this legislation.

The process resets but the problems remain

On 1 September 2025, Eskom’s environmental consultants, Nsovo Environmental Consulting, resubmitted the environmental authorisation application after the original process lapsed. They claimed that “the environmental context has not changed”. Conservationists call this assertion “patently false”.

In the intervening years, ecological pressures have intensified, international commitments have been signed, and key parcels of land have been formally designated as protected nature reserves. To proceed as if nothing has changed is both misleading and unlawful.

A cruel paradox

At a global level, South Africa has committed to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which aims to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030. Among its key targets are sustainable land-use planning (Target 1), conserving 30% of the planet’s land and waters (Tar-

get 3), and integrating biodiversity into all economic decision-making (Target 14).

The Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF), established to finance these goals, supports developing nations like South Africa in achieving them. By pushing a destructive infrastructure project through a Unesco biosphere, the country risks breaching its obligations – risking future biodiversity funding and international support.

This is the cruel paradox of South Africa’s energy dilemma: a coal-dependent grid already fuelling climate change is now being expanded in ways that further destroy biodiversity. The country faces a double hit – burning fossil fuels that erode ecosystems through global warming, while running new powerlines through the very wilderness areas that mitigate those impacts.

The road ahead

If South Africa wishes to remain a global conservation leader and premier ecotourism destination, Eskom’s proposal must be reconsidered.

Sustainable energy should illuminate the future, not destroy the natural heritage on which that future depends.

This article was previously published by the Daily Maverick/Our Burning Planet/Eco-Hazards Op-Ed

Dr Adam Cruise is an investigative environmental journalist, travel writer and academic. He has contributed to a number of international publications, including National Geographic and The Guardian, covering diverse topics from the plight of elephants, rhinos and lions in Africa to coral reef rejuvenation in Indonesia. Cruise is a Doctor of Philosophy, specialising in animal and environmental ethics, and is the editor of the online Journal of African Elephants.



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Expansive riverfront home with open-plan lounge, dining, kitchen and scullery with courtyard. Covered patio with boma, pool and uninterrupted views. Air-conditioned bedrooms with private decks, and a guest room or study. Includes traverse rights into 1,300ha Big 4 reserve for exceptional game drives.
Michelle Severin - 083 469 3821 Ref: 2411374



SOLE MANDATE

CANYON GAME RESERVE R 2 800 000
Bedrooms 3 | Bathrooms 2.5 | Floor: 275 m²

This comfortable home has a lounge, open plan kitchen, upstairs library and large patio. The house has a new thatch roof and there are solar panels, 5kVa inverter and 5kVa batteries. The views from the spacious patio are towards the Drakensberg mountains, and a large Tamboti tree.
Rob Severin - 083 469 3820 Ref: 2344618



SOLE MANDATE

KAMPERSRUS R 4 300 000
Beds 4 | Baths 2 | Floor: 274 m² | Stand: 1,625 m²

Spacious home with open-plan living areas, well-finished kitchen, scullery and guest loo. Large windows capture mountain views. Upstairs rooms open to a balcony, while a large rooftop patio offers sweeping 360° vistas. Features landscaped garden, powered shed, ample covered parking.
Calin Leppan - 082 824 9482 Ref: 2433836



SOLE MANDATE

CENTRAL HOEDSPRUIT R 1 900 000
Bedrooms 2 | Bathrooms 1.5 | Floor size: 106 m²

Spacious duplex with open-plan living area, modern kitchen and study nook. Lounge opens to private patio and access to the communal garden. Bedrooms and full bathroom upstairs, guest loo downstairs, private courtyard and covered carport. Secure complex with easy access to amenities.
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SOLE MANDATE

LISSATABA NATURE R 3 080 000
RESERVE Beds 2 | Baths 2 | Floor: 162 m²

Brand-new, low-maintenance bush home with central living area and open-plan kitchen. Set on a 7,500m² full-title stand within a 2,500 ha reserve. Includes two en-suite chalets with aircons, patios, and outdoor showers. Features include double carport, large boma, paved walkways, tool shed.
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KAMPERSRUS R 2 750 000
Bedrooms 2 | Bathrooms 2 | Floor size: 125 m²

Charming thatched home with open-plan living, scullery, covered patio, and swimming pool in a lush garden. Features include air conditioning, solar system with panels, inverter and batteries, water storage tanks, viewing deck with bar, double carport, alarm, and versatile outside room.
Jason Jones - 083 267 4794 Ref: 2411987



ZANDSPRUIT VALLEY R 2 250 000
Bedrooms 2 | Bathrooms 1 | Floor size: 98 m²

Modern home on a spacious stand with open-plan living area and well-equipped kitchen. Features fans and aircons, covered patio overlooking lovely garden, and double automated garage. Conveniently located near town and amenities.
Michelle Herb - 071 652 9140 Ref: 2425474



MODITLO WILDLIFE R6 200 000
ESTATE Beds 3 | Baths 3 | Floor size: 290 m²

Elevated home with beautiful bushveld and mountain views. Features spacious open-plan lounge, dining room and kitchen, scullery, a bar, large patio, and pool, plus a boma for outdoor evenings. Modern bedrooms open to the bush, with a separate private guest room.
Michelle Severin - 083 469 3821 Ref: 2430164



NDLOVUMZI NATURE R 4 000 000
RESERVE Beds 4 | Baths 3 | Floor: 125 m²

This 21 hectare Olifants river property offers stunning views, a beautiful garden, and riverine tree surroundings. The property includes a 2-bedroom main house and a separate 2-bedroom cottage, as well as an expansive entertainment area with braai, pizza oven, dining area and pool.
Jason Jones - 083 267 4794 Ref: 2330912



WILD RIVERS NATURE R 8 200 000
RESERVE Beds 5 | Baths 5 | Floor: 323 m²

Exceptional bush home on 1 hectare stand overlooking the Blyde river. Features open-plan living, plunge pool, patios, braai areas, staff chalet, tool room and a netted garden. Located in a secure 2,500 hectare reserve with game and birdlife. Great for permanent living or as holiday home.
Rob Severin - 083 469 3820 Ref: 2404188



RENTAL

RAPTOR'S VIEW WILDLIFE R 25 000 pm
ESTATE Beds 3 | Baths 3 | Furnished

Available immediately, not pet friendly - Open-plan lounge and kitchen flow onto a deck and pool with mountain views, plus a separate dining room and study. Bedrooms are en-suite. Solar system powers the home except the pool. Includes storeroom, two carports, and tenant-paid utilities.
Michelle Herb - 071 652 9140 Ref: 2434176



RENTAL

ZANDSPRUIT BUSH & AERO ESTATE R 50 000 pm
Beds 3 | Baths 2 | Furnished

Subject to availability (no pets) - Open-plan living with fully equipped kitchen and scullery. Covered patio, pool and outdoor dining area for relaxed bushveld living. All rooms have air-conditioning and fans. Located in a tranquil wildlife setting with free-roaming plains game.
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The Agama That Stole the Show — And the 2026 K2C CYCLE TOUR



The incredible art piece created by Warren Cary for the K2C Cycle Tour (above).

Lovelle Henderson

Anyone wandering into Hoedspruit artist Warren Cary’s studio recently might have thought a small reptile had escaped onto his drawing board. But no - that startlingly lifelike “koggelmander” taking shape is the star of the Rotary K2C 2026 Cycle Tour.

Observers say it was a moment: the creature seemed to step out of the page, as if honoured and ready to marshal 150 cyclists when they roll out on 20th June 2026, pedalling a full 100 km through the beautiful Timbavati, Thornybush and Kapama - landscapes the agama itself calls home.

And the excitement didn’t stop there. When designer and curator Stephanie

Hawkins-Mollett unveiled the 2026 cycling kit - the agama bursting across the fabric like it owned the place - the whole event suddenly felt charged with new energy. If ever a fundraiser had a mascot with attitude, this is it.

But here’s the thing - the southern blue-headed agama (*Acanthocercus atricollis*), affectionately known as the “bloukop koggelmander”, is no ordinary lizard. Males turn an electric, iridescent blue in breeding season - a colour so bold you’d swear someone had dipped them in paint. They’re also notorious head-bobbers, using their flashy displays to court females and warn off the guys who push their luck.

They live in tight little colonies, each ruled by a dominant male who maintains his ha-

rem of females and juveniles like a strict but charismatic landlord. Although naturally wary, they’re surprisingly relaxed around humans - curious even - which probably explains why so many Hoedspruit residents have a story about “their” local agama.

One resident recently got quite the fright when she rounded a bend in Raptors View and found one of these blue-headed beauties sunning himself in the middle of the road, entirely unbothered by oncoming traffic. The standoff ended only when the lizard was gently ushered off the gravel and back to safety - a reminder that their natural predators may be snakes and monkeys, but cars are an altogether modern deadly hazard.

Agamas are more than just photogenic - in

parts of Africa they’re considered economically valuable, traded for food and traditional medicine. But here in the Lowveld, they’ve found their way into something far more joyful - a community event that raises funds, lifts spirits, and gets people outdoors and together.

So, why not saddle up and ride with the Agamas in 2026? There’s plenty of time to gather your friends and family, come up with a suitably wild team name, and start training for a day you’ll talk about for years.

The pelotons are already filling fast, so book early if you want a slot in this unforgettable Lowveld adventure – the K2C Cycle Tour.

For more information on the event go to www.k2c-cycletour.co.za

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Funds are raised by Hoedspruit Rotary for conservation and social upliftment

Charitable Giving

‘What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.’

With these words by the late Nelson Mandela top of mind in a month leading up to gifting at Christmas, how can you and your family take part in charitable giving?

Many people only give away some of their wealth after they die by way of bequests in their wills to charities of their choice.

Others regard philanthropic giving as vital during their lifetime. Environmental causes benefit in terms of research on the topic while donors are alive, with many donors

also taking a more hands-on approach, by giving their time and effort to the causes they believe in.

Governments around the world, including South Africa, support giving by granting tax breaks on donations to tax exempt charitable organisations.

It is important to confirm if a charitable organisation is tax exempt and comply with Section 18A of the Income Tax Act in South Africa before donating to them, if you would like to enjoy these tax breaks. Donations to such organisations will not be subject to donations tax or capital gains tax in the hands of the donor, and will not be subject to estate duty in the estate of the deceased giver. Such donations can be claimed as tax deductions against taxable income by the donor up to certain limits if the organisation

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equitable and sustainable future in which both people and nature thrive. Have a look at their website at www.wwf.org.za. You can donate or support them by buying nature-positive gifts, with sustainability at the core of what they create. What a wonderful “alternative” present for your loved ones for Christmas.

Wishing you all the gift of a safe, joyful and blessed holiday break and Christmas season.

Marteen Michau is a Trustee of WWF. If you would like to find out more about specific projects of WWF to contribute to, or for more information about WWF and what they do, please email Michelle Govender at mgovender@wwf.org.za.

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Locally rooted in the heart of the Lowveld

Phalaubeni’s New Chapter Begins: Rewriting Their Narrative From Conflict to Conservation Champions



Vusi Tshabalala and Lauren Booth

On 8 November 2025, the community of Phalaubeni in Limpopo marked a milestone many thought impossible just a few years ago: the official launch of its community-led Eco-Tourism Office and newly established hiking trails. But the true story is not about buildings or trails - it is about a profound shift in identity and mindset.

For decades, Phalaubeni was known as a Human-Wildlife Conflict hotspot bordering Kruger National Park, Letaba Ranch and Mthimkhulu Game Reserve. With broken fences, limited livelihoods and conservation tainted by the sense of exclusion, the landscape was viewed mainly as a place from which to extract to sustain livelihoods - firewood, grazing and in many cases, bushmeat. Illegal wildlife trade and unmanaged access became symptoms of the deeper socio-economic pressure on the community. But something remarkable has unfolded here.

A quiet transformation takes root

The turning point began in early 2024 when the community engaged in a Safe Systems assessment, facilitated through the WWF South

Africa Khetha Programme and supported by the K2C Biosphere Region. Over three days, residents, leaders and partners confronted hard questions about their relationship with wildlife, land, safety and each other.

For the first time, the community mapped out the challenges and the possibilities. They identified seven priorities that could fundamentally reshape daily life: securing fences, strengthening communication, improving grazing, building skills, and critically, exploring eco-tourism as a new livelihood pathway.

This was the moment Phalaubeni began to see its landscape not as something to be survived, but as something of value - an asset with the power to generate income, pride and protection.

The celebration of a new era

That shift was on full display at the launch. Community members arrived in large numbers, filling the courtyard of what is now the Eco-Tourism Office - a once-abandoned structure refurbished through collective effort and partner support.

With Headman Million Mabunda and the Community Development Forum leadership at the helm, the ribbon cutting symbolised far more than a project opening. It represented a



Hiking trail baobab, hiking trail view point (middle) and Ecotourism guides:Images supplied

reclaiming of identity: Phalaubeni as custodians of nature, not victims of it.

From there, the community moved to the Phalaubeni Dam, which is the newly established trailhead, to experience their landscape anew. Five trained nature-based tour guides led guests along a 5km route, sharing stories of termite mounds, ecological processes, sacred baobab trees and the history embedded in every ridge and rock.

For many of the residents, it was a moment of revelation. “It doesn’t feel like we are still in my community,” one resident said. “It feels like a place far from here.”

That sense of rediscovery and wonder captured what words could not. This was not simply a new tourism product - it was pride returning home.

Elders remember while the youth reimagine

One of the most impactful events unfolded when elderly residents were transported to the “koppie” viewpoint - some had not visited these places in decades. Childhood stories resurfaced. Landmarks were remembered. A sense of belonging, long overshadowed by conflict and fear, found its voice again.

The day ended in a joyful colour-splash celebration, where children, youth, elders, guides and partners painted themselves onto the canvas of a shared, hopeful future. A community marking an inspiring new beginning.

A model for community-led conservation

Phalaubeni’s transformation demonstrates what becomes possible when communities unpack their own challenges, leadership unites around a shared vision, partners listen and support rather than impose, and nature is repositioned as a source of livelihood that should be protected, rather than harvested unchecked for survival.

Today, five local guides have been upskilled. Trails are open. The office is functional. Part-



nerships with organisations such as Elephant Alive, Global Conservation Corps, SAEON, Octopus Horse Riding, and the K2C Biosphere Region have supported this process thus far and continue to strengthen Phalaubeni’s capacity and confidence.

But the greatest achievement is intangible: a mindset shift at community level.

Phalaubeni, once known for poaching, harvesting and breaching fences, now speaks openly about protecting wildlife, maintaining boundaries and welcoming visitors to experience its natural heritage. This shift did not happen overnight. It is the product of brave conversations, honest reflection and the courage to imagine something different.

Looking ahead

Over the coming months, the Eco-Tourism Office aims to develop booking systems, expand guide training, improve trail infrastructure and market the product to regional networks. Longer-term plans include cultural tours, overnight experiences and deeper integration of tourism with conservation monitoring.

The vision is clear: a thriving community that benefits from safeguarding the ecosystem it calls home.

A story of hope for the Greater Kruger

Phalaubeni’s journey is an inspiring reminder that transformation is possible, even in places long defined by conflict. When communities are given tools, trust, and the space to lead, they demonstrate resilience and creativity far beyond what external actors alone can achieve.

The people of Phalaubeni deserve recognition for this extraordinary shift. Their story offers hope for other communities across the Greater Kruger landscape, showing that coexistence is not a distant ideal, but a practical, achievable, community-driven reality.

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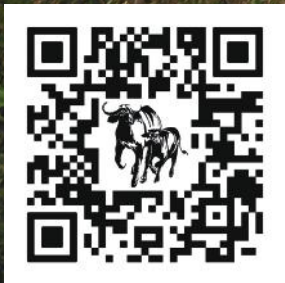
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A Year That Shapes a Lifetime: EcoTraining’s Professional Field Guide Course



EcoTraining landscae view: Image Scott Ramsay

For young South Africans standing at the threshold of adulthood, the choice of what to do after matric can feel overwhelming. Some will step directly into university pathways; others sense that their future lies not in lecture halls, but in landscapes, among wildlife, weather, and the rhythms of the natural world. For those seeking a purposeful gap year or a launchpad into eco-tourism and conservation, EcoTraining’s 1-Year Professional Field Guide Course offers an extraordinary alternative.

This accredited programme, open to anyone 18 and older, gives school leavers the chance to trade fluorescent lights for firelight, classrooms for ecosystems, and routine for real-world experience. It is not a detour from career development; it *is* career development, delivered through full immersion in nature across four possible EcoTraining’s wilderness camps.

Unmatched Immersion in Wild Places

As a powerful post-school path, few experiences can match the depth and authenticity of a year spent learning in the bush. EcoTraining students live across multiple biomes, absorbing ecological understanding in the only place it truly exists - outdoors. “There is no substitute for time spent in nature,” says Anton Lategan, Managing Director of EcoTraining. “A young person who learns to read a landscape gains awareness, maturity, and confidence that stays with them for life.”

Multiple Certifications in One Transformative Year

The course is deliberately broad, giving students a full suite of industry-relevant skills and qualifications, from Wilderness Medicine and FGASA Nature Site Guide (NQF2), to firearms handling, tracking, birding, and progress toward FGASA Apprentice Trails Guide status. “We build competence step by step,” Lategan explains. “By the end of the year students have the qualifications, but most importantly, also have the lived experience to

use them responsibly.”

Work Integrated Learning: Experience Employers Value

One of the programme’s defining strengths is its 5 - 6 month Work Integrated Learning (WIL) placement. Students join operational teams at EcoTraining’s partner properties, working alongside seasoned professionals in real lodge, conservation, and guiding environments. This is where theory becomes confidence. They gain exposure to day-to-day lodge operations, conservation management, guiding activities, and guest interactions - the skills the industry actively looks for. “Real credibility comes from real work,” says Lategan. “A placement allows students to understand what the industry actually requires and to prove to themselves that they can meet those standards. This is where it all comes together. A student becomes a young professional - someone who can operate ethically, responsibly, and with confidence.”

Industry Relevance

Graduates walk out with the combination employers consistently ask for: recognised accreditation and proven field experience. “Guiding and conservation are professions,” says Lategan. “We hold our students to professional standards because the industry - and the environment - deserve nothing less.”

Is This Course for You?

EcoTraining’s career programme is designed for young adults (18+) who want their gap year or post-school journey to mean something - who want adventure with purpose, hands-on learning, and a meaningful entry into eco-tourism, conservation, or wildlife guiding. It suits those who prefer the outdoors to lecture halls, who want real-world readiness, and who value a year that grows both their skills and their sense of self. **Your Year in the Bush** Throughout the year, students rotate between EcoTraining’s wilderness camps,



Pridelands:Image Tayla MacCurdy

each offering different ecological lessons, landscapes, and species. Under expert instructors, they develop the fieldcraft, safety awareness, and ecological insight essential for guiding. “The bush is the most honest teacher you’ll ever have,” says Lategan. “It rewards attention, patience, and integrity. Those qualities shape strong guides - and strong human beings.”

What Can You Graduate With

- You could come away with the following certification:
- Wilderness Medicine Level 1 & 2
 - Nature Site Guide NQF2 (CATHS-SETA) qualification
 - FGASA Nature Site Guide NQF2 Certificate
 - Firearm Proficiency certificates
 - FGASA Advanced Rifle Handling Competency
 - FGASA Apprentice Trails Guide status
 - EcoTracker Track and Sign, Trailing, and FGASA Tracker Certificates

“Every one of these qualifications represents hours of commitment,” says Lategan.

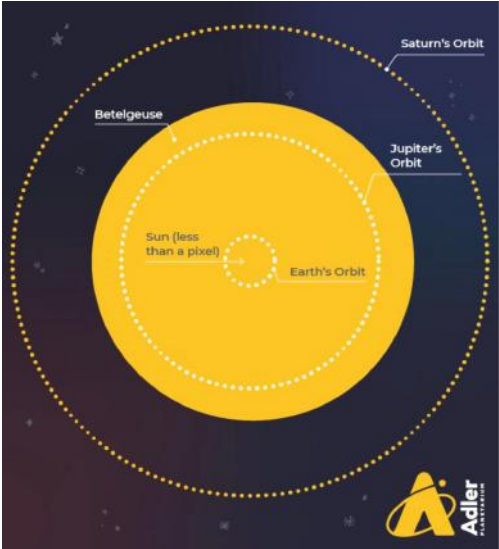
“Students earn them - and that pride shows in their work.”

Entry Requirements

EcoTraining’s Professional Field Guide Course develops far more than technical ability. It builds ecological intelligence, emotional maturity, and the sense of responsibility required to work in wild, living landscapes. “This year doesn’t just train guides,” Lategan reflects. “It develops capable people - individuals who know where they stand, how they contribute, and how to walk respectfully in nature.” For school leavers seeking purpose, adventure, and a strong professional foundation, this programme offers a qualification, as well as a defining year that echoes long after the students leave the bush.

The next course dates are as follows:
5 January 2026 - 15 December 2026;
1 February 2026 - 22 December 2026;
1 August 2026 - 4 July 2027;
1 October 2026 - 6 September 2027
For further information please contact: +27 (0)13 752 2532; enquiries@ecotraining.co.za; www.ecotraining.co.za.

Cosmic Fairy Lights



Betegeuse, Rigel & Aldebaran (top left): Image supplied.

Star Colour (above): Image sciencenotes.org.

Celestial Christmas Tree (right): Image supplied.

The Size of Betelgeuse (below left): Image Adler Planetarium.



Ben Coley
Celestial Events SA

Every summer Christmas in South Africa comes with its own traditions: evening braais, warm nights outdoors, and the soft glow of festive lights decorating homes and gardens. But while we hang strings of coloured bulbs and ornaments on our trees, the night sky above us is already glowing with its own natural Christmas palette - stars shining in brilliant blue, crisp white, warm yellow, glowing orange, and deep red.

The colour of a Christmas light bulb is determined by the pigment in the glass or the LED that emits a certain wavelength. Stars, on the other hand, get their colours from one fundamental property: temperature.

It may seem counterintuitive, but in astronomy, blue means hot, and red means cool. The hotter the object, the shorter the wavelength of light it emits. Short wavelengths look blue or white; longer wavelengths appear red.

If you heat a metal bar, it first glows red, then orange, then white as it becomes hot-

ter. A star works in exactly the same way. So, when you see a blue star in the summer sky, think of it as the cosmic equivalent of turning your Christmas lights up to maximum brightness.

Here are some stars to look out for this December and January that perfectly illustrate the classic Christmas colours:

Rigel - The Bright Blue Light of the Christmas Sky
Colour: Blue **Constellation:** Orion

Rigel shines with a cold, electric-blue glow—the same icy tone you find in bright blue LED Christmas lights. Despite lowveld temperatures, its colour mimics frost on windows in northern-hemisphere Christmas cards. As a blue supergiant, Rigel burns ferociously hot, pouring out blue-white energy that feels almost like the laser-bright sparkle of tinsel catching the light. If the sky were a Christmas tree, Rigel would be the dazzling blue bulb that stands out no matter where you stand.

Sirius - The Brilliant White Fairy Light
Colour: White **Constellation:** Canis Major

Sirius, the brightest star in the night sky-

risers like the mother of all fairy lights. It's pure white glare is the celestial version of a brand-new string of LED lights plugged in for the first time. On warm summer nights, unstable air can make Sirius flicker in red and green flashes, like a shimmering fibre-optic Christmas ornament.

Capella - The Soft Yellow Candle Flame
Colour: Yellow **Constellation:** Auriga

For a gentle yellow glow - the colour of classic golden fairy lights - look for Capella, low in the northern sky. It shines like the flame of a Christmas candle: warm, steady, and welcoming. It's the kind of warm, buttery tone you find in the bulbs used to create that cosy "Christmas at home" atmosphere.

Aldebaran - The Orange Bauble on the Cosmic Tree
Colour: Orange **Constellation:** Taurus

Aldebaran glows with a striking orange tone, like to a vintage orange glass bauble that catches the firelight beautifully on a Christmas tree. As a red giant, Aldebaran's outer layers have cooled, giving it the appearance of a glowing ember. It is steady,

warm, and instantly recognisable: an orange decoration hanging proudly in the dark sky.

Betelgeuse - The Deep Red Christmas Lantern
Colour: Red **Constellation:** Orion

Betelgeuse marks the shoulder of Orion and shines a deep, smouldering red, like a glowing paper lantern or a red Christmas candle left burning on a still evening. This red supergiant is enormous. If it were to replace our Sun in the centre of the solar system, its diameter would stretch as far as Jupiter's orbit. In the sky it stands out like a vibrant ruby glittering under festive lights.

With these five stars, the night sky gives us the full spectrum of Christmas colours. So, this holiday season, take a moment to step outside after dark and look up these glittering cosmic decorations draped across the heavens - a festive display billions of years in the making!

See Celestial Events SA advert for contact details.

Five Birds that Capture the Spirit of the South African Festive Season



Credit: BirdLife South Africa

John Kinghorn
Avitourism Project Manager: BirdLife South Africa

As the year draws to a close and we settle into the festive season, nature enters the celebration alongside us, quietly, beautifully, and often in ways we overlook. While we decorate our homes, gather with loved ones, and pause to reflect on the year gone by, the natural world is equally alive with colour, movement, and song. In South Africa, where the festive season coincides with the height of summer, our landscapes burst with reproductive energy, blooming plants, the remarkable spectacle of birds in their breeding plumage, and the arrival of our migratory visitors from the Palearctic and central Africa.

From brilliantly coloured feathers to joyful calls that echo from gardens and wetlands, certain bird species embody the spirit of this season so naturally that they almost feel made for it. Here are five locally occurring birds whose appearance, behaviour, or symbolism beautifully echo the essence of the South African festive season.

Southern Red Bishop (*Euplectes orix*) - The Bird of Festive Colour
No bird embodies festive season splendour quite like the charismatic southern red bishop. Males, sporting vivid scarlet and contrasting black breeding regalia, mirror the classic colours that we all associate with the festive season - thinking of wrapping tinsel around your Christmas tree? Why not visit your local wetland or dam and see how colonies turn it into a glowing patch of red? Their bold presence and lively displays

are tangible examples of the excitement and visual vibrancy that can be seen around every corner.

Cape Robin-Chat (*Dessonornis caffer*) - The Spirit of Warmth and Togetherness
The Cape robin-chat is synonymous with South African gardens, often appearing on stoops or hopping about near social holiday gatherings. With its cheerful call and familiar presence, it represents home, warmth, and hospitality, which are all central to the festive period. Its orange chest colouration also adds a gentle splash of seasonally associated colour, reminiscent of European robins, long associated with Christmas imagery.

African Emerald Cuckoo (*Chrysococcyx cupreus*) - A Flash of Festive Green
“Pretty! Geor-gie!” rings the iconic call of the African emerald cuckoo, almost as if the bird itself is complimenting the season. The male’s shimmering green and gold plumage aligns perfectly with classic festive season palettes. Its sudden arrival in forest and wooded habitats during the summer months adds an element of surprise and delight. Do you have your kids running around the house looking for mischievous “elves”? Why not have them try to find the mischievous African emerald cuckoo instead!

Knysna Turaco (*Tauraco corythaix*) - The Bird of Festive Luxury
Few birds look as though they were professionally designed by artists or interior designers, yet somehow the Knysna turaco comes close. Its deep green body, crimson primary feathers, and regal crest create a colour palette that feels unmistakably festive. Found

in our country’s lush Afromontane forests, the Knysna turaco represents celebration, colour, and abundance, which all speak to how emotionally beneficial and regenerative this time of year can be for many.

White-bellied Sunbird (*Cinnyris talatala*) - Nature’s own Ornament
Sunbirds are the jewels of South Africa’s biomes, and whilst relatively common across most of its range, the white-bellied sunbird is by no means an exception. Males glitter with iridescent blues and greens, resembling living festive season ornaments flitting among flowers. Their tireless nectar-feeding habits mirror the energy and brightness that the festive season brings with it. At the same time, their presence in gardens allows many South Africans to enjoy holiday “decorations”, except these

decorations are crafted entirely by nature, and fly from tree to tree.

While Christmas in South Africa is marked by sunshine, summer blooms, and outdoor gatherings rather than snow and sleighbells, our birdlife offers its own uniquely local symbolism. These five species - through their colours, calls, and seasonal behaviours - bring the spirit of celebration into forests, wetlands, and backyards across our incredible country.

Most importantly, may they remind us to pause, listen, and appreciate the magic that nature weaves into our lives, and into the festive season.



Wasps 101: Nature’s Pest Control



Paper wasp queen (left), mud dauber wasp nest (top) and female velvet ant (above)
Images supplied

Tim Baynham
Wildlife Safety Solutions

Wasps in southern Africa span many families, from solitary hunters to social nestbuilders. They play a vital ecological role that extends far beyond their reputation for stinging. As highly effective predators, they naturally regulate populations of insects and other invertebrates. Many wasps also act as pollinators while visiting flowers for nectar, contributing to plant reproduction and biodiversity. Together, these functions make wasps essential to maintaining healthy and balanced ecosystems.

The sociable paper wasps are some of the most fascinating and hardworking members of the insect world. Living in small, cooperative colonies, they follow a clear social structure. The colony is usually started by a single female, the queen, while female workers forage, defend, and expand the nest. Their nests, often found under roof eaves or branches, are crafted from finely chewed plant fibers mixed with saliva, forming delicate open combs that look like miniature paper umbrellas. Despite their elegant ar-

chitecture, paper wasps can be fiercely protective of their nests. Approach the nest too closely, and workers will issue rapid warning flights before resorting to swift, accurate stings. Most stings only result in pain and localized swelling however there is always a risk of an allergic reaction in sensitive individuals. The pain usually subsides within 10 to 15 minutes whereas the swelling may persist for a number of days. Their diet is a mix of sweet nectar for energy and soft-bodied insects, especially caterpillars and spiders, which they chew into protein-rich meals for their larvae.

The mud dauber wasps are solitary architects, crafting some of the most distinctive nests in the insect world. Unlike social paper wasps, mud daubers work alone, gathering tiny pellets of wet mud to build multi chambered nests on walls, rocks, and rafters. Once a chamber is complete, the female stocks it with paralyzed spiders or worms, often several per cell, creating a fresh pantry for her developing larva. Despite their intimidating appearance, mud daubers are remarkably non-aggressive and rarely sting unless physically handled. With no colony

to defend, they spend their days hunting spiders, collecting mud, and carefully sealing their nest chambers before moving on to build more. Their efficient hunting, unique nesting behaviour, and gentle nature make the mud daubers both ecologically important and surprisingly charming members of the wasp community.

The potter wasps are remarkable solitary builders, well known for crafting tiny clay pots that serve as nurseries for their young. Using mud collected from puddles or damp soil, the female shapes perfect jug-like chambers on branches, walls, or rocks. Inside each pot, she places a single egg and stocks it with paralyzed caterpillars or beetle larvae, fresh food for the developing wasp larva. Potter wasps are calm and seldom sting unless handled.

The so called “Velvet ants”, despite their name, are in fact not ants but rather wasps. The females are wingless, covered in fine and often brightly coloured hairs, giving them an appearance similar to ants, hence their common name. The males are winged and have a more typical wasp appearance. Velvet ants are

known for their striking aposematic colouration, formidable sting, and intriguing natural history.

The world hosts an extraordinary diversity of wasp species, from the imposing “tarantula hawks” to the exquisitely iridescent cuckoo wasps. Each plays a distinct and essential ecological role, contributing to the balance and health of natural ecosystems. Far from being creatures to fear, wasps exemplify the intricate balance of nature and deserve our respect and appreciation for the vital ecological functions they perform.

For more information on scorpions, snakes, spiders and other venomous animals, awareness training and talks, as well as a professional 24hrs problem snake rescue service, contact the author at Wildlife Safety Solutions: 073 934 6156; info@wildlifesafetysolutions.co.za; www.wildlifesafetysolutions.co.za, FB Wildlife Safety Solutions, Instagram [wildlife_safety_solutions](https://www.instagram.com/wildlife_safety_solutions)

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The Neighbour Hoed Opens — And Hoedspruit Comes Out to Play



If anyone doubted whether Hoedspruit needed a new place to gather, laugh, eat, sip, shop, mingle and generally let its hair down, the opening of The Neighbour Hoed at Zandspruit Boulevard settled it. The place launched with a bang - live music blaring, pizzas spinning out of the oven, drinks flowing under the old fig tree, and enough foot traffic to convince even the sceptics that Hoedspruit has a brand-new destination on its hands.

The crowd arrived early and filled the space in that familiar Lowveld way: kids darting around barefoot, dogs trotting between legs, and adults balancing cold craft brews with paper plates stacked high with food. The smell of wood-fired pizza drifted through the air, courtesy of the newly re-launched Yum Yum Truck, now permanently

parked on site (open daily from 12:00) and very clearly back in business. The queue literally never shrank - families, cyclists, office crews, and tourists lined up for their crispy-edged favourites. The music kept things honest - upbeat, a little wild, and just loud enough to feel like a celebration without drowning out the laughter. People moved between the different corners of the venue like they were exploring a mini festival: a drink here, a slice there, a chat under the fig tree, a wander into the gallery. And that gallery - The Art House - may have stolen a quiet part of the show. Opened officially on the same day, it offered a cool, contemporary counterpoint to the party outside. Understated walls, clean light, and a curated mix of established and emerging South African artists gave locals something

we've been craving: a proper creative space that doesn't apologise for being bold. More than one visitor was heard saying, "At last - a cultural home in Hoedspruit." Meanwhile The Shed (open from 7:00 AM daily), kept spirits high... literally. Drinks circulated generously beneath the towering fig that everyone instinctively migrated toward. Its broad canopy turned into an unofficial town square - the perfect perch for swapping stories, catching up with old friends, or simply people-watching with something cold in hand. By the time night settled in, the whole venue felt alive: conversations rolling, glasses clinking, slices disappearing as fast as they appeared, kids dancing, and that unmistakable sense that something new - and important - had just landed in Hoedspruit. The Neighbour Hoed isn't just a new spot.

It's shaping up to be the alternative hang-out: part gallery, part food hub, part chill-zone, part social heartbeat. With The Yum Yum Truck firing on all cylinders and The Art House adding serious cultural weight, the place is already looking like the "let's meet there" answer for almost any plan. The event organisers called the opening "a celebration of community spirit," highlighting the project's goal of creating a place where people can meet, share experiences, and enjoy the best of Hoedspruit's art, food, and culture. One thing is certain: Hoedspruit has a new destination - and it's open, humming, and ready for you.

All photographs by Emma Gatland

Lady Godiva's Horoscopes – 2026 The Year of Quiet Realignment

2026 doesn't arrive with a bang - but it lands with purpose. Small choices start shifting the bigger story. Things that felt stuck finally begin to move. People simplify: less noise, more clarity. Courage shows up in ordinary, everyday moments. And before you know it, you realise you've turned a major corner.

- Sagittarius (22 Nov – 21 Dec)**
Adventure calls, but this time you're more strategic than impulsive. A partnership - romantic or professional - shifts into a stronger lane. Finances improve with a clever restructuring of your habits. Trust your gut: if it says "go," go.
- Capricorn (22 Dec – 19 Jan)**
Your hard work matures into something visible and lasting. A leadership role presents itself; take it without underselling yourself. Home life steadies after you make one overdue decision. Health and stamina strengthen - consistency finally wins.
- Aquarius (20 Jan – 18 Feb)**
The year brings invention, disruption, and the freedom you've quietly craved. You break a pattern that's held you for years. Romance gets interesting - in the best way - if you stay open. A social circle shift puts the right people in your corner.
- Pisces (19 Feb – 20 Mar)**
2026 softens your anxiety and sharpens your purpose. Creativity soars - but this time you actually finish things. Work stabilises with a mentor or guide who sees your talent clearly. Listen to your intuition; it's loud and oddly accurate this year.
- Aries (21 Mar – 19 Apr)**
2026 nudges you to slow down just long enough to notice which fires you're actually fighting. A surprise opportunity late winter shows you what "aligned" really feels like. Relationships steady - but only if you drop the



- stubborn act. Finances lift after a smart risk mid-year finally pays off.
- Taurus (20 Apr – 20 May)**
This is your "build it properly" year - foundations, boundaries, budgets, the lot. Someone close leans on you more than usual, and you handle it with quiet grace. Career surprises you: what you thought was a detour becomes the main road. Expect a meaningful upgrade at home - new space, new comfort, or new peace.
- Gemini (21 May – 20 Jun)**
Expect powerful conversations that shift your direction more than you realise. Travel or movement sparks a fresh idea that grows legs

- fast. You're bold enough to say the thing you've avoided saying - and it liberates you. Watch your energy levels; your mind races faster than your body can keep up.
- Cancer (21 Jun – 22 Jul)**
2026 calls you to step into your own authority - no more hiding behind others' needs. Money tightens mid-year then opens suddenly; keep the faith. Family dynamics stabilise once you say what you mean, not what keeps the peace. A long-delayed personal project finally takes shape.
- Leo (23 Jul – 22 Aug)**
A golden year for visibility: people notice, opportunities follow. Your charm does half the

- work; discipline finishes the rest. Someone surprising becomes a powerful ally - treat that relationship well. Avoid impulsive spending when your confidence spikes.
- Virgo (23 Aug – 22 Sep)**
2026 brings a shift from "fixing" to "building." You finally work on your own dreams. A health routine sticks for the first time in years. Networking opens doors you didn't expect to walk through. Let go of being the quiet one - your voice carries weight this year.
- Libra (23 Sep – 22 Oct)**
Relationships deepen - some through harmony, some through honest conflict. Creativity returns like a long-lost friend. Work life sharpens: a new role or responsibility puts you back in balance. Avoid old people-pleasing traps; you've outgrown them.
- Scorpio (23 Oct – 21 Nov)**
A big internal shift sets you on a cleaner, more uncompromising path. 2026 is about pruning: fewer obligations, more intensity where it matters. Career direction clarifies after a dramatic early-year pivot. An emotional breakthrough mends something you thought was permanent.

- HOT TIPS FOR 2026 (For Everyone)**
1. Stop delaying the hard conversations - they free more energy than they cost.
 2. Declutter your digital life; it's quietly draining you more than your cupboards.
 3. If something feels "too small" for you this year, it probably is - level up.
 4. Strengthen one daily habit and one financial habit; both reshape the year.
 5. Make space for rest before the burnout signs arrive; not after.
 6. Say yes only to what feels aligned - you've paid your dues in the chaos years.

Plan Your Preventive Health Goals for 2026: A Fresh Start for a Healthier You

A New Year always brings a sense of renewal, but 2026 can be more than just another January reset. This year, make preventive health your priority. By taking small, consistent steps now, you can protect your long-term health and feel better every day.

Before choosing new goals, take a moment to understand where you're starting from. Think honestly about your current health - your energy levels, daily habits, recent doctor visits, and any symptoms you've been ignoring. Knowing your baseline makes it easier to set goals that actually work for you.

Your goals don't need to be huge; they just need to be practical. Using the SMART approach - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound - helps keep things simple and realistic. You might decide to walk for 20 to 30 minutes five days a week, add two servings of fruits or veg-

etables to your daily meals, schedule all recommended screenings on time, go to bed at the same hour each night to improve sleep, or practice stress-relief activities like deep breathing or stretching a few times a week. The clearer the goal, the easier it is to follow.

Exercise is one of the best tools for preventing chronic disease, but you don't need to become a marathon runner to benefit from it. Simply find ways to move that feel enjoyable and realistic - dancing in your living room, taking the dog on longer walks, or choosing activities that fit smoothly into your day. Consistent movement helps improve heart health, boosts your mood, and increases your energy levels.

Improving your nutrition doesn't require a strict or complicated diet. Focus on adding healthier choices rather than removing things you love. You can fill half your plate with fruits or vegetables, drink more water throughout the day, choose whole grains

more often, limit sugary snacks and drinks, or plan simple meals ahead of time. A few small, steady changes can lead to major improvements over the year.

Preventive screenings are another essential part of looking after your long-term health. Many conditions can be treated more effectively when found early, or even prevented entirely. Make 2026 the year you stay up to date with your annual physicals, vaccinations, blood pressure and cholesterol checks, diabetes screenings, and age- or history-appropriate cancer screenings such as mammograms or colonoscopies. If you're unsure which screenings you need, your primary care provider can guide you.

Health isn't only physical. Stress, burn-out, lack of sleep, and emotional strain can make achieving any goal feel impossible. Try building small habits that support mental wellness - limit screen time before bed, spend more time outdoors, keep a journal, take short breaks during the day, and stay

connected with friends and family. These small shifts make a noticeable difference in your overall well-being.

Remember to track your wins, not your mistakes. One off-day won't ruin your progress; what matters most is consistency. Track your habits in an app, a notebook, or even on a simple calendar on your fridge. Celebrate the small milestones - a full month of regular walks, sleeping better because of a consistent bedtime, or sticking to your meal planning. Progress doesn't need to be perfect to be meaningful.

You're also far more likely to stick with your goals when you involve others. Build a support team by sharing your plans with a friend, family member, or coworker, or by joining a group class at your local health centre. Accountability and encouragement make new habits easier - and a lot more enjoyable.

Wishing you a wonderfully healthy 2026!!!



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Kulani Makharinge 060 631 6874
Candice Kuschke (Lymphoedema Therapist) 071 382 8638

Orthotist

Marius Goddefroy 082 557 0309

Occupational Therapists

Kirsten Jordaan 084 208 4646
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7	5	8	2	6	3	4	9	1
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My 5 Sent

Oupa Bobbili

En doef daar is dit weer Die Feestyd van die jaar. Tyd vlieg as jy pret het nê? Daar is vier groot dae wat vir ons voorlê, Gelofte Dag, Kersdag, “Slaan Dag” en Nuwe Jaar. Twee is Christelike dae, maak nie saak hoe jy daarna kyk nie. Feite is feite. Twee is partytjie dae. Ek glo daar is drie groepe mense wat die tydperk aanbetref. Eerste groep, die mense wat die tydperk baie ernstig opneem en doen wat reg is. Tweede groep is wat net die partytjie sien in alles en die derde groep, gee nie om nie.

Ek weet nie in watse groep jy val nie, en eerlik gesproke gee ek glad nie om nie. Elke mense het sy reg hoe hulle die ty-

dperk wil hanteer en ek respekteer dit. Immers as jy bietjie waarde in jou het sal jy die regte ding op die regte tyd doen. Maak nie saak hoe jy na die tydperk kyk nie, spandeer kwaliteit tyd saam met jou geliefdes.

Jy het hard gewerk die jaar om hulle ietsie spesiaal te kan gee, en die duurste geskenk is jou onverdeelde aandag en tyd. Ja as jy ekstra geldjie het gebuik dit as jy wil. Maar moenie Januarie se salaris gaan mors nog voor jy dit gekry het nie. Onthou die jaar het 365 dae en die helfde daarvan behoort aan Januarie alleen.

Almal sê altyd “Hierdie is ‘n tyd van gee” waarheid ja, maar gee bietjie vir jou self ook iets. Reg deur die jaar word

daar aan die armes gegee, wonderlik. Dit is goeie waardes. Wat van jou, wat hard gewerk om die tyd met Gemak te kan ingaan? Die sediges sal sê jy is selfsugtig, ek sê vir jou “dit is ok”

Ek gaan somer oorseë die jaar. Ek het baie hard gewerk en dubbel so hard gespaar om te kan gaan. En voel glad nie sleg oor ek ‘n bietjie selfsugtig is nie. As jy moet weet hoeveel sjokolades ek moes opoffer sal jy my jammer kry. Hoewel keer het ons net by die huis gesit, want elke sent is waardevol vir die reis.

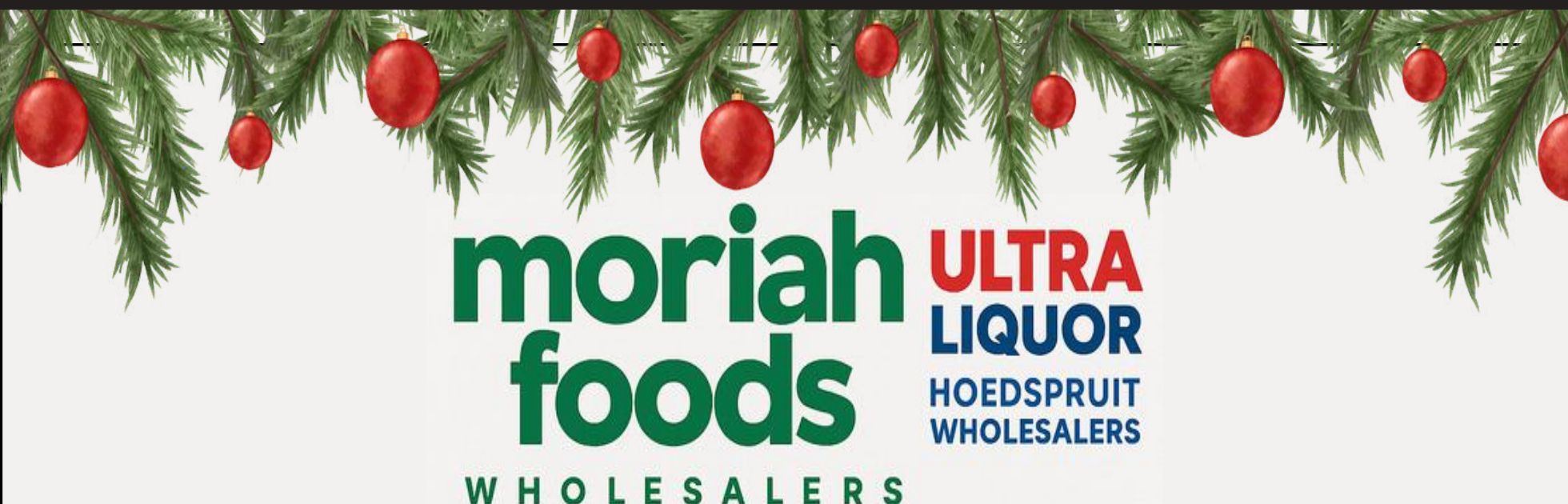
Maak nie saak wat jy doen in die feestyd nie, wees altyd respektvol teenoor ander mense. As jy wil suip, bly van die paaie af. Ons het genoeg trane gestort die jaar. As jy op vakansie gaan, wees veilig. As

jy by die huis bly, wees vrolik en rus. As jy werk, doen dit met oorgawe. Mense geniet die feestyd man, dit is die laaste die jaar. Nuwe jaar is die eerste van die volgende jaar, “Make it count”.

Moenie vergeet waarom die tydperk gaan nie. gelofte dag en Kersdag het groot betekenis in ons lewens, of jy dit wil glo of nie. kom ons betoon eer en respekt soos dit van ons verwag word. Maar asb stop die sedighedi en doen alles met vreugde. Onthou die beste geskenke, is tyd en onvoorwaardelike liefde. Dit kan jy nie toe draai en onder ‘n plastiek boom sit nie.

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