Monkeyland



Plettenberg Bay 6600

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MONKEYLAND IN A NUTSHELLMonkeyland, just outside of Plettenberg Bay, is the world’s first free-roaming multi-species primate sanctuary. Over the course of our tours – which we call “monkey safaris” – you’ll be able to see over 550 primates of various species – Capuchin Monkeys, Ring-tailed and Black-and-white Ruffed Lemurs, Gibbons and Howler Monkeys, to name a few.The 128-metre suspension bridge, which runs through the forest canopy, gives you the chance to see these primates from another perspective – and not only literally. In addition to the tour itself, Monkeyland has a restaurant, a souvenir store and a viewing deck.Many of our tour guides are multi-lingual and as such can accommodate speakers of English, Afrikaans, German, French and Spanish.Monkeyland was founded by Tony Blignaut, who dreamed of and saw the need for a forest sanctuary that could restore the freedom of ex-captive primates. In his research he found that many of South Africa’s captive primates lived in terrible conditions in people’s homes. The owners of these animals are often overwhelmed by and unprepared for the difficulties of keeping intelligent, wild animals as pets and, before Monkeyland, there was nowhere they could turn to find a more appropriate home.Other primates are kept in even worse conditions in circuses and laboratories and, in addition, many zoos have ‘surplus’ primates for whom they no longer have space. So in 1998, after a lot

of hard work, the world’s first free-roaming, multi-species primate sanctuary opened its doors to rescued primates and the people who visit them.As well as these ex-pets and zoo animals being provided with a more suitable home in a semi-free-roaming forest, the Monkeyland primates are able to find their own companions and mates and form family groups. In doing so they gain the potential to breed and strengthen collective bonds, which facilitates the ability to form genuine familial and inter-family structures.One of Tony’s hopes for Monkeyland was that, in the seemingly not-so-distant future, it could quite literally ‘give back to nature.’ Specifically, for it to be able to function as a source of indigenous primate species for the repopulation initiatives of places in which the local groups have been wiped out. Due primarily to human exploitation, deforestation and logging, natural disasters and so on.Here at Monkeyland a multitude of species, already endangered or critically endangered, can survive and reproduce for a future reintroduction into the wild. Essentially, Monkeyland serves not only to rescue and provide happier lives for ex-captive primates but also to safeguard these species against extinction. An intention analogous with the guarding of seeds of vulnerable flora so that they may be planted when the need arises.That being said, under no circumstances will any primate ever be traded from Monkeyland to a private individual, zoo or institution unless it is for reintroduction into the wild.Our role in nature conservation is to protect and maintain genetically pure species of various taxa in a semi-wild state; in free-roaming habitats not dissimilar to those of the animals’ home ranges. Ultimately, it is to hold in safekeeping the seeds of these taxa which, when the time is right, can repopulate debilitated wildlands.

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