



Don't miss this truly unique opportunity to view **big cats** and other amazing wildlife while exploring the wild savannas of Southern Africa with two experts in their fields: renowned big cat biologist **Jeff Sikich** and conservation leader **Beth Pratt**.

Big Cats: 13-day African Luxury Safari

2nd - 14th December 2023



Itinerary Overview

Africa's savannas are famous for the incredible abundance of wildlife they support and for being home to an intact ecosystem still inhabited by a large assemblage of megafauna. Jeff and Beth, together with exceptional local African guides, will take you on a visceral and enlightening journey through the African Bush, absorbing the beauty and exciting wilderness and wildlife, while delving into the ecology and biology of big cats and other wildlife, their behavior and the complexities associated with human coexistence. One of the privileges of visiting these vast protected areas is that animals are relaxed around game-drive vehicles. This allows one the unusual and wonderful opportunity to observe even the most elusive cats at close quarters for extended periods of time.

Early December is a fascinating time to travel to Botswana and Zimbabwe because it is the beginning of the rainy season where the parched land flushes with green, flowers appear, animals have their babies and migratory birds have arrived. The weather is dramatic, with gorgeous cloudscapes and breathtaking sunsets. When it rains it is usually in short bursts which adds to the excitement.

The Palm River Hotel, 2 nights: Your journey begins in **Victoria Falls** where you will recover from the international travel and witness one of the largest and most beautiful waterfalls in the world, set deep in the heart of Africa.

Linkwasha, 3 nights: Fly to Zimbabwe's **Hwange National Park**. The wildlife here is abundant, with a large population of elephants, and a fantastic start

to your safari. Zimbabwe is famous for its excellent walking guides, so take this opportunity for a careful look on foot at the small as well as the large. For insight into the conservation issues in the area, you will connect with the Scorpions Anti-Poaching Unit and/or Oxford's WildCru to hear about lion conservation.

Chobe Safari Lodge, 1 night: Fly back to Vic Falls then do a road transfer across the Zimbabwe border to Kasane, Botswana. End the day on the Chobe River doing a wonderful sunset wildlife boat cruise in **Chobe National Park**.

Vumbura Plains, 3 nights: A private charter flight takes you to begin your exploration of the **Okavango Delta**, a remarkable World Heritage Site. This gorgeous Premier Wilderness Safaris camp is set in a diverse ecosystem with permanent water channels, floodplains and wooded 'islands' which you will explore through game drives and mokoros (traditional dug-out canoes). This area has excellent game and birding! You will start looking more closely at interpreting animal behavior and should have excellent photographic opportunities for those interested in wildlife photography.

Chitabe, 3 nights: Your safari culminates at Chitabe, the best game area in Botswana. It has an extraordinarily diverse ecosystem - with 7 different habitat types - which is home to a great diversity of animal and bird life. If possible, a talk will be arranged by a wild dog researcher from the Botswana Predator Conservation Trust and hopefully you will get a glimpse of these fascinating endangered creatures. From here you fly to Maun, from where you go home.



Jeff Sikich

Jeff Sikich is a wildlife biologist researching the impacts of urbanization and habitat fragmentation on mountain lions in Southern California. Jeff manages the field work for this study, one of the longest running of its kind, which informs mountain lion conservation, as well as outreach, education, and habitat conservation efforts locally and around the world. Over the last 25 years Jeff has captured and handled over 16 carnivore species for wildlife research and he has advised and trained many professionals around the world on humane capture methods. In addition to his work in California, Jeff has contributed to mountain lion research in Montana, Arizona, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Peru. He has worked on gray wolves, black bears, lynx, coyotes, bobcats, desert tortoise, and deer, as well as studies focused on tigers in Sumatra, jaguars in Central and South America, and leopards in South Africa. Jeff has contributed to many scientific papers and popular articles on carnivore ecology and conservation, and his work has been featured on numerous television programs and news outlets.



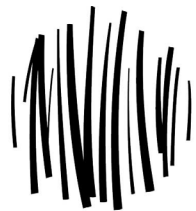
Beth Pratt

A lifelong advocate for wildlife, Beth Pratt has worked in environmental leadership for over twenty-five years, and in two of the country's largest national parks: Yosemite and Yellowstone. As the California Regional Executive Director for the National Wildlife Federation, Pratt leads the #SaveLACougars campaign to build the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing, which broke ground in 2022. Her innovative conservation work has been featured by *The New Yorker*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *BBC*, *CNN*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The Guardian*, *NPR*, *AP News*, and more. Her books include *When Mountain Lions are Neighbors*, *I Heart Wildlife*, and the upcoming *Yosemite Wildlife*, which will be published in 2024.

This special safari for curious nature enthusiasts is handcrafted by True Wild in support of the National Wildlife Federation's wildlife crossing and connectivity work.



True Wild LLC is a conservation and safari company based in San Francisco's North Bay. Our mission is to connect people strongly to nature through experiences and encourage individual action to conserve our planet. We do mountain lion research and conservation, and work with communities on how to co-exist with wildlife. We offer outdoor experiences connected to this work. We also design personalized safaris, specializing in authentic journeys to Africa. In all we do, we strive for conservation impact.



W I L D E R N E S S

For this journey we have chosen **Wilderness** safari camps. Wilderness is Africa's leading eco-tourism operator, renowned for their excellent camps and service. It actively conserves millions of acres of wilderness in the areas in which it operates. They are deeply committed to creating a positive impact on the communities of people and animals that live within and adjacent to these extraordinary wild ecosystems.

Logistics

Group size: 8-12 people. Price is all inclusive (accommodation, food, drinks, activities, transfers between camps, group leaders) but excludes international travel (to Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, and from Maun, Botswana), visas, insurance, and gratuities. *Singles in their own room will be charged an additional single-supplement rate and quoted separately.



Join Us!
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