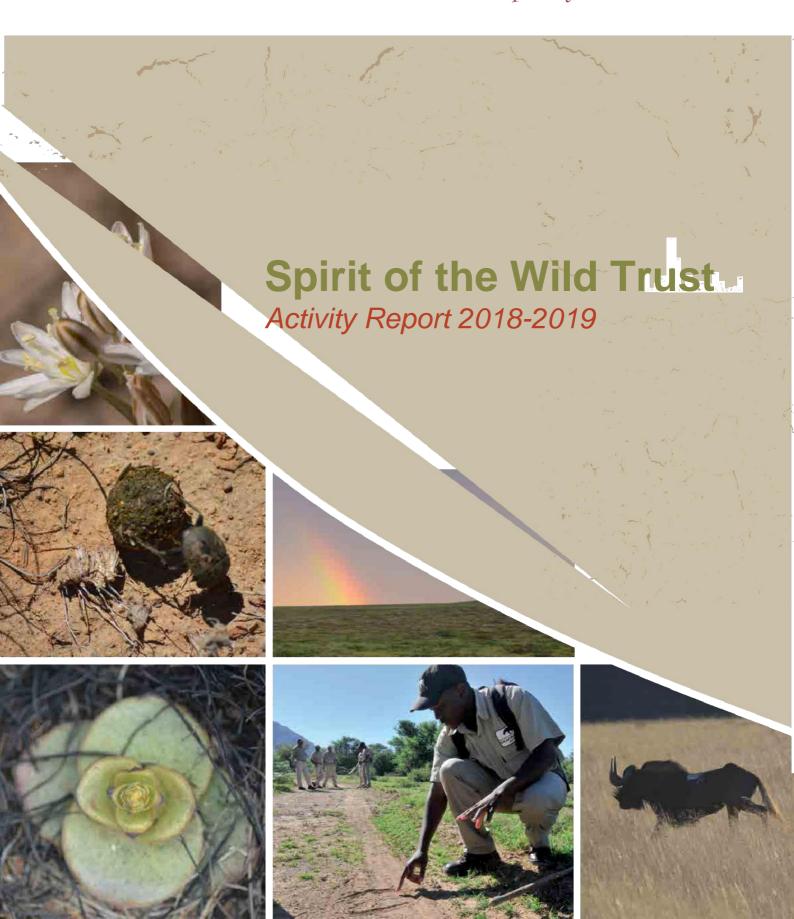


Spirit of the Wild



OVERVIEW

This was the twelfth year of the programme and Bergplaas hosted three groups of between eleven to twenty participants per group.

The majority of participants are from economically impoverished and disadvantaged backgrounds in South Africa's urban and rural areas, as well as the South African government's job creation initiatives in the conservation sector.

There are still many challenges facing our youth who are seeking employment and we are pleased to say that the *Spirit of the Wild* offers them the chance to uplift their skills, gaining confidence in their abilities and better equip themselves to enter the job market.

The *Spirit of the Wild* programme continues to be sort out by organisations to train those in the conservation sector, to equip them with a better understanding of their role in Nature and bring to life their true potential.

Guillaume Taylor Trustee Spirit of the Wild Trust



28 FEBRUARY 2019 FINANCIAL STATEMENT SUMMARY

Balance Sheet

ASSETS

Current Assets 59 201

TOTAL ASSETS 59 201

EQUITY & LIABILITIES

Equity 714 212 Retained Income (655 011)

TOTAL EQUITY & LIABILITIES 59 201

Income Statement for the year ended 28 February 2019

INCOME

Donations Received 736 830

EXPENSES

Donations made (1 390 000) Bank Charges (1 841)

NET INCOME (655 011)



LEADING THROUGH BELONGING

The Spirit of the Wild Programme is a wildlife guiding experience that awakens each participant's pathways of knowledge, belonging and purpose. It is a profound personal and leadership skills development expedition that reconnects people from all backgrounds with the natural environment.

In the 21st century, many of us have lost this connection, which is the lifeline to our shared humanity, our collective wellbeing and the achievement of our full potential.

Cindy and Wayne Maspero manage Bergplaas and have facilitated and developed the *Spirit of the Wild* Programme since 2007. They have extensive skills development and wildlife management experience.

In 2012, the Field Guides Association of Southern Africa (FGASA) endorsed the *Spirit of the Wild* Certificate Programme as a Specialist Training Provider.

STRONG CONNECTION

When the Founder of the *Spirit of the Wild Programme*, HRH Princess Irene van Lippe-Biesterfeld of the Netherlands first visited Bergplaas, she was deeply affected by its wildness, vastness and harshness, and immediately felt a strong connection to the landscape. It inspired her to start the *Spirit of the Wild Certificate Programme* on the 5 000-hectare, proclaimed Private Nature Reserve that is Bergplaas today.

Irene removed all the livestock and internal fences, and reintroduced the wildlife that is indigenous to this area.

Bergplaas today has a population of approximately 900 large mammals, including Eland, Kudu, Red Hartebeest, Plains Zebra, Springbuck and Black Wildebeest. Its small carnivores include the Black-backed Jackal, Caracal, Small-spotted Genet, Bat-eared Fox, African Clawless Otter and the Cape-, Grey and Marsh Mongoose.

There are 133 bird species in the region, including the Secretary Bird, Black Harrier, Lanner Falcon and Blue Crane.

"Bergplass is a powerful and wild place where our connection with nature and the oneness of all life is alive and can be experienced and felt. It is here that we can allow the land and all its life forms to be our prime teacher. A space where we can connect to our own true nature and recognise that solving the environmental crisis the world is facing starts with a commitment to deep reconciliation through the heart." – HRH Princess Irene van Lippe-Biesterfeld of the Netherlands



SPIRIT of the WILD

PROGRAMMES in 2018

The Spirit of The Wild Trust funded three groups of young people who attended the Spirit of the Wild Programme on Bergplaas in 2018, from the following organizations:

Mangaung Metro Municipality

A wonderful addition to Spirit of the Wild Training as the Mangaung Metro Municipality targets the youth, community builders and staff working in Nature Conservation Sector.

Tracker Academy

Established in 2010, the Tracker Academy is a training division of the SA College for Tourism, and it operates under the auspices of the Peace Parks Foundation. The Tracker Academy is a non-profit organisation which trains disadvantaged, unemployed young men in the traditional skills of tracking. More than 94% of Tracker Academy graduates are permanently employed in the naturebased tourism industry of South Africa.

Dear Cindy,

This letter serves to confirm that our tracker students attend a weeklong Spirit of the Wild to be three groups) of eight students twice per annum on the course, which is fully funded by the Spirit of the Wild Trust.

Since 2010, some 90% of our tracker graduates have found permanent employment in the conservation industry. Some of our graduates have returned to work at Bergplaas in order to continue learning about the human connection to wilderness.

The Spirit of the Wild programme certainly leaves a lasting impression on our graduates and course at Bergplaas. We send two groups (shortly it often forms the highlight of their first semester whilst at Tracker Academy. We hope to continue the relationship in the future.

> On behalf of Tracker Academy we would like to sincerely thank the Spirit of the Wild Trust for the wonderful training opportunity.

Sincerely, Alex van den Heever General Manager

"Dear Cindy,

Thank you very much for the opportunity.

Bergplaas and the Spirit of the Wild experience is something immeasurable. I have been involved in various life changing programmes for the past 11 years of my life, some crafted by great leaders, such as the 'wilderness leadership school trail' in Imfolozi Hluhluwe created by Ian Player and Maqubu Ntobela. Spirit of the Wild and the team that facilitates the programme uncover in a few weeks, what we as wilderness guides expect to learn in years. The design and outlay of the programme allows for each individual participant to grow exponentially, to almost 5 times more than the individual would have on other intervention orientated programmes.

What I could observe from what happens to the students is also something that is rather wonderful. I've seen the development of some of South Africa's most inspiring youth. At Bergplaas, I have seen the magic that speaks of miracles. The transformation of young people on this course is monumental. The course acts almost as a spring board for those with massive amounts of potential that is uncovered and would otherwise be lying dormant in their lives if not uncovered the way the team does it at Bergplaas.

They have a strong sense of community and Bergplaas awakens their African spirit of *Ubuntu* – the belief that I am because we are. This increases their teamwork and the ability to be more sensitive towards others as well as makes them tolerant of people. Group work generally becomes a breeze.

Students grow mentally stronger, they develop a healthier understanding of pain and anger, and can identify their feelings and respond to them more appropriately. This allows for them to take ownership of themselves and their actions. Accountability is rare amongst the youth and Bergplaas helps to develop it in young people.

Lastly, students have become people who genuinely understand nature and their place in it. They will spend their lives working for a better environment on Earth, and for all that belongs to it."

Lincoln Meyer

Nelson Mandela University

Nelson Mandela University is the largest University in the Eastern Cape, the province in which Bergplaas is situated.

Many of the students at the University are from financially impoverished households and the only way that they are able to achieve a university education is by securing loans, scholarships and bursaries.

Bergplaas Private Nature Reserve and the School of Natural Resource Management at Nelson Mandela University George Campus, have developed a strong partnership over the past five years.

Dear Spirit of the Wild officials,

My name is Nelsiwe Mpapane, a 23 year-old female from a small area in the province of Mpumalanga. In 2014, I decided to enrol for my Diploma in Nature Conservation at Nelson Mandela University (George Campus). As part of the curriculum we were required to undergo a year of experiential learning in which we put our theory into practise. I then worked for a well-known conservation organisation called Cape Nature in the Western Cape. That opportunity then opened the door for me to be one of the few people who attended the SOTW programme.

During the three years of my diploma I understood nature only in one way. I saw the environment as a single entity separate from human beings – not something I could experience and connect with fully.

I grew up harvesting plants for different purposes sustainably in the wild, but I saw how this had changed with today's generation overexploiting nature. Because of this, I began to believe that it is better to have a barrier between us and nature in order to conserve it.

When it was time to attend SOTW during my experiential year, I asked around about the course from people who had attended before, but they could not explain their experience to me in words. It felt intimidating but I took a leap of faith and attended the course. My first week was facilitated by Cindy and Ian, the most beautiful spirits I've ever encountered. What that week did to my life is beyond imagination, it completely changed the way I view nature as a whole.

- 1. I realised nature cannot be separated from our day to day lives and has to be incorporated and experienced in different ways that are not harmful to it.
- 2. I gained so much confidence during the course and was able to share the deepest setbacks I've had in life, which then made me realise I have potential to study further and do my Honours.
- 3. In the long-term because of this course, I gained interest in the ways humans access protected areas and how people experience nature.

I attended my second week of the programme last year during the most stressful year of my life, while I was doing my Honours. I found so much comfort, felt grounded in myself and remembered my role in nature. During the course I was motivated by my peers to enrol for a Masters in Science and to do research on how people benefit from ecological ecosystems. To cut the story short, I'm in a program with the biggest Conservation Company in South Africa – SANParks. The program is called Junior Scientist. It enrols less than 5 individuals in South Africa from previously disadvantage backgrounds to study further and be part of a research community. I am attending my last week of SOTW later this year because every time I go there I come back rejuvenated and ready to make the world a better place.

The course has made a huge impact on my life and I do not think I would be here and at this spiritual level if it hadn't been for the experience offered at Bergplaas. I'm truly honoured to be a part of this experience and would like to encourage the team to get as many young people in the course as possible. They made me realise the holistic way of viewing ecosystems and I am currently documenting so many experiences that people get from nature. This letter is meant to motivate anyone who is in doubt about attending the course to take a leap of faith and spend a week with amazing people.

Yours truly, Nelsiwe Mpapane

Monies Realised – Spirit of the Wild Courses 2018 - 2019

Sent to Spirit of The Wild Courses

R 1'390'000

Facilitators	R 325 525
Chef	R 125 555
Guesthouse Staff	R 102 926
Co-Ordinator	R 174 485
Travel – Facilitors	R 61 690
Food	R 155 500
Gas and Cleaning	R 82 253
Course Material	R 18 610
Food Collection	R 63 767
Rent Location/Accommodation	R 279 689
Total Expenditure	R 1 390 000

Quarterly Report 2018

Bergplaas nature conservation progress report

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Background

Executive Summary

This initiative is dedicated to youth, staff members in conservation and community builders in order to create developmental processes that will foster the positive acknowledgement of nature in communities. It is meant to achieve its objectives through the use of educational programs and courses. It aims to engage persons ranging from youth to nature conservation practitioners in other areas and regions and create inclusive and accessible professional platforms to cultivate the spirit of nature conservation. It also seeks to incline itself with the fundamental principles of the National Youth Policy, NDP and the IDP and other national legislations.

Vision

To empower youth, staff working in conservation, adventurers and nature lovers and disadvantaged communities and the broader society at large by sharing insights and principles on social responsibility by ensuring positive acknowledgement of nature and the rebirth of nature in technological developing areas.

Mission

To raise community champions, mentors and mentees that will steer head the developmental processes and programs in communities for the better good of the future of nature conservation.

Objectives

- Sustainable growth and improved industry performance and best practice to ensure full optimal empowerment of communities.
- To consolidate youth initiatives that enhance the capabilities of young people in nature conservation to transform the economy and society.
- promoting positive outcomes, opportunities, choices and relationships; and providing the support necessary to develop all young people, nature conservation practitioners, famers and social entrepreneurs; particularly those outside the social, political and economic mainstream.

"Mother nature tends to delight itself in feeding the souls of mankind."-Slaangman

To Our Stakeholders

Strategic Highlights

The Bergplaas Spirit of the Wild program was one of the biggest breakthroughs in our stakeholder relations in the Mangaung Nature Conservation department. As part of our mandate to raise and mentor the next generation of nature conservers in various societal sectors; the Spirit of the Wild Program happened to be the bridging gap between our dream and reality. Thus, marking the beginning of a fruitful and strategic relationship between the two parties.

Financial Highlights

As part of Free State Growth and Development Strategy, part of our needs analysis within the conservation sector is to sponsor, assist and empower youth, community builders and staff members within the conservation department to grow their knowledge and skill in the Agriconservation. The main aim is to serve as a bursary, scholarship and merit base funding which will be undertaken in academic and fieldwork training, to better enhance credibility and accreditation for knowledge based beneficiaries.

Operating Highlights

The vision of the initiative is to allow beneficiaries and participants to be part of a number of on-going programs. This will ensure eco-tourism practice nationally and foster policy change and influence in environmental issues that are steer-headed by technology and development. This allows people to be one with nature, in turn increasing institutional capacity in more funding and community based programs that will yield more towards the implementation of eco-friendly societies.

Looking Ahead

The most import factor is to acknowledge and show gratitude for Bergplaas Nature conservation, the management (Cindy and Wayne), staff and the sponsors for being generous in their partnership with Mangaung. Looking forward to a progressive and fruitful partnership.

Jan Baloyi (Slaangman) February 8, 2018

Contact Information



Jan Baloyi (Slaangman) 073 030 4629 Janbaloyi7@gmail.com Jan.baloyi@mangaung.co.za

Company Information

Mangaung Metro Municipality
Zolabudd Street, Bloemfontein, 9300
Tel 051 412 7000
www.mangaung.gov.za















