

Study Abroad: Examining the Conservation Parks and Trophy Hunting in South Africa and the United States



Jazlyn Turner

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061

Introduction

During the Winter Session of 2022, I had the opportunity to participate in a two-week Virginia Tech faculty-led course abroad, ALS 3954: A Focus on Food Security, Wildlife and Conservation. The course was directed by Dr. Ozzie Abaye and the experience took place in South Africa. We traveled to different parts of the country such as Johannesburg, Limpopo, Cullinan, Cape Town, Darling, and Stellenbosch. In these provinces, we visited research institutes, hunting game farms, conservation parks, universities and small businesses related to animals. This allowed me to obtain the information needed to accurately compare and contrast the conservation parks and hunting game farms in the United States to South Africa.



Bottom Right: A cow-calf pair we seen on the Safari ride through Kruger Park.

Objectives

To observe the similarities and differences in the methods within the conservation parks and hunting game farms in the United States and South Africa.

Analyze different cultural and governmental approaches when it comes to wildlife, while trying to seek ways to improve both conservation parks and hunting game farms.

My Assignments

- Pre-Departure Reflection
- Book Review on Mandela, N. Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela. 1995
- Brown and Company, NY, Boston, London.
- Daily Journal Log (for class discussions)
- 3 Page-Final Reflection Paper
- Final Project on the entire study abroad experience

Study Abroad Experience

This study abroad experience gave me the opportunity to visit various animal-related establishments. We visited Kruger Park, Henk's Game Farm & Lodge, the Rhino Rescue Farm, and a very famous Dairy Farm in Darling. In addition, we also were able to visit places relating to South Africa's history and culture, such as Table Mountain, the Sustainability Institute, and Robben Island (where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned). I loved that we were able to incorporate South Africa's history into this experience because it made it much more phenomenal.

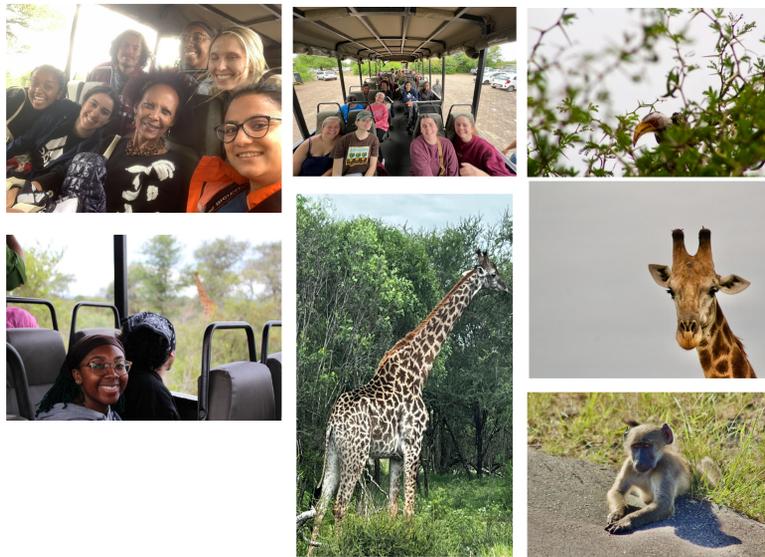


A selfie of the whole crew in the colorful and vibrant town Bo-Kaap.

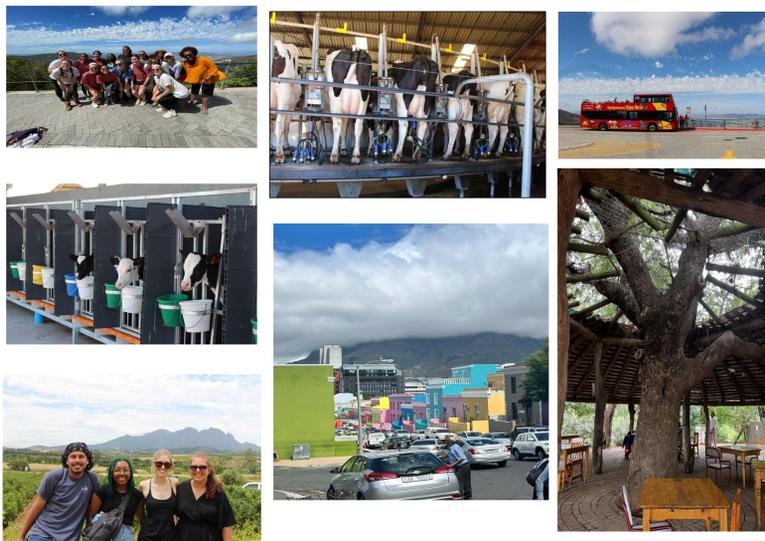
Henk's Game Farm



Kruger Park



Cape Town & Darling



Acknowledgments

Dr. Ozzie Abaye, *Study Abroad Instructor*
 Dr. Cynthia Wood, *Capstone Experience Mentor*
 Dr. Mark Reiter and Ms. Karen Drake-Whitney, *On-site Study Abroad Supervisors*



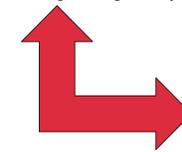
My Project

Project Objective:

- To further understand the connection and dissimilarities between the conservation parks and hunting game farms in South Africa versus the United States.
- To use the insight and knowledge gained from my study abroad experience and the research conducted, to form accurate information regarding to my topic.



Top right: Two Vervet monkeys, the mom is showing some love to her infant (Kruger Park)



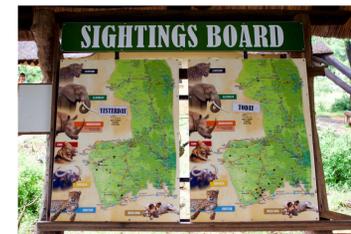
Results

Comparison & Contrast of Kruger Park and Yellowstone National Park

- ★ There is no hunting or farming allowed on any part of the land
- ★ Main goal is to preserve the natural beauty and wildlife in the surrounding areas
- ★ Yellowstone doesn't have an emergency wildlife clinic on-site of the park, unlike Kruger Park
- ★ Kruger Park hires armed guards to protect the Rhinos, while Yellowstone believes in zero interference with the wildlife

Comparison & Contrast of Trophy Hunting in South Africa and the United States

- ★ Uses indirect management by allowing the wildlife to roam free on a large area of land
- ★ Overall goal is to promote conservation and control the wildlife population.
- ★ South Africa always provides lodging on the property for their customers, while it is fairly uncommon in the U.S.
- ★ The U.S. doesn't have nearly as many species to hunt unlike South Africa because they are home to a variety of exotic species.



Bottom Left: A sighting board at a rest stop in Kruger Park. It shows what animals people have spotted during the safari ride and their location from the present day and the day before



Conclusions

Overall my capstone experience studying abroad and conducting the necessary research surrounding conservation parks and hunting game farms was a major success. I've gained a greater understanding about the "bigger picture", which is essentially about preserving the wildlife and how important it is to seek ways to improve the practices conducted in both countries. The knowledge I now have will help me further my career in revisiting working with wildlife and be a contributing member to conservation. I enjoyed every part of this trip and would do it again in a heartbeat!

Contact information

If you would like to learn more about my experience studying abroad or even my capstone, please do not hesitate to contact me through email at itsjazlyn@vt.edu. I'm open to any questions you may have!



Left: Myself standing on a mountain on Henk's property; Center: My friend captured me looking at the beautiful town called Cape Town; Right: My friends and I each bought a painting the owner created and he wanted a picture for keepsakes.