

Tara Pirie



I have a strong background in wildlife, supported by a combination almost 2 decades experience with wild and captive animals and a formal scientific education in the form of a zoology degree and my current role as a doctoral researcher at the University of Reading.

Work Experience

07/13 - Present- University of Reading; Doctoral Researcher.

- The title of my thesis is “The ecology and conservation biology of the Africa Leopard *Panthera pardus*.” Hand in date July 2016 – July 2017.
- Proficient in R-statistical software, Q-GIS and Microsoft packages.
- Interviewed by the BBC during the News 24 Live broadcast. I was asked to interpret and comment on leopard behaviour during an incident in India.

02/12 – 10/15 – Thaba Tholo Wilderness Reserve, Mpumalanga, South Africa - Black Leopard Campus; Team Leader / Head FGASA Instructor - Ingwe Leopard Research; Head Researcher.

- Train volunteers and organise daily activities.
- Camp management, finances, maintenance, cleaning and organising kitchen duties and food.
- Head trainer for field guiding qualification level one.
- Produce programs for students and volunteers.
- Set up research and maintain research collection, oversee and check data inputting.
- Had the original idea, initiated and operated the “Ingwe Camera Club” to increase cameras for the project.
- Give presentations and lectures to guests, volunteers and students.
- Provide written reports, papers and blogs for public, landowners and publication.

04/10 – 11/12 – Safari TV for WildEarth, Sabi sands, Mpumalanga, South Africa; Wildlife Presenter.

- Presenter and director of 3 hour **live** broadcasts on the internet channel WildEarth twice daily.
- Provide general information on all aspects of the nature and interpret animal behaviour during live broadcasts.
- Answer questions on screen live from viewers from across the world via email.
- Camera operator of a Sony NX5 on a rotational basis with other team members.
- Provide technical assistance and support during broadcasts.
- Provide updates to viewers on animal movements off screen via blogs and twitter updates.
- Provide script, voice over for post produced footage.
- Proficient in use of Wirecast, Final Cut Pro on Apple Mac for editing 2D HD and limited 3D.

06/06 - 03/10 – Entabeni Safari Conservancy, Limpopo, South Africa; Head Guide/Ranger.

- Joined as a field guide, providing game drives/walks in the Big 5 reserve, during which information, interpretation and commentary were given on a wide range of biotic and abiotic subjects; including animal behaviour, flora, local history and astronomy.
- Promoted to head guide in April 2007, managing a small guiding team.
- Provided training to new guides joining the team.
- Conducted administrative duties and ensured high customer care standards were met within the team.
- Voted Ranger of the Year for Legend Lodges 2007.

06/02 – 12/04; South Lakes Wild Animal Park, Cumbria, UK; Senior Keeper

- Organised 10 team members to ensure a high standard of care for a wide collection of endangered species including Carnivores, Ungulates, Primates and Marsupials.
- Prepared and administered basic medications using a blow darts and needle injections.
- Provided educational presentations to members of the public.
- Conducted general maintenance across the park.
- Featured in a 6 part television series “Wildlife Park” which focused on the animals and lives of the keepers.

Part time work undertaken during University and School holidays.

- Volunteering at South Lakes Wild Animal Park.

Education

- **Entabeni Safari Conservancy, South Africa** – FGASA Field Guiding level 3 equivalent of NQF4, Back up Trails Guide, Advanced rifle handling, intermediate 4x4, reptile orientation course, cyber tracker track and sign level 2, tracker level 1.
- **Bush Academy, 2006** – 1 year professional field guide and lodge management course.
- **University of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, UK, 1999 - 2002** - BSc Zoology (Hons); 2:1.
 - Aspects of degree included Ethology, Ornithology, Genetics, Ecology and Vertebrate Evolution.
 - Conducted research into space utilization of tigers *Panthera tigris*, in captivity.
 - Conducted independent research considering the effect of temperature on pelage colour in giraffe for dissertation communicated orally and written.

Interested and Achievements

- **Travel**
 - 2001 - Conservation research visit to the Sumatran Tiger Trust in Sumatra, Indonesia.
- **Photography**
 - Edit own wildlife photographs using Photoshop elements.
 - Produced South African wildlife calendars to raise money for local primary school.
- **Newcastle University Theatre Society**
 - Involved in a number of productions as Director, Producer, Stage Manager and Cast.
 - Produced Dracula and was voted “Best Producer 2001”.
 - Directed an original play written by the co-director.
- **Publications**
 - Pirie, Tara J., et al. “**Limitations to recording larger mammalian predators in savannah using camera traps and spoor**”. – In press – Wildlife Biology.
 - Pirie, Tara J., et al. “**Social interactions between a male leopard (*Panthera pardus*) and two generations of his offspring.**” (2014): 574-576.
 - Pirie, Tara J., et al. “**Erythrisitc leopards (*Panthera pardus*) in South Africa.**” – In press – Bothalia.
 - Tara Pirie and volunteers. “**Dining With Leopards**” (2013) ISBN: 978-1-291-17391-8.

Referees: Contact details can be supplied on request.

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Craig Carnaby. Operations manager at Safari TV, South Africa (at time of employment).

Stefan Winterboer. Escarpment ranger manager, Entabeni, South Africa (at time of employment).