

# Boundless opportunities

At 1 000 square kilometres, Tswalu Kalahari is South Africa's largest private game reserve. Owned by the Oppenheimer family, it is taking its conservation responsibilities seriously – and recently launched the Tswalu Foundation.

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Abdim's Storks

Owned by the well-known Oppenheimer family, Tswalu Kalahari is South Africa's largest private game reserve, spanning over 1 000 square kilometres. While offering guests a luxury safari experience, Tswalu also follows environmental and social responsibility philosophies, including architectural designs that minimise water and energy usage, extensive use of solar energy and an established practice of recycling most of its waste.

The reserve's primary aim, however, is to develop conservation and socio-economic opportunities in the region.

As part of this vision, Tswalu Kalahari has established the Tswalu Foundation, which aims to restore the natural environment and ecological processes that define the Kalahari's ecosystems, offering a safe haven to endangered species while providing habitat for the protection of the region's unique biodiversity.

The Tswalu Foundation was created in 2008 as a result of Jonathan Oppenheimer's foresight and his great interest in the Kalahari. His vision for the Foundation was to develop a platform on which local and international visitors could contribute to and involve themselves in environmental and community

research in the reserve. In fact, Oppenheimer's inspiration for the Foundation came from the great interest shown by guests and academics in the research conducted on the property, and it hopes to maximise more of these opportunities in the future.

The Kalahari system is a vast and understudied area, thus the Foundation assists in developing research programmes and protocols that will lead to a better understanding of its unique fauna and flora. Armed with a deeper knowledge, conservation management of this region can be more effective.

The Foundation supports species, ecological and applied research, with special mention of innovation, and upholds excellence in its investments in knowledge, people, products and infrastructure. It also provides grants for postgraduate research training, a vital component for the understanding and conservation of this system.

Visitors to Tswalu Kalahari and individuals interested in the Kalahari are encouraged to make a donation to enhance research projects on the reserve and

the surrounding area. This could either be a contribution to the research as a whole, or to support studies that have particular relevance for the funder. Funds will be drawn on for research and community development projects only and will not be used to develop the reserve's infrastructure in any way. They will also be acknowledged through newsletters, electronic media and in popular and scientific articles.

People who make a contribution to the Tswalu Foundation will be sent regular progress reports and, through this interaction, we envisage the development of long-term research and monitoring programmes, whose contribution to the conservation and understanding of the Kalahari will prove immeasurable. Through this exciting initiative, anyone with a passion for the Kalahari can be involved in the kind of research and community development that will ensure its future.

*For further information on research and sponsorship opportunities, e-mail Duncan MacFadyen at [Duncan.MacFadyen@eason.co.za](mailto:Duncan.MacFadyen@eason.co.za) or Lyrene Zimmerman at [Lyrene.Zimmerman@eason.co.za](mailto:Lyrene.Zimmerman@eason.co.za), or visit [www.tswalu.com](http://www.tswalu.com)*



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