

MORE
FIELD GUIDE COLLEGE

Trails Experience Course

Duration: 60 Days
Dates: April and October

The Trails Experience Course is designed for field guides who have already achieved their NQF2 Nature Site Guide and Wilderness First Aid Level 2 qualifications, and who wish to take the next step towards becoming a FGASA Trails Guide.

1. Trails Experience Course content

- FGASA Apprentice Trails Guide Mentorship Programme
- Rifle competency (PTFC) and Advanced Rifle Handling (ARH)
- Tracks & Signs
- Trailing
- Specialist Birding
- Wildlife Photography
- Snake handling
- Hospitality in a 5-star environment

To obtain the FGASA Apprentice Trails Guide Mentorship Programme qualification and FGASA ARH, you need to hold a valid First Aid certificate and an NQF2 Nature Site Guide (FGASA) qualification. If you don't have that, you can still participate in the whole course and get the full experience, but you can't get the actual qualifications.

2. FGASA Apprentice Trails Programme

A FGASA Apprentice Trails Guide (Back-up Trails Guide) is an individual who is in training (in an apprentice programme) to become a Trails Guide and will learn how to function as 2nd rifle and later as 1st rifle during the training phase. The apprentice programme is a stepping stone in the process for a field guide to attain a FGASA Trails Guide qualification and is not yet qualified to conduct trails or walks in areas with dangerous game in absence of a FGASA Trails Guide (NQF4), Professional Trails Guide, or SKS (DG) Guide. You should be able to prepare to conduct a guided nature experience as a back-up on foot in areas where potentially dangerous animals may occur and back-up a guided viewing experience of potentially dangerous animals.

3. Tracker Syllabus

- Track & Sign interpretation and assessment
- The basics of trailing
- Gaits
- Track & Sign interpretation evaluation as well as trailing evaluation

4. Short Courses Syllabus

The content of these short courses is subject to change.

Specialist Birding

- ID of local and most common bird species by sight and sound

Wildlife Photography

- Camera use and settings in an outdoor environment
- How to deliver a safari for a photographer

Bushcraft

- Fire-making techniques
- Shelter building and water purification
- Navigation and foraging
- Core ecological awareness and principles of sustainable living

This course not only teaches practical outdoor survival skills but also encourages participants to reconnect with the natural environment in a meaningful way.

FGASA TRAILS GUIDE SYLLABUS
SECTION A - TRAILS GUIDE

MODULE 1
Protocols: Dangerous Game Walking Qualifications

On completion of this module, you will:

- These qualifications apply to walking field guides, walking in areas where dangerous game occur and are gained through experience (logged hours and encounters) training and mentorship.

MODULE 2
Dangerous Animal Knowledge

On completion of this module, you will:

- Know what animals are considered potentially dangerous from a guiding perspective
- Know the general statistics of the potentially dangerous animals
- Have an understanding and knowledge of the potentially dangerous animals

MODULE 3
Animal Comfort Zones

On completion of this module, you will:

- Have an understanding of animal comfort zones and personal space

MODULE 4
Planning for Trails Guiding Experience

On completion of this module, you will:

- Know what a trails guiding experience is
- Be able to carry out guest checks and prepare guests
- Know how to plan the experience based on guest information
- Be able to communicate planning with Apprentice Trails Guide/Tracker

MODULE 5
Trails Guiding Equipment

On completion of this module, you will:

- Know why it is important to select the right equipment
- Have an understanding of different types of trails guide backpacks
- Know what should be included in the contents of the trails guide backpack
- Know what navigational equipment you should take with you on a walking trail
- Know what you should carry on your belt for easy and quick access if the need arises

MODULE 6
Rifle Etiquette and Safety during Walks

On completion of this module, you will:

- Have an understanding of the correct handling of a rifle during walks
- Have an understanding of muzzle awareness at all times

MODULE 7
Conducting a Guided Walking Experience

On completion of this module, you will:

- Be able to carry out a pre-trail briefing
- Know the ground rules for conducting walking trails
- Know how to apply skills for guided walking experiences
- Have an understanding of the role of the Apprentice Trails Guide
- Know what an ethical encounter is with dangerous animals
- Know the important guidelines when approaching dangerous animals
- Know what to be constantly aware of when approaching dangerous animals
- Know the general rules for animal reactions to your presence
- Know when to make use of own discretion when walking in various types of terrain

MODULE 8
Specific Animal Charges and Guide Actions

On completion of this module, you will:

- Understand what a serious charge is and how to deal with it in terms of making use of the rifle
- Know how to respond to the charge by different dangerous animals based on interpretation of their behaviour
- Know where in terms of anatomy to place a shot if required to shoot a charging dangerous animal

MODULE 9
Shot Placement

On completion of this module, you will:

- Know where in terms of anatomy to place a shot if required to shoot a charging dangerous animal

MODULE 10
Backpack and Primitive Trails

On completion of this module, you will:

- Backpack or primitive style trails can either be sleeping under the stars or in a tent. Regardless of the type, there are certain ethics that should be considered by all, to ensure the least impact on the environment and also the wildlife.

MODULE 11
Evacuation of Guests from Trail

On completion of this module, you will:

- Whilst on trail, there may well be situations of medical emergencies that will require one or more of your guests to be treated or evacuated.

MODULE 12
Orientation Skills

On completion of this module, you will:

- Know what it meant by the term orientation skills
- Know what a map is and how to orientate and read a map
- Know what contour lines are
- Know what is meant by the scale of a map
- Know how to determine distance on a map
- Know how to take compass bearings
- Know what the cardinal points are
- Know how to orientate yourself making use of the Sun
- Know how to find direction at night
- Know how to find direction making use of natural indicators
- Know what to do when you are lost
- Know how to find water and food from the bush
- Know how to recognise and test poisonous plants

MODULE 13
Incident and Crime Scene Management

On completion of this module, you will:

- Understand basic management of an incident or of a crime scene
- Know how to approach a crime scene (poaching incident)
- Know how to report a crime scene
- Know how to protect the crime scene
- Know how to manage the situation in which you have had to shoot an animal in self-defence

FGASA TRAILS GUIDE SYLLABUS:
SECTION B - RIFLE HANDLING

MODULE 1
Rifle Handling for Dangerous Animals

On completion of this module, you will:

- Understand the state of readiness and the rifle operation in dangerous situations
- Know how to carry a rifle for quick action responses
- Know the difference between loading and cocking a rifle
- Know the loading sequence for different dangerous animals
- Understand all the rules of rifle safety

MODULE 2

The Basic Actions of a Bolt-Action Rifle

On completion of this module, you will:

- Know and be able to name the parts of a rifle
- Know the parts of a Bolt-Action mechanism
- Know the basic actions of a Bolt-Action rifle
- Know and be able to name the parts of a cartridge
- Understand the barrel making process
- Understand cartridge designation and calibre
- Know the different types of bullets

MODULE 3
Rifle Ballistics

On completion of this module, you will:

- Have knowledge of internal ballistics including the functions of all the parts of the rifle
- Have knowledge of external ballistics with particular reference to the effects on the bullets ability to hit the target
- Have a good knowledge of terminal ballistics in terms of stopping power, hydrostatic shock theory and the relevant types of bullets used

MODULE 4
Rifle Cleaning and Maintenance

On completion of this module, you will:

- Know how to clean the bore
- Know how to clean the bolt
- Know how to clean the magazine and chamber
- Know how to clean the stock
- Know how to clean the ammunition

MODULE 5
Legal Aspects of Guiding with a Rifle

- Understand the legal requirements pertaining to the use of a rifle for guiding purposes
- Know what the Firearms Control Act is
- Know what the SASSETA requirements are for use of a rifle



Get in Touch:

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