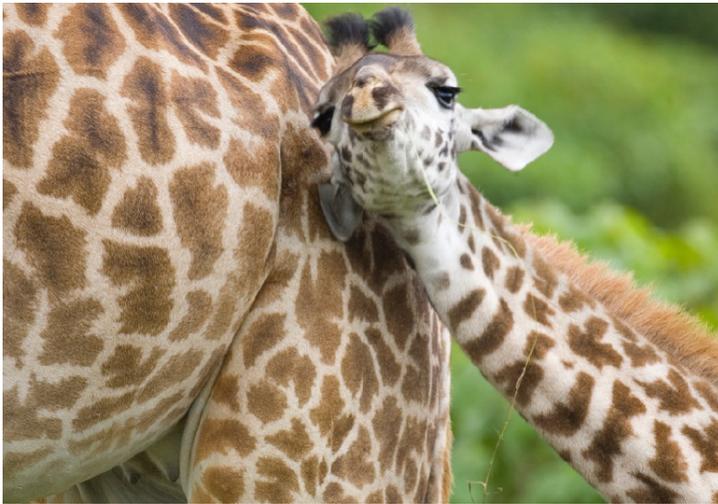


# Cornell University



## **CAU Study Tour: Ultimate Tanzania Safari August 1 - August 11, 2027**

Led by  
Cole Gilbert, Professor of Entomology  
&  
Linda Rayor, Senior Lecturer Emerita

# A Letter from Our Experts

Dear CAU Travelers,

Our passions are watching wildlife in their native habitats, experiencing local cultures, and eating good food. This happens in our woods in Central New York, but we have also lived and worked on several continents and visited all of them for the opportunity to discover new habitats and their indigenous creatures. Increasingly with climate change, our travel goals have expanded to explore habitats that are particularly at risk and those that are home to many endemic species. Like many CAU participants, our domestic conversations often involve what animals we most want to see in the wild and where we want to go to learn about them.

The first trip we led for CAU was to a dude ranch in Wyoming, but our 2nd and 3rd tours were to Tanzania in December 2006 and December 2007 with Thomson Safaris. Those Tanzania trips were both fulfilment of lifetime dreams and life changing for us. As longtime watchers of Nature and other animal documentaries, actually being in the savannah watching a cheetah mother showing her four youngsters how to chase down a hare, being surrounded by massive herds of elephants like being in the middle of a real-life Jurassic Park, and watching pools full of cranky hippos was beyond our wildest expectations. And it remains so! We think that this trip is even more special because unlike most Tanzanian tours, we will be able to get out of our vehicles and hike, as well as taking night rides! We are delighted to be returning to Tanzania, working again with Thomson Safaris, and seeing how the country is different in August and 20-years later.

Both of us are passionate about teaching. We both come from families of educators. We relish the opportunity as tour leaders to share information with participants that helps them understand the underlying biology, ecology, geology, and behavior that contributes to what we are seeing/hearing/smelling in the community we are passing through. Along with providing lectures about the wildlife and ecology we visit, we want to enrich the participants' appreciation of what they experience on the tour. It has been said that one of the hallmarks of traveling with us is that we occasionally don't wander very far because we find so many interesting creatures and plants to talk about along the way. Guilty as charged. Our goals are to point out awesome, often overlooked, insects, spiders, to get up early for birding and listening to mammal groups announcing their territory, and to experience as much nature as possible in our time traveling together – while eating good meals and learning how local communities live. Along with Tanzania, we have led CAU wildlife-oriented tours in Madagascar, Malaysian Borneo, Galapagos & Ecuador, Brazilian Pantanal, Belize & Guatemala, Panama, Alaska, Arizona, and Wyoming. Visiting these places and working with local guides has changed our view of the world. We suspect it will change yours as well.

Warmly,  
Linda Rayor and Cole Gilbert

# Tanzania

The world's premier safari destination, Tanzania offers unmatched beauty and wildlife experiences. Known as "the Switzerland of Africa," this peaceful nation dedicates 25% of its land to conservation, showcasing the Great Migration of over two million animals. Bird enthusiasts can enjoy over 1,100 species, from doves to lilac-breasted rollers. Tanzania's rich culture, shaped by its harmonious blend of traditional and modern influences, reflects the warmth and generosity of its people, making it a truly unique and dynamic destination.



## **Serengeti National Park** *Discover Big Cat Country*

The Serengeti is the lifeblood of Africa's wildlife. It boasts more lions than anywhere else in Africa, earning it the name "Big Cat Country," and it's home to the Great Migration of almost two million wildebeest. Best of all, safari camps are relocated seasonally to put you closest to the animals.

## **Eastern Serengeti Nature Refuge** *Enjoy Exclusive Access to Wildlife*

This private, 10,000-acre nature refuge has made remarkable strides in the conservation of wildlife and landscapes—and it's only accessible to Thomson guests. Stretch your legs on walks during the day and witness nocturnal wildlife behavior during a night wildlife drive, both restricted in the national parks.

## **Ngorongoro Crater & Highlands** *Visit a Geological Marvel*

The Ngorongoro Crater is the world's largest unbroken volcanic caldera, measuring around 11 miles across and encompassing 102 square miles. With over 25,000 animals, this UNESCO World Heritage Site is one of the greatest natural wonders of the planet.

## **The Big Five** *Witness Africa's Most Iconic Wildlife*

Few experiences compare to seeing the Big Five—lion, leopard, elephant, rhino, and buffalo—in their natural habitat. Across legendary landscapes like Serengeti National Park and the Ngorongoro Crater, these extraordinary animals roam vast plains and ancient volcanic calderas. With expert guides and carefully chosen camp locations, you'll have exceptional opportunities to observe each species up close, gaining a deeper appreciation for Africa's most celebrated wildlife.

## **The Great Migration** *Experience Nature's Greatest Wildlife Spectacle*

Each year, nearly two million wildebeest, along with hundreds of thousands of zebras and gazelles, move across the plains of the Serengeti in a timeless cycle of survival. This sweeping journey draws predators, dramatic river crossings, and nonstop wildlife activity. With camps positioned to follow the herds, you'll be immersed in the heart of the migration, witnessing one of the most extraordinary events in the natural world.

## Faculty Bios



**Cole Gilbert** *Professor of Entomology*

Growing up in eastern Missouri, Cole enjoyed a childhood exploring nearby woods and creeks and returning from expeditions laden with all manner of creatures, living, dead, and fossilized. His interest in insects was fostered by a neighborhood physician with an avocation studying butterflies and studying animal behavior and neurobiology while attending college at Washington University in St. Louis.

These topics became Cole's principal interest: how an animal acquires sensory information, evaluates it, and produces adaptive behavior. He earned graduate degrees in insect behavior at the University of Kansas, where he met Linda. He did post-doctoral work in visual physiology at Indiana University, and in neuroscience at the University of Arizona before joining the Entomology Department at Cornell in 1992. Along the way, he spent a Fulbright year in West Germany, served a year as a program officer at the National Science Foundation, and taught for 7 summers at the Marine Biological Laboratory on Cape Cod. At Cornell, he has taught courses in Introductory Biology, Evolution, Insect Biology, Insect Physiology, Comparative Physiology, and Art & Vision for which he earned university, state, and national teaching awards. He served 7 years as Director of Undergraduate Biology and is currently Director of Undergraduate Studies in Entomology. He also enjoys working with "life-long learners" and since 2002 has taught 10 CAU on-campus courses, co-led multiple CAU Study Tours with Linda, and for the past 13 years has taught workshops for New York State Master Naturalists. When not biologizing, Cole enjoys cooking (and eating) dishes from a variety of cuisines, and listening to improvisational music, such as jazz and bluegrass.



**Dr. Linda S. Rayor**  
*Senior Lecturer Emerita*

Dr. Linda S. Rayor, Senior Lecturer/ Senior Research Associate Emerita, was on the faculty of the Department of Entomology at Cornell University from 1994 – 2026.

Linda taught courses on how to do scientific outreach (Naturalist Outreach), Spider Biology and Social Animal Behavior: Arthropods to Apes. Her innovative teaching has been recognized by national societies (2016, 2008 Entomology Society of America; 2015 Animal Behavior Society) and within Cornell University (2007 Innovative Teacher Award; 2005 Kaplan Service-Learning Award). Linda is a behavioral ecologist whose research focuses on social spiders and other arachnids, with research on the social dynamics of primates and prairie dogs. Her research focuses on the behavioral, physiological, and systematic patterns found in the large group-living and solitary huntsman spiders ([read here](#)). She is Past President of the American Arachnological Society.

Helping others understand and appreciate science has permeated all aspects of Linda's career – from running the Naturalist Outreach Program, a K-12 STEM Outreach Program which trains and sends Cornell students into classrooms to give hands-on presentations on biodiversity and ecology ([read here](#)), to starring in the nature documentary 'Monster Bug Wars' (@MonsterBugWarsTV), producing videos explaining nature-oriented biology with her Naturalist Outreach students ([watch on YouTube](#)), and helping develop parts of Australian Museum's stunning 'Spiders: From Fear to Fascination' blockbuster exhibit which is touring the USA and Canada, to leading CAU wildlife tours around the world. Along with tours, Linda has taught numerous CAU workshops on spiders. A proud field biologist, she has done research in Colorado, British Columbia, Mexico, Costa Rica, and Australia.



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## CAU Study Tour: Ultimate Tanzania Safari Itinerary

### Sunday, August 1: Arrive in Tanzania



Arrive at Kilimanjaro International Airport, where you are met and transferred to the Gran Melia Lodge in Arusha. Settle in and enjoy a relaxed first evening in northern Tanzania.

### Monday, August 2: Explore Arusha



Set at 4,500 feet on the southern slopes of Mount Meru, Arusha is a small, welcoming city surrounded by coffee plantations, banana groves, and villages. Enjoy a relaxed morning to explore independently or take in the views from your lodge. After lunch, you'll meet your fellow travelers for a safari briefing that sets the stage for the journey ahead. This evening, join them for a family-style dinner—share laughs, swap Cornell stories, and toast to the start of an unforgettable safari adventure. **Meals Included:** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

## Tuesday, August 3: Eastern Serengeti Nature Reserve



A short scenic flight carries you from Arusha into the eastern Serengeti ecosystem, where vast open spaces replace city streets. After landing, meet your guides and receive an introduction to the Eastern Serengeti Nature Reserve, a private refuge exclusive to Thomson guests shaped by conservation partnerships and deep community ties. Settle into your Nyumba and enjoy lunch while overlooking the surrounding landscape.

In the afternoon, spend time at your Nyumba camp as giraffes, warthogs, and zebras gather at the waterhole to drink, socialize, and move through the landscape. From the comfort of camp, you can observe these interactions up close, experiencing the rhythms of the Serengeti in an intimate way.

Take an afternoon walk around the nature reserve to learn more about the flora and fauna of the ecosystem. You'll come face-to-face with the friendly faces of giraffes, impala, and eland. On a walking safari, there's no vehicle, no barrier between you and the animals, allowing you to get a freer, deeper connection to the Serengeti and its wildlife.

Gather for a Cornell faculty lecture with your hosts. Following the lecture, enjoy a family-style dinner and settle into your Nyumba as the bush comes alive with the sounds of wildlife at night. **Meals Included:** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

## Wednesday, August 4: Eastern Serengeti Nature Reserve



Begin the day with a morning hike through the reserve, where you may come face to face with giraffes, track animals by their footprints and scat, and observe birds, insects, and small creatures up close. Later, visit the Enjipai Women's Group to learn how tourism supports local livelihoods. After lunch at camp, hear stories passed down through generations from a Maasai storyteller and explore a traditional boma.

Tonight, enjoy the rare opportunity of a night drive in search of nocturnal wildlife that few get to see, including aardvarks, bush babies, and genets, all under a vast, starlit sky.

**Meals Included:** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

## Thursday, August 5: Serengeti National Park



Depart the eastern Serengeti and travel west toward Serengeti National Park, passing rugged hills, wooded gullies, and Maasai settlements along the way. Stop to visit a local school and a community development project through Thomson's sister non-profit, FOTZC, gaining insight into daily life beyond the park boundaries.

Once you arrive at the National Park, enjoy a boxed lunch in the bush before spending the afternoon on wildlife drives through the Serengeti's iconic landscapes. The journey itself is a wildlife experience, following the Grumeti River and entering the park through its northeastern corridor, where the plains begin to open wide. **Meals Included:** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

## Friday, August 6: Serengeti National Park – The Big Five



The Serengeti is one of Africa's most celebrated wildlife regions, known for its extraordinary biodiversity and opportunities to encounter the Big Five: lion, leopard, elephant, buffalo, and rhino. These animals earned their name not for size, but for the challenge they once posed to early hunters—today, they represent some of the most sought-after sightings on safari.

Begin the day with morning wildlife viewing or rise before dawn for an optional balloon excursion that offers a sweeping aerial perspective of the plains. After lunch at your Nyumba, continue exploring different habitats within the park, from open grasslands to acacia-dotted corridors. Back at camp, your group gathers in the dining lodge for a Cornell faculty lecture. The rest of the night is yours to relax at camp. **Meals Included:** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

## Saturday, August 7: Serengeti National Park – The Great Migration



Today is devoted to seeking out the Great Migration, one of the most extraordinary wildlife movements on Earth. Rather than a single event, the migration is a continuous cycle driven by rainfall, as more than one million wildebeest and hundreds of thousands of zebras move across the Serengeti ecosystem in search of fresh grazing.

Spend the day tracking the herds and the predators that follow them, with expert guides interpreting the subtle signs of movement and behavior. Enjoy a bush lunch in the heart of the plains, then return to camp in the afternoon for a sundowner and easy conversation with fellow travelers. **Meals Included:** *Breakfast, Boxed Lunch, Dinner*

## Sunday, August 8: Ngorongoro Highlands



After morning wildlife viewing, bid farewell to the Serengeti and fly south to Manyara before transferring into the Ngorongoro Highlands. The scenery changes dramatically as flat plains give way to rolling hills, rich red soil, and lush vegetation shaped by mist and rainfall.

Arrive at Gibb's Farm for lunch and a guided tour that introduces its gardens, coffee estate, and long history in the region. Settle into your private cottage and enjoy the peaceful atmosphere of the highlands. As the day winds down, sit down to a farm-to-fork dinner. Afterward, gather around the fire for another Cornell faculty lecture before returning to your cozy cottage. **Meals Included:** *Breakfast, Boxed Lunch, Dinner*

## Monday, August 9: Ngorongoro Crater



Descend into the Ngorongoro Crater, a vast natural caldera that supports one of the densest concentrations of wildlife in Africa. Within its walls, grasslands, wetlands, and forests create a self-contained ecosystem where resident animals thrive year-round.

Spend the day exploring the crater floor in search of the Big Five and countless other species, stopping for a picnic lunch beside a scenic lake. In the late afternoon, return to Gibb's Farm for time to relax on the veranda or by the pool, followed by a farm-to-fork dinner with views of the rolling hills and live music. **Meals Included:** *Breakfast, Boxed Lunch, Dinner*

## Tuesday, August 10: Explore Gibb's Farm



Today is dedicated entirely to relaxing at Gibb's Farm—a chance to slow the pace and spend the day immersed in the Ngorongoro Highlands. Named the #1 Safari Lodge in Africa and one of the Best Hotels in the World by Travel + Leisure and Condé Nast respectively, Gibb's Farm is an unrivaled sanctuary for the soul.

The day is yours to enjoy any of several optional activities at Gibb's Farm. Visit with the artist-in-residence, enjoy traditional tea on the veranda, visit the spa, take a guided hike to the elephant cave, or simply enjoy the grounds. In the evening, gather for a farewell dinner and toast to your final evening in Tanzania with your fellow travelers.

**Meals Included:** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

## Wednesday, August 11: Depart Tanzania



After breakfast, travel back to Arusha with stops at the Cultural Heritage Center and a farewell lunch at Arusha Coffee Lodge. A day room is provided before a group transfer to Kilimanjaro International Airport for your onward journey home.

**Meals Included:** *Breakfast, Lunch*

## Your Accommodations



**Nyumba Camps:** Nyumba means “home” in Swahili, and that’s how camp feels. This safari experience offers close access to landscapes and wildlife. Nyumba tents, exclusive to Thomson Safaris, provide both proximity to Tanzania’s wilderness and generous Western-style amenities.

Nyumba tents were designed by co-founder Rick Thomson to give you the ultimate safari camping experience. Take a behind-the-scenes look at what goes into making your Nyumba so special.

Each Nyumba camp blends seamlessly with its surroundings, rotating seasonally to keep you close to wildlife. Expect tracks from warthogs, dik-diks, and grazers right through camp. The highly trained chefs create delicious meals with a Western palate in mind, featuring East African flavors that guests rave about and request recipes for every year.

### Each tent is outfitted with:

- A queen-sized bed with fine linens (twin-sized beds available upon request)
- Private en suite bathrooms
- Safari-style en suite showers with hot water
- Solar LED lighting



**Gibb’s Farm:** Named the #1 Safari Lodge in Africa and one of the Best Hotels in the World by Travel + Leisure and Condé Nast respectively, Gibb’s Farm is an unrivaled sanctuary for the soul. Thomson enjoys unmatched access to this eco-lodge in the Ngorongoro Highlands, which offers farm-to-table meals, walking and biking tours, and luxurious accommodations.

**Gran Meliá Arusha:** Set against the backdrop of Mount Meru and surrounded by lush coffee and tea plantations, Gran Meliá Arusha offers a refined and welcoming start to your Tanzanian adventure. Ideally located between Kilimanjaro International Airport and Arusha National Park, this contemporary retreat blends modern comfort with natural beauty. Guests enjoy spacious rooms, landscaped gardens, a heated outdoor pool, a spa, and exceptional dining that highlights fresh, locally sourced ingredients — all providing a seamless transition into safari life.



## Pricing

**\$13,990 per adult, based on double occupancy**

**\$1,800 single supplement (if applicable)**

**\$600 Tanzania-imposed tax, per person**

**\$599 optional Serengeti Balloon Safari**

### Register today!

Please contact

[francesca@thomsonsafaris.com](mailto:francesca@thomsonsafaris.com)

or call Thomson Safaris

at 800-235-0289

To reserve space, a 20% deposit per person is required.

## Terms and Booking Policies

### Deposit: \$2,800 per person

There are 14 total rooms, including 2 for CAU faculty and staff

### Deposits

A 20% deposit is required to reserve your space. This deposit is non-refundable and non-transferable. Visa, MasterCard, and Discover credit cards are accepted for the initial deposit.

We strongly encourage you to purchase travel insurance within two weeks of making your deposit as we are not able to make changes to our cancellation policy for any reason.

### Payments

You will be invoiced upon making a reservation and full payment is due 90 days prior to the first land day of the trip. Payment is accepted as follows:

- U.S. Dollar check posted to our office
- Wire transfer to our account at Eastern Bank, Lynn, MA.
- Money order

### Cancellation and Refunds

Notification of cancellation must be made in writing to Thomson Safaris. At the time we receive the cancellation, all moneys will be refunded less the following cancellation charges:

91 days or more before departure: Cancellation fees equal the amount of your deposit

90 to 61 days before departure: 50% of the package price is non-refundable

60 to 46 days before departure: 65% of the package price is non-refundable

45 days or less before departure: 100% of the package price is non-refundable

Within 90 days prior to departure cancellation fees will apply. You may also be responsible for any fees imposed by hotels, airlines, etc., that are over and above your land arrangements, due to your cancellation of your original date bookings.

Please note that no partial refunds will be given for unused meals, hotel rooms, airport transfers, etc., for any reason whatsoever. Thomson Safaris reserves the right to increase the tour price in the event of cost increases due to changes in airfares, currency fluctuations, park fee increases, fuel surcharges, taxes, etc. Thomson Safaris reserves the right to alter the tour without notice.

Thomson Safaris is not responsible for expenses incurred by trip members in preparing for the trip (e.g. visa fees, immunizations, insurance, equipment, etc.) or for any necessary additional travel arrangements should you embark from home before the group departure date. Accommodations are subject to change.

If you are planning a trip within 3 months of travel, please call our team at 1.800.235.0289 for additional information.

### **Contacting Us**

If there are any questions regarding our policies you may contact us using the information below:

**Thomson Safaris**  
**14 Mount Auburn Street**  
**Watertown, MA 02472**  
**United States**  
**P: 1.800.235.0289**

## **Travel Safety Policy**

While Cornell is pleased to facilitate travel opportunities for its travelers and friends with tour operators that specialize in high-quality educational travel, please be aware that Cornell does not conduct, manage, or operate these travel experiences, or act as an agent for travelers interested in tours. Tour operators and travelers are responsible for making their own safety decisions concerning this travel, and, as a facilitator between travelers and the tour operators with whom travelers make arrangements for completing travel, Cornell's role and liability are strictly limited. Specific tour operator and national health and safety protocols will apply to each trip, and travelers should review all protocols and trip terms and conditions, including terms and conditions regarding cancellations, refunds, health and safety, and insurance prior to making a reservation. Cornell is not responsible for changes to trips or travel arrangements or for losses, expenses, damages, or injuries resulting from travel.