



FGASA News: June 2023



FGASA News and Updates:

Hey {{ contact.FIRSTNAME }}, can you believe we have already passed the half-way mark for 2023?! We can hardly believe it either and there is still so much more to come.

June certainly kept our hands full and kicked off with the largest event of our annual calendar, [Safari Guide of the Year](#). Hosted by [Kapama Private Game Reserve](#), this year's event was certainly one for the history books! Not only did we have our first female winner of the competition, [Kimberlee Le Hanie](#) from [Lion Sands Game Reserve](#), but we also hosted our first ever Invitational Candidate, Francois du Plessis from the [N/a'an ku sê Ecotourism Collection](#) in Namibia.

It was our immense privilege to be invited to the [MORE Field Guide College's Kruger Campus](#) graduation ceremony. MORE Field Guide College in Partnership with [Timbavati Private Nature Reserve](#) and the [Timbavati Foundation](#) are proactively taking the proverbial education-buffalo by the horns by providing free guide training to young, passionate people from local communities in and around the Greater Kruger Area. We were filled with pride and admiration as the once students, now guides, stood, and received their hard-earned qualifications. Each of the new graduates will also receive practical work placements with loads of on-the-job safari experience giving them the best possible opportunity for employment and success in the safari tourism industry.

We were also invited to attend the Sabi Sand Nature Reserve's Western Sector's bi-monthly Guides Social. A fantastic opportunity for us to sit and chat with the Guides and General Managers in the area in a more relaxed and less formal setting. It is wonderful for us to see the Western Sector banding

together and pooling their efforts across all the Lodges and Properties to enhance the guided experience for any guest visiting that part of the reserve. The driving force behind this are the General Managers and Head Guides, all of whom are committed to a more unified collaborative effort among the various lodges to uphold and uplift guiding excellence. This initiative is based on mutual respect, knowledge, and skills exchange, as well as a healthy camaraderie between guides. There is also a huge amount of backing for guide development and upskilling among those who attended. Our Managing Director, Michelle du Plessis, said one of the biggest highlights of the event was how supportive the Western Sector is of FGASA and the standards of professionalism set out by the organisation, "As employers we trust and support FGASA" said Keith Jenkinson, General Manager of [Inyati Game Lodge](#). FGASA will continue to offer support and strives to always develop good relationships among all our members.

FGASA Calendar July 2023

July

Wednesday 5 Written Exam registration for August closes	Wednesday 26 FGASA Executive Committee Meeting	Friday 28 Online Exam registration for August closes
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In the News



Safari Guide of the Year: Winner's Circle

We are so incredibly proud of each of the Finalists and our Invitation Candidate for their knowledge, skill, and dedication to their careers. It is not easy to put your hand up and say *"Yes! I will compete among the best while being assessed by the industry's most respected guides, mentors, and*

assessors.” We respect the huge amount of courage it takes to do this and applaud all of you for stepping up and accepting the challenge! So, without any further ado, please give it up for each of the Finalists in their winning categories:



Kimberlee Le Hanie, Lion Sands Game Reserve

- Safari Guide of the Year 2023 winner
- Birding Slide and Sound winner
- Guided Game Drive winner
- Storytelling winner

[Learn more about Lion Sands](#)



Jan Dykema, Shamwari Private Game Reserve

- Safari Guide of the Year 2023 Runner-Up
- Advanced Rifle Handling winner
- Hospitality and Professionalism winner

[Learn more about Shamwari](#)



Pioneer Moyo, Bushwise Field Guides

- Safari Guide of the Year 2023 Finalist
- Animal Track and Sign winner

[Learn more about Bushwise](#)



Ruan Coetzee, Kapama Private Game Reserve

- Safari Guide of the Year 2023 Finalist
- Guided Bushwalk winner

[Learn more about Kapama](#)



Warren Deyzel, Imbali Safari Lodge

- Safari Guide of the Year 2023 Finalist
- Guided Photographic Experience winner

[Learn more about Imbali](#)



Safari Guide of the Year 2023

[FGASA](#) (Field Guides Association of Southern Africa) and [Safari Guide of the Year](#) are pleased to announce that another successful week of competition, fun and camaraderie was held to celebrate the incredible dedication, passion, and talent of some of southern Africa's top safari guides...

[Read more](#)

Kimberlee Le Hanie Makes History...

The Field Guides Association of southern Africa ([FGASA](#)) is proud to announce that Kimberlee Le Hanie has been awarded the title of [Safari Guide of the Year](#) 2023, becoming the first-ever woman to achieve this prestigious honour. Kimberlee's exceptional knowledge...

[Read more](#)

Thank You from Safari Guide...

[FGASA](#) (Field Guides Association of Southern Africa) is proud to have hosted another hugely successful Safari Guide of the Year competition. Thank you to all of our guests, esteemed judges, sponsors, media partners, and a special thanks to [Kapama Private Game Reserve...](#)

[Read more](#)



[Getaway Magazine - First woman to win Safari Guide of the Year: Kimberlee Le Hanie](#)

An initiative of the Field Guides Association of Southern Africa ([FGASA](#)), the competition highlights the best in the guiding industry each year, by putting Southern African guides through a series of tough events to test critical guiding skills...

[Read more](#)



[Latest Sightings - The First Female to Win Safari Guide of the Year](#)

Founder of [LatestSightings.com](#) Nadav Ossendryver gives us his first-hand experience of this year's Safari Guide of the Year competition. "As the founder of [LatestSightings.com](#), I have had the privilege of being a part of some extraordinary events..."

[Read more](#)



Safari Guide of the Year on Instagram

We're very excited to announce that Safari Guide of the Year finally has its own home on [Instagram](#)! The adventures of southern Africa's top guides, our amazing sponsors, esteemed guests and legendary judges will continue to unfold there. We'll also be digging into the archives to celebrate the incredible men and women who have given this industry their all and put their best velle forward in the competition. Check it out and give us a follow!

[Follow us here](#)



Congratulations to our Friends from Singita!

June certainly is a month of celebration; we would like to offer our most sincere congratulations to Chantelle Venter and Solomon Ndlovu from [Singita Kruger National Park](#), a household name in the luxury safari business. Chantelle and Solomon have had truly remarkable careers with [Singita](#) and we are so excited to see how far their growth and development has taken them.

Singita's commitment to guide development and their constant striving to ever push the limits of excellence in their service has resulted in both Chantelle and Solomon taking their next distinguished career steps.

Chantelle was Head Guide at Singita Kruger National Park for eight stellar years. Her dedication to her profession and her key role in furthering the skills growth in Singita's Guiding and Tracking Teams through dedicated training has been influential in their success. Singita is now taking this one step further by creating a new role for Chantelle that is going to have far reaching impacts for the entire Singita team. Chantelle will become the first Senior Guide and Mentor for Singita, meaning that her vast and passionate knowledge, and skill will be applied through training, assessing, and mentoring. Congratulations to you Chantelle!

With Chantelle's transition into her new role, Solomon Ndlovu has now been promoted to Head Guide at Singita Kruger National Park. Solomon has had a long a hugely successful career at Singita and has shown outstanding commitment to upholding the diamond-standards of guest experience at the lodge. His exceptional leadership abilities are well suited to this position as he will manage the daily duties of the guiding team at Singita Kruger National Park. Solomon will also continue to provide Singita guests with extraordinary safari experiences. Congratulations to you, Solomon!

We are brimming with pride and joy, for Chantelle, Solomon and Singita. It is so wonderful to see such a prestigious ecotourism and conservation brand ensure the growth, development, and fulfillment of their staff.



#IamFGASA Good news story: FGASA Guide Training in Rwanda

[The Field Guides Association of southern Africa](#) has become synonymous with standards of guiding excellence and world-class guide training. This is a legacy we are incredibly proud of, and we continually strive to improve our standards of training so guides can deliver exceptional experiences to both local and international guests.

Recently, we received an unbelievably fantastic piece of news all the way from one of Africa's most biodiverse and intriguingly beautiful countries, Rwanda. We are proud to announce that [Wilderness](#) along with several experienced FGASA qualified Assessors have brought the FGASA training to the nation to develop, train and increase the standards of guiding. The first luxury lodge this has been implemented in is the stunning [Magashi Lodge](#) in [Akagera National Park](#).

The initiative began pre-COVID in 2019 under the leadership of Adriaan Mulder and Hein Myers, at this point, the lodge had yet to be built. Initially, Adriaan, Hein and their two new guiding recruits Alfons and Innocent were posted in the park to assist with leopard habituation. A process whereby leopards are slowly and ethically introduced to humans and particularly safari vehicles over an extended period. This helps with leopard viewing and increases the park's desirability for tourists. It is important to note that this is a safe, tried, and tested procedure, the leopards of Sabi Sand have not found their comfort with humans by accident! You can learn more about the process of leopard habituation in Akagera [here](#).

As the park developed and the lodge began to be built, the decision was made to train Alfons and Innocent as guides and to use the FGASA syllabus to do so. Their training officially began in 2020 and FGASA Mentor and Assessor Henry Parsons was asked to help facilitate the training through online teaching and support. At this point, Luke Abbot joined the Wilderness family in 2020 as Head Guide and continued to share his knowledge and skills with Alfons and Innocent, developing them and ensuring they received the best training opportunities available. Once the restrictions of the pandemic had been lifted and Alfons and Innocent had passed their NQF2 theory exam, Henry journeyed to Akagera to facilitate some practical training as well as conducting their assessments. Alfons and Innocent then officially became the first ever FGASA qualified guides on Rwandan soil in 2021.

The project has continued with Wilderness Magashi and we are super excited to announce that another three Rwandan nationals are now qualified guides through FGASA. Congratulations to Venutse, Zee and Assiat who all passed their exams and assessments in March of 2023. Assiat is also the first ever FGASA qualified female guide in Rwanda. We hope that Assiat's example of dedication, hard work and passion for nature inspires the other amazing women of Rwanda to pursue their dreams of working with wildlife.

Henry had this to say about the newly FGASA qualified guides: *“All of them are so incredibly proud of getting their FGASA, they’ve been dreaming of this for a long time.”*

We are incredibly proud to see the FGASA footprint slowly expanding beyond southern Africa and making a positive impact, improving livelihoods, and bringing the shared love of wildlife to people across the continent.

We thank Wilderness for their commitment to community development and high standards of professionalism and for introducing the FGASA syllabus, Mentors and Assessors to guides in Rwanda. Finally, we thank Hein, Adriaan, Luke and Henry for their generosity in knowledge and skills sharing, their dedication to the development of passionate young guides and their continued support of FGASA.



Ulovane says “cheers for now” after 18 Years of Exceptional Service to the Guide Training Industry

On Wednesday 28 June, numerous members of the Eastern Cape community, guiding industry, reserve and lodge managers and owners, Ulovane alumni, FGASA as well as many other friends and family gathered at the Sidbury Sports Club to celebrate and honour Candice and Schalk Pretorius for their incredible contributions to the safari-tourism and field guiding industries over the last 18 years.

It’s always difficult to say goodbye and especially to such an incredible bastion of excellence within the field guide training industry. After 18 incredible years, Ulovane Environmental Training said their final farewell to their campus in the Eastern Cape. Candice and Schalk, owners and founders of Ulovane, have gone above and beyond to deliver professional, comprehensive, and holistic training to all students with a passion for wildlife and an ambition to turn field guiding into their careers.

While it is always sad to see institutions of greatness go through change, we are pleased to say that this is not the end of the training journey for Candice and Schalk. We look forward to seeing how Ulovane will conquer this next exciting chapter.

“We will not be leaving the Eastern Cape and we want to make this very clear. We will remain committed to the continued growth and advancement of the Eastern Cape guiding community. This is our home and our family. As we look to the future, we are excited about the possibilities that lie ahead. We are not leaving the industry, but instead, we are developing new projects and exploring exciting avenues to make an even bigger contribution.” These

words from Schalk Pretorius solidify Ulovane's unwavering commitment to the industry and to the continued development of gold-standard guiding professionalism.

FGASA is proud to support such an incredible training institution. Ulovane has done more than just uphold the FGASA standard, they have built upon this foundation to achieve outstanding results in guide development and training. FGASA applauds Ulovane for their dedication to excellence and we extend our most sincere thanks to you for all that you have done and achieved over these last 18 years.

Candice, Schalk and Ulovane were presented with an Honorary Training Award in recognition of excellence in guide training and development. While this is a small token of appreciation relative to the insurmountable contributions made by Ulovane, we hope that you may look upon this award with pride and fond memories. May this inspire you to continue to pursue the highest standards of training and industry commitment.

We are well aware that this is not a "goodbye" but rather, a firm "see you later!"



Schalk Pretorius, Candice Pretorius, Michelle du Plessis and Andrew Kearney



Honorary Training Award presented to Ulovane from FGASA

FGASA Job Space

FGASA is always looking out to help our members find their ideal career paths in tourist guiding, nature guiding, tourism and hospitality, have a look at some of the jobs currently available in the industry:



Sunway Safaris

We are currently looking for young, dynamic individuals with strong personalities and the ability to work under the pressure of client demands. We will consider both experienced tour leaders and newly qualified guides...

[Apply here](#)



Global Vision International (GVI)

GVI is an international multi-award-winning social enterprise. We offer conservation and community development programs in 13 countries, all aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and led by our teams and experts from the communities we operate in...

[Apply here](#)

Mahikeng Lodge

Mahikeng offers magic moments for every type of traveler and we are looking for a lodge



management couple with strong experience and excellent references. If you wish to apply please ensure you meet the minimum requirements of the position...

[Apply here](#)



Mapesu Game Reserve

Mapesu Private Game Reserve is currently seeking two experienced guides looking to take on a new wild adventure. First, they are looking for an outstanding Head Guide with Lead Trails. This person needs to be a good leader, well organised and a team player.

The second position is for a Junior Guide working towards Trails, or if you already have Trails Guide qualification this will be advantageous.

Mapesu is a 7000ha private game reserve on the border of [Mapungubwe](#) in Limpopo. Knowledge of the area as well as the cultural and historical aspects (rock art and history) will be advantageous to candidates.

Send through your CVs and Cover Letters to: quinten@mapesu.com or bookings@mapesu.com

[Apply here](#)

FGASA Mentor Space



Trails Guide Mentored Hours

Jack Hutchinson, Professional Field Guide and Trails Guide Mentor is offering his time and knowledge to help all the aspiring Trails Guides out there! Join Jack to gain needed hours, encounters, and receive one-on-one mentorship:

The mentored trails include:

- Accommodation
- Food
- Rifle and ammunition
- Two mentored walks

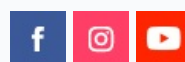
Price: R1500.00 per person per night

WhatsApp: (+27) 72 145 7538

Instagram: [@bearded_trailsranger](#)

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