

Module 6: Insects



Certification

Graduates receive DTA Short Course Certificate (upon completion of full program)



Duration

3 days (24 hours)

Course Description

Module 6: Insects provides an in-depth exploration of the most diverse and ecologically critical class of animals on Earth. This module moves beyond simple identification to equip professional safari guides with a comprehensive understanding of insect biology, evolution, and their indispensable roles in African ecosystems, with a specific focus on Botswana. Trainees will learn to interpret insect behaviour, understand their profound relationships with plants and other animals, and effectively communicate their significance to guests. The course blends classroom theory with practical field sessions to transform insects from overlooked curiosities into key components of a holistic and engaging guiding narrative.

Course Outcome

Upon completion of this module, the learner will be capable of:

- Identifying the key anatomical and biological characteristics that define the Class Insecta and its major orders.
- Explaining the ecological significance of insects as pollinators, decomposers, predators, and prey, and their role as bio-indicators of ecosystem health.
- Recognizing and describing the most prominent and significant insect orders found in Botswana, including their unique behaviours and evolutionary traits.
- Communicating the fascinating life cycles, from complete and incomplete metamorphosis to the unique strategies of ancient orders, in an engaging way to guests.
- Articulating the complex relationships insects have with humans, from disease vectors and pests to beneficial partners and cultural icons.
- Practically applying this knowledge on game drives to enhance guest appreciation for the smaller yet vital components of the savanna, wetland, and forest ecosystems.

Topics Covered

- Introduction to Class Insecta: Diversity, abundance, and key characteristics (body plan, respiration, metamorphosis, flight).
- Insect Evolution and Adaptation: Origin from crustaceans, wing evolution, coevolution with flowering plants.
- Insect Behaviour & Communication: Sociality (eusociality in ants/bees), communication via chemicals, sound, and visual cues.
- Ecology and Significance: Roles as pollinators, decomposers, and ecosystem engineers.
- Relationships with humans (pests, benefits, research).
- Taxonomy and Identification: Detailed study of prominent insect orders in Botswana.



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