

Frontier Ecotourism *Presence*

Collar a carnivore, count herbivores and meet the experts of Zambia's million-hectare Busanga Plains



Zambia





Travel with Purpose

Celebrate 35 years of travelling with purpose

For the last 35 years – even when we started out in 1983 with just one old Land Rover – there has always been one overriding purpose to our ecotourism activities: to conserve and restore Africa's wilderness and wildlife.

This is something enshrined in our internal charter and vision statement and which undoubtedly beats in the heart of every single Wilderness Safaris employee.

So ... what better way to celebrate our 35th birthday than to indulge in 12 months of adventurous and impactful journeys to exciting destinations, accompanied by local experts and with unique, privileged behind-the-scenes access to conservation and community processes of Wilderness Safaris and our partners.

We considered the places we'd choose to be, when we'd choose to be there and with whom we would travel and came up with 12 itineraries with limited guest capacity that take in some truly spectacular destinations. The trips are fun, enlightening expeditions to interesting places that make a real difference to those same interesting places.

All proceeds will of course be channelled back to the conservation and community projects that we'll be exposed to.

In this Itinerary, we invite you to join us on the vast Busanga Plains to be part of the conservation initiatives that we support here. All funds raised from this itinerary go directly to the NGO *Zambian Carnivore Programme (ZCP)*.



Purpose itinerary #6

22 – 27 Oct 2018

Zambia

**Busanga Plains
(remote northern Kafue)**

6 guests

Trip guaranteed to travel with minimum 4 guests.

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October 2018 – Busanga Plains in Zambia’s remote Kafue National Park

- Observe darting and collaring of lion
- Participate in road count survey of large mammals on the Busanga Plains
- Exposure to and interaction with local experts and authorities
- Watch an integrated ecotourism and conservation model at work



About the Purpose

Zambia’s Kafue National Park is a vital stronghold for Africa’s large carnivores. Thanks to our year-round presence and logistical and financial support to local anti-poaching activities, wildlife populations have grown, particularly species such as lechwe, puku and even elephant.



Itinerary



22 Oct 2018: Fly into Busanga Plains, afternoon game drive. Overnight Busanga Bush Camp.

23 Oct 2018: Morning and afternoon game drives, evening presentation by Zambian Carnivore Project (ZCP) on the darting/collaring process.
Overnight Busanga Bush Camp.

24 Oct 2018: Collar replacement – lion. Overnight Busanga Bush Camp.

25 Oct 2018: Early morning hot air balloon excursion; road count; evening talk by ZCP expert on conservation actions in the area.
Overnight Busanga Bush Camp.

26 Oct 2018: Early morning hot air balloon excursion; road count; evening discussion on counts by Wilderness ecologist Arnold Tshipa.
Overnight Busanga Bush Camp.

27 Oct 2018: Morning game drive, then to airstrip for flight out.

Ts & Cs apply





Zambia

OUR CONCESSIONS (KAFUE)

KAFUE'S UNIQUE BUSANGA PLAINS

UNUSUAL ANTELOPE

Kafue is home to fantastic concentrations of common antelope species such as puku, lechwe and wildebeest, but also comparative rarities not easily seen in most other places in Africa: the stately roan, nimble oribi, secretive sitatunga and unusual Lichtenstein's hartebeest.

UNUSUAL LION

The lion is the dominant carnivore of the Busanga Plains. In these flat and open surroundings, the lions have taken to using raised points for the cooling breeze more than other populations, climbing both fig trees and the raised decks of the camps. This unusual behaviour occurs only in the hotter months of September and October.

The open terrain also means that hunts – unusually – can often be watched from start to finish as the pride chases and brings down red lechwe or puku (their two most common prey species here).

They are also known for their impressively stocky physiques, as well as for their ability to survive the inundated summer months on this floodplain.

ACTIVITIES ON THE BUSANGA PLAINS

HOT AIR BALLOON SAFARI

Drifting aloft over the remote and private Busanga Concession at sunrise makes this one of the most exclusive hot air ballooning destinations in Africa. A 360-degree vista of the surrounding expansive plains that meet the enormous sky at the horizon also make it the most visually stunning. A bird's-eye view of wildlife can include thousands of red lechwe and puku, as well as regular sightings of hippo and buffalo. A delicious champagne breakfast follows, served in the Park's vast grasslands.

The hot air ballooning season runs from August until the end of October.

BOATING

At the beginning of the season (from June, and even into July), should summer rains have been heavy enough, it is possible to traverse parts of the Busanga Plains by boat. Specially-adapted motorboats can be used in very low water levels allowing excellent birding opportunities and viewing of hippo, lechwe and puku.

GAME DRIVES

The mainstay of our game-viewing activities, day and night game drives take place throughout the season and cover large areas of the plains and the tree-line edge in search of wildlife. The vast open landscape allows for excellent visibility, whether of large predators or the herds of plains game.



BUSANGA PLAINS
28 000 hectares (69 000 acres); the expansive, grassy Busanga Plains are the jewel in Kafue's crown. Ringed by miombo woodland, the plains themselves are a mosaic of grassland, muddy channels and hippo pools, palm islands and fragmented papyrus swamp. This range of habitat provides fantastic concentrations of common species as well as comparative rarities. Key mammal species: puku, lechwe, buffalo, roan, oribi, sitatunga, Lichtenstein's hartebeest, lion, cheetah, wild dog. Key bird species: Ross's turaco, grey crowned crane, Fülleborn's longclaw, locust finch.

KEY

- Wilderness Safaris – Classic Camp
- Wilderness Safaris – Adventures Camp
- Town/City



Meet your Host

Chris Roche – Wilderness Safaris

Chris has spent more than 20 years working in the ecotourism industry and over the past 10 years in particular has been intimately involved in the evolution of Wilderness Safaris out of the savannahs and deserts of southern Africa into more specialised habitat niches in the rainforests of central and east Africa. He is convinced that ecotourism can do more in helping conserve these ecosystems (and the services they provide to humanity). Armed with a Master's degree in springbok ecology in South Africa's Karoo and a background in biological research and guiding, Chris is currently the Chief Marketing Officer of Wilderness Safaris but does his best to spend time in the field exploring new opportunities for the company.



Meet your Experts

Ben Goodheart, Zambia Carnivore Project

Since graduating from the University of Montana in 2012, Ben has worked extensively as a field ecologist, conducting a wide range of research on migratory songbirds, small mammals, forest carnivores and venomous snakes. He joined the ZCP team in April 2016 and spent his first two years in the Luangwa Valley, before moving to the Kafue team as Co-manager.



Dr Kambwiri Banda, vet, Zambia Carnivore Project

Dr Banda joined the ZCP team in 2015, after receiving his degree in Veterinary Science from the University of Zambia in 2014. He is the field-based vet and Co-manager for ZCP's Greater Kafue Project. As the only field vet in Kafue, his presence is critical for the important de-snaring work that ZCP undertakes in the area.



Lameck Sakala, Zambia Carnivore Project

Lameck is a graduate of ZCP's Conservation Club Programme, and its Conservation Biologist Training Programme in 2015. Originally from the Luangwa Valley, Lameck is now an integral member of ZCP's research team in the Greater Kafue Ecosystem. He works as a field assistant as well as an environmental educator through our partnership with Treetops School and educational facility.



Arnold Tshipa, Wilderness Safaris Zambezi Environmental Manager

Arnold's father was a professional guide who, as soon as they were old enough, would take his children on bush drives and camping. It is no wonder then that Arnold studied Forest Resources and Wildlife Management, joining Wilderness Safaris Zambezi's Conservation Department in 2012. Over the years he has honed his research skills and has been involved in the draft of the Hwange Conservation Management Plan as well as several action plans for the management of Hwange National Park. Arnold is currently researching elephant dominance for his Master's degree. The aim of the project is to improve understanding of elephant movements and habitat use in Hwange National Park where elephant density is one the world's highest.



Meet your guide

Isaac Kalio

At the age of seven, Isaac had already been introduced to wildlife – in this case, the animals that invaded the farmlands; Isaac and his mother would spend their nights in a tree-house in the fields, waking up to chase elephants and hippos in the dark! However, inspired by his brother, a successful guide in the Zambezi Valley, Isaac began work as a porter for a canoe safari operation. He later trained as a canoe guide so that by 2000 he was leading his own trips on the Zambezi River.

Having acquired his guide's license in 2004 and wanting to explore more of Zambia, in 2007 Isaac met up with Wilderness Safaris who took him on as a guide for its Busanga Plains operation. Captivated by the magic and mystery of this remote and completely wild wilderness area, Isaac has found his happy place. Isaac is passionate about wildlife photography and his knowledge of the natural world is unsurpassed. His wit is complemented beautifully by his genteel personality and he is as enthusiastic to learn from his guests as he is about sharing his wisdom and understanding of his own country.



Partner and Beneficiary

Zambian Carnivore Programme (ZCP)

The Zambian Carnivore Programme is a non-profit Zambian registered trust dedicated to conserving large carnivore species and the ecosystems they reside in for one of Africa's most wildlife-rich places. The Programme works across three distinct ecosystems in Zambia, each encompassing a wide range of biological, environmental and human variation. One of these is the Greater Kafue Ecosystem (GKE) where the ZCP has undertaken long-term carnivore research projects.

Its goals include:

- To safeguard large carnivores, their prey, and habitat in Zambia through applied research, conservation, and education.
- To utilise large carnivores and their prey as flagship species for large scale habitat conservation, which in turn will benefit many other species.
- To provide information and recommendations to the Zambia Wildlife Authority, and support them in all efforts to safeguard wildlife species and the ecosystems they reside in.
- To increase knowledge and understanding of large carnivore and herbivore dynamics and interrelationships and contribute to the conservation of these species as a whole.
- To build capacity within local Zambian organisations and government bodies for the sustainable conservation of large carnivores and herbivores, their ecological functions, and their habitats.



<http://www.zambiacarnivores.org/donation>





Seychelles

*Travel
with Purpose*

