Snake Awareness, First Aid for Snakebite and Venomous Snake Handling Course

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Course Information:

Course Date: Friday, 27 November 2026
Venue: Exotic Animal World, Klapmuts, Western Cape
Directions: http://bit.ly/2coMgMG

Programme:

The course starts at **09:00** sharp - please arrive a few minutes earlier and enjoy coffee or tea while the team signs you in.

We start the day with the highly informative theoretical section – covering scorpion and spider awareness and first aid, snake awareness, biology and behaviour, myths and superstition, identification, basic first aid for snakebite, as well as the medical treatment of snakebite. This is followed by a multiple-choice test at the end of the session. The theoretical section lasts around 3.5 hours in total, with a coffee break halfway through.

The practical venomous snake handling takes place after lunch and delegates are taught how to use the correct handling equipment (snake tongs, snake hooks, buckets and tubes) and the safest protocols to catch and release venomous snakes.
Delegates work one-on-one with the trainers during the practical session and a trainer is always close by to offer instructions and assistance. The trainer will guide you through the protocols of doing a safe removal, explaining how to read the snakes' body language and make sure both you and the snake are safe throughout the process.
Snakes used for the handling session vary but we usually make use of the following species: Mole Snake, Boomslang, Cape Cobra and Puff Adder.

This is a full-day course with a coffee/tea break at around 10:45, and a lunch break at around 13:00 with a light lunch provided.
If you have booked for the Venomous Snake Handling session, it starts at around 14:00. Snake handling, depending on the group size, takes around 1½ - 2 hours.

Course Fees:

All course fees include coffee/tea refreshments and a light lunch.

Snake Awareness, First Aid for Snakebite & Venomous Snake Handling	R 1 695.00
Snake Awareness & First Aid for Snakebite Only (no snake handling)	R 1 035.00
Scholar's Snake Awareness, First Aid for Snakebite and Venomous Snake Handling	R 1 200.00
Scholar's Snake Awareness & First Aid for Snakebite Only (no snake handling)	R 595.00

The Scholar's rates apply to delegates under 18 years of age.
The full amount will have to be paid prior to the course to secure your attendance.

There are two options for booking:
1) Please follow the link or
2) Request a booking form from Michelle at courses@asiorg.co.za.
Return the completed form and we will send you an invoice for payment.

Bookings close three days before the event (unless fully booked prior to this) please book early to avoid disappointment.

Cancellation policy:
No cancellation fees for changes or cancellation to your booking 48 hours prior to the course date.
50% canellation fee for cancellations or changes within 48 hours of the course date.
100% cancellation fee for Non-attendance on the day of the course.
PLEASE NOTE:
Occassionally we need to cancel courses.
In this event, you will be notified at least 48 hours in advance, you will then gave the option of moving the course to another date or for a full refund to be done.

Important information:

1) No spectators are allowed during the Snake Awareness session, and this includes children. Spectators are welcome to watch the Venomous Snake Handling session from a safe distance but are not to interfere with the training in any way.

2) Mobile phones: The use of mobile phones for text messages and calls is not permitted during the awareness or handling courses and may only be left on for emergency calls.

3) Photographs that are taken by the ASI team during the course will be made available via Dropbox.
Participants and spectators are also welcome to take photographs of the handling session but video recording is not permitted.

4) Our minimum age requirement for both the Awareness and the Handling course is 12 years of age.

5) Delegates that do the Venomous Snake Handling will have to sign an indemnity prior to the practical session. Parents/guardians must sign for delegates under 18 years of age.

6) Should a delegate have any specific dietary requirements, they are welcome to bring their own lunch.

Dress code and what to bring:

1) Delegates doing the Venomous Snake Handling should wear long trousers and closed shoes and are advised to bring a hat.

2) As you will be writing a test just before the lunch break, please bring a pen and notepad (for those who wish to take notes). No prior studying or snake knowledge is necessary for the test and the format is multiple choice.

3) The African Snakebite Institute will supply all equipment needed for delegates to use during the snake handling session (hooks, tongs, buckets, and tubes).

Certificates and course material:

Each delegate will receive a course certificate, First Aid for Snakebite booklet, as well as a full colour A3 Dangerous Snakes of Southern Africa poster.

Delegates who do not confirm their bookings prior to the course, will not be able to attend the training on the day.

PLEASE NOTE: All delegates who book and pay 3 days prior to the course date, will receive a printed certificate on the day. Please ensure that we have the right name and surname as it will appear on the printed certificate. If details are provided incorrectly another certificate will have to be issued and sent by courier and will cost R250.00. Digital certificates will be sent to all successful delegates on the Monday after the course.

Presenter details and accreditation:

Our courses are presented by one of our experienced trainers:

Johan Marais is one of Africa's leading herpetologists with over 40 years of experience. Johan is the most prominent author of snake books in Africa and has written the best-sellers; A Complete Guide to Snakes of Southern Africa, Snakes and Snakebite in Southern Africa and First Aid for Snakebite, to mention just a few.

Tim Vorster is based in the Western Cape and has been assisting the African Snakebite Institute for many years with public courses, kids courses and more recently, corporate training. Tim has been a snake enthusiast since his youth and presented thousands of awareness sessions throughout Southern Africa.

Luke Kemp is a keen herpetologist and photographer who has been working for the African Snakebite Institute for more than four years and, in addition to presenting courses, develops much of the ASI course material and does the identification of snakes from all over Africa on the ASI App. He is also co-authoring a new a book with Johan on the Reptiles & Amphibians of southern Africa.

Tim Brammer is an avid herpetologist who has been based in Malawi for the last few years, where he started presenting snake awareness and handling sessions. He also developed identification posters for the country and is working on a book of snakes of Malawi. Tim is a keen reptile photographer and assists on field surveys in various African countries, when possible.

Willem Van Zyl is an experienced snake handler, wildlife photographer and wilderness first responder who has been working with the African Snakebite Institute for the last five years. He has done many public and corporate Snake Awareness and Venomous Snake Handling courses. Willem is a software developer and assists with the ASI website, and created our hugely popular free App ASI Snakes.

Accreditation:

This course is registered with the following bodies:
HPCSA (Health Professions Council of South Africa) – registered health professionals earn 4 CPD points.
SAIOSH (South African Institute of Occupational Safety and Health) – registered participants receive 2 CPD points.
PCIPC (Pest Control Industry Professional Council) – registered members receive 3 CPD points when completing this course.
Our courses are accredited by the **ISZS** (the International Society of Zoological Sciences) and recognised by the **AFGA** (African Field Guides Association) and the NFTGA (National Federation of Tourist Guides & Affiliates).

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Saiosh South African Institute of Occupational Safety and Health Corporate Member

AFGA AFRICAN FIELD GUIDES ASSOCIATION

Pest Control Industries Professional Council