

July 2023

# Mid-Year Report

*“We use animal tracking as a means to do social good in Africa.”*

*Trainer Innocent Ngwenya*

SUBMITTED BY

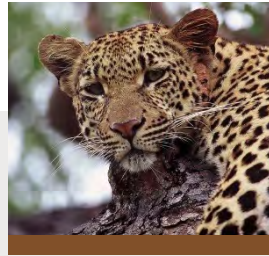
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**Tracker Academy (SA College for Tourism)**  
PO Box 314, Magazine Hill, Graaff-Reinet, 6280  
Tel +27(0)49 892 2244  
Fax +27(0)49 892 2227  
[email: alex@nns.co.za](mailto:alex@nns.co.za)

## OUR VISION

To restore ancient African animal tracking skills and indigenous knowledge for the benefit of wildlife conservation.

## Our MISSION

To demonstrate that the traditional skills of tracking have relevance in modern conservation efforts.

## 1. 2023 Update

*“This ancient skill has relevance in modern conservation efforts.”*

With the recent addition of the Rhino Guardian tracker course, we are now running **two** formally accredited programmes, side-by-side – trackers for ecotourism (Lodge Trackers) and trackers for counter-poaching (Rhino Guardians).

## 2. Programme Update

A total of sixteen tracker students completed and passed their final practical tracking assessments in June 2023 – 8 x Rhino Guardians and 8 x Lodge trackers. Additionally, all were found competent against the CATHSSETA NQF2 Tracker and NQF4 Conservation Guardian Skills Programmes.

The group stationed at Tswalu Kalahari Reserve has moved to Londolozi Game Reserve for their 2<sup>nd</sup> 6-month semester. The Rhino Guardian students who started in January 2023 have commenced their active deployment (2<sup>nd</sup> semester) with Bhejane 360 anti-poaching unit. A second group of Rhino Guardian trainees have started their course at our base at our Southern African Wildlife College based field ranger’s camp.



*Three generations of world-class tracker trainers  
Ian Thomas, Renias Mhlongo & Innocent Ngwenya*

*Mid-year students have logged 575 to 790 hours, and final-year 1550 hours in the bush practising their tracking skills.*

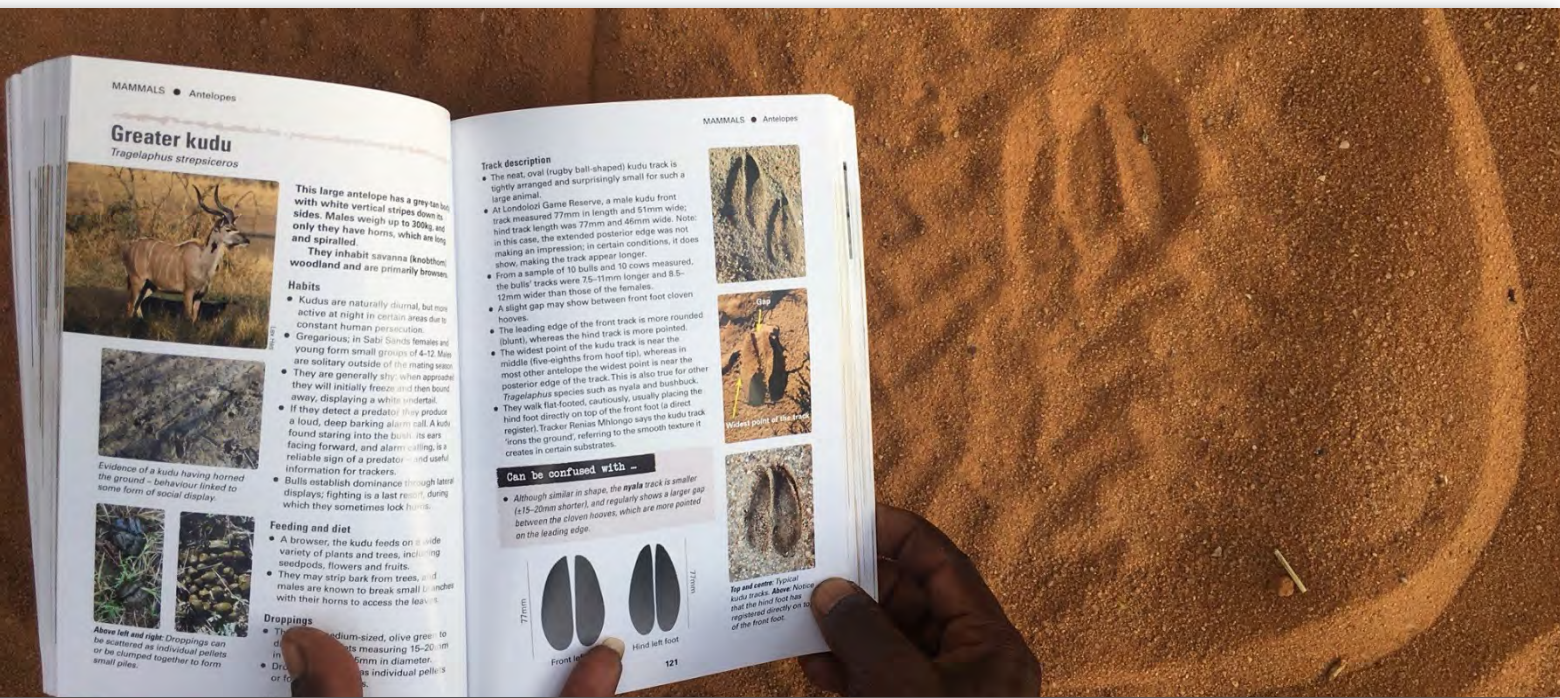
*Each student record approximately a minimum of 150 encounters with high profile animals such as lion, leopard, cheetah rhino & buffalo on foot.*

*As of end-June 2023, all students have completed animal monitoring, viewing potentially dangerous animals, basic ecology, animal behaviour, track & sign, and trailing.*

### 3. Student Learning: 2023

Tracker students are trained in theoretical and practical elements of wildlife tracking. Our training applies tracking to real world conservation management outcomes, wildlife protection and ecotourism.

Tracker student group who began training at out Tswalu Kalahari site were introduced to the local ecology, fauna and flora. With its soft often-deep red sand, the Kalahari presents a unique set of challenges for the tracker students, such as track recognition at midday when the sun casts few shadows. The dept of the sand distorts the size and shape of the footprints. However, it is a perfect environment in which to learn animal gaits and subtleties in behaviour which may often be discerned in the fine substrate.



Nkosinathi Sibuyi (left) made history for becoming the first ever student to achieve 100% for both the "Track & Sign" and "Trailing" components' – graduating with Advanced Tracker (Level 4).

Mid-year students achieved Tracker Level 2 (12 trackers) and Tracker Level 3 (6 trackers) in the practical tracking assessment.

Final-Year students achieved Tracker Level 3 (16 students), and Advanced Tracker (1 tracker)

Final tracker results will be reported in December 2023

## 4. Rhino Guardians: Accredited Programme



Rhino Guardian trackers in training – this programme combines traditional skills of tracking with modern combat and law enforcement skills.

### Rhino Guardian Skills Programme

The **table right** reflects those unit standards (subjects) undertaken on the accredited skills programme.

In addition to this, students are engaged in rigorous practical tracking training, and as part of the yearlong programme, will spend 6 months operating in a real-world Counter-Poaching unit (APU).

Unit standard number	Unit Standard Description	Level & credits
8518	Track animals and identify spoor using moderate to difficult spoor	Level 4 40 credits
252452	Perform conservation guardianship	Level 2 4 credits
253973	Enforce conservation compliance	Level 5 5 credits
376442	Track a person	Level 5 5 credits
119649	Handle and use a handgun	Level 3 2 credits
119651	Handle and use a manually operated rifle or carbine	Level 3 2 credits
119652	Handle and use a shotgun	Level 3 2 credits
<b>Total</b>		<b>51 credits</b>

## 4. Rhino Guardians: Real-time experience



Rhino Guardian trainees spend their second 6-month semester with **Bhejane 360** where they gain real-time experience in an active counter-poaching unit.

Bhejane 360 was founded by Stefran Broekman in 2018 to address the urgent need for a specialized counter-poaching and wildlife protection organization. Registered with PSIRA and SAPS, the founders are experts with extensive knowledge in Security, Risk analysis, Wildlife protection, Technology, Integrated solutions, Strategy development, and Implementation. Their combined experience of over 80 years spans diverse levels and spheres, providing tailor-made Integrated solutions to local and international customers.

The Rhino Guardians Programme would not have been possible without the support of **Londolozi Game Reserve**, and the Varty family.



## 5. Official Partnership: Ineos Grenadier



Ineos Grenadier began its sponsorship of Tracker Academy in 2022 – agreeing to sponsor 30 tracker students over a period of three years. We are incredibly grateful for this support, the gracious team at Ineos, and of course, the magnificent Grenadier vehicle that allows us to get to places ordinary 4X4's can not!

Special thanks to Ineos CEO, Tim Abbott, and Kelly Cleverdon, who worked so hard to make this partnership a reality.



## 6. Donors

It is with immense appreciation that we thank the donors who have supported us in 2023 (in alphabetical order):

Animal Friends Pet Insurance  
Blue Recruiting  
Bro Trust  
Donald & Sara Kyte  
Genevieve Mensah  
Hamilton Hill  
Hanse Hoheisen Charitable Trust  
Henry Makansi  
Ineos Grenadier  
James & Rachel Linnett  
Koos & Rona Rupert Educational Trust

Markus Heitz  
Metamorphosis Foundation  
Michael Corrigan  
Multi Health Solutions Staff  
Niel & Nelia Hoogenhout  
Nicholas & Francesca Tingley  
Operation Pachamama  
Richard & Fiona Houghton  
Rupert Nature Foundation  
Supersport  
Will & Beth Gardiner

*Donors Dr Simon Thornton and Dr Niel Rotherham, trustees of the Metamorphosis Foundation, visiting the tracker students sponsored by their foundation.*





## 7. Audited Financial Statements

Kindly email Alex van den Heever ([alex@nns.co.za](mailto:alex@nns.co.za)) should you wish to review our latest audited financial statements - for the period ending 31 December 2022.





## 8. Conclusion

*We would like to express our sincerest thanks to you for supporting this important project.*

We are delighted to present the mid-year Tracker Academy donor report, showcasing the immense impact of your generous contributions. Thanks to your support, Tracker Academy has witnessed remarkable growth and success in empowering underprivileged youth through traditional skills of tracking.

Please notify us if you would like to meet to discuss the report.

Thank you,

*The Tracker Academy family,*

*Janetta, Karel, Innocent, Norman, Renias, Alex & Mariette*

