

Conservation & Community



Overview

Location	Paterson (closest town is Port Elizabeth, 60km away), South Africa.
Duration	From 2 weeks.
Dates	All year round.
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minimum age: 18.• You must have an Upper Intermediate level of English.• Special skills: You need to be physically fit.
Your impact	<p></p> <p>The impact of your volunteer work depends on the nature of the project. In addition, it may also depend on whether the project offers a full volunteering experience or a combination of volunteering and tourism. For details, please see the description of the project and what's included in the project fees.</p>
Documents required	Enrolment form, curriculum vitae, letter of motivation, passport copy, proof of medical insurance.
Day of arrival	Monday.
Day of departure	Saturday.



Highlights

- Hands-on volunteering offers an insight into conservation and environmental issues as part of managing the game reserve.
- You will experience the Wild 5 on their Safari Drives.
- Work with children in a Xhosa community and animals in one project.
- The project is involved with the Conservation of Rhino.
- There are a variety of activities to take part in after hours.
- You will make new friends from all over the world.

Project information

This pioneering conservation project is the result of 6 farming families working together to form a private game reserve approximately 7500 hectares in size.

It is a unique conservation initiative that allows animals to be re-introduced to the area where they once roamed freely and so making a contribution to the conservation of the natural heritage.

This project provides an insight into the environmental issues and management of a game reserve by assisting the Conservation Centre. It also contributes to community upliftment through a local orphanage and vulnerable child centre, whilst also providing an element of fun for those who participate.

Programme details

Community service

- Conservation centre assistance with school groups.
- Centre for vulnerable children and local orphanage.
- Care, education and vegetable gardening.
- Clean ups.

Conservation Service

- Game management, the re-introduction of new game into the park and the wild.
- Land management, controlled burning, investigating grazing patterns, management of roads, bridges and fencing.
- Predator monitoring, mainly lions.
- Game drives, animal ID, tracking and introduction.
- Birding and entomology collection.
- Removal of alien vegetation and work in the indigenous nursery.
- Anti poaching patrols.

Fun Element

- Learn about the Xhosa culture and the use of medicinal plants.
- Learn more about the history, geology and paleontology of the area.
- Star gazing.
- Beach walks and marine conservation.

Your role

There is a dedicated volunteer coordinator at the project who arranges the work and activities for the volunteers. Two days a week, you will spend your time at a day care centre and on the other three days, you will stay at the game reserve.

Typical tasks at the day care centre include working with children of all ages. You may be reading, teaching or playing with the kids. There are also organisational tasks: fixing things, helping in the vegetable garden, etc.

At the game reserve, you are involved with tracking lions and monitoring their wellbeing, game counts, road maintenance or clearing alien plants. There are also lectures and discussions on various topics like birding and hunting.

It is important to note that this description serves as an example only. The daily tasks and challenges depend on the volunteer, the time of the year and the work that needs to be done. The final job description can therefore vary substantially from the above.

Getting to and from the project



The Conservation and Community project is located only 60km away from Port Elizabeth .

You need to arrive at Port Elizabeth Airport where you will be collected by the volunteer staff. Transport is provided on both your arrival and departure – the preferred arrival time is early on Monday mornings and for your departure Saturday mornings.

Accommodation

Your accommodation is in the renovated Old Railway Station in Sandflats. Sandflats is part of the Paterson Village, which is 10 km from the reserve. You are accommodated in a one storey 7-bedroom house, which overlooks a large garden and is within walking distance of the local bar and basic shops. Two volunteers usually share a room, and there are 3 bathrooms (with hot showers) to share. Bedding as well as towels will be provided. Laundry is available. There is a communal dining and sitting room with DSTV and a well-equipped kitchen with adjoining office space.



The house also has a swimming pool, an outside seating area with a braai (BBQ) and a fire pit for chilly nights and social gatherings. WiFi is available.

Meals

Food is supplied but you need to prepare your own meals. The stock will be supplied once a week in the form of meats, fruits, vegetables as well as dry stock. A vegetarian option is available and it is also possible to cater for special dietary requirements.

Free time

You can arrange to explore the area at your own expense, i.e. a trip to Port Elizabeth, Grahamstown, Jeffrey's Bay or even Cape Town. There are also nearby attractions available. You can go whale watching, do all kind of sports (golf, tennis, squash, surfing, horse riding, tandem sky diving, bungee jumping, etc.), enjoy the beach, do a fishing charter, watch movies, visit the casino, go shopping or even join a historical tour. Transfers can be arranged by the project.

Each week the project offers an excursion, for example:

- An excursion to the Addo National Elephant Park.
- An excursion to a Penguin Sanctuary.
- A river cruise.

Local transport

You will be taken onto the game reserve daily from Monday to Friday. Any other transport must be organised by your own expense, either you pay a shuttle, use a taxi or hire a car.

What to bring

The Port Elizabeth/Grahamstown area is known to have 4 seasons in one day. Please pack sensibly for cold and warm weather conditions. You will be working on the Game Reserve for the majority of the day. It is important to note the wind-chill factor for early morning drives into the reserve, particularly in winter (June - September). Blankets are provided at the house to offer extra warmth in the vehicle. The reserve is a short journey in an open Land Rover from Paterson and therefore you will be asked to take enough equipment and food out with you to last the day – and clothing for any impending weather conditions.

All year round essential clothing items:

- Warm clothes: hat, scarf and gloves
- Waterproof jacket
- Thick fleece/coat
- Working/hiking boots
- Rockies or light canvas shoes for around the house
- Work gloves
- Long trousers
- Old shirts/old trousers (in case of painting with the children at the community centre)



Other items to bring:

- Binoculars
- 3 point South African adaptor
- Torch (additional batteries can be purchased in Paterson)
- Sleeping bag + mat
- Small pocket knife
- Travel pillow/Camping pillow
- Personal toiletries (soap, insect repellent and suntan lotion - although a certain amount of basic toiletries can be bought in Paterson)
- Lip balm
- Sunglasses
- Peaked cap/sunhat
- Beach Towel / swimming costume

Items provided at the project:

- Lunch boxes / thermos flasks
- Bush camping kitchen equipment

While there is no specific uniform, volunteers are asked to wear sensible clothing, e.g. long shorts and closed shoes. Hot pants, string bikinis and flip-flops are not suitable for work.

Medical insurance

It is required that you take out medical insurance before travelling to South Africa. For stays exceeding 90 days, it is compulsory to take out a South African medical insurance. We recommend NetworX from Compcare, which is specifically designed for people who visit South Africa for 3 to 12 months. You will receive an information leaflet and an application form together with your confirmation of booking.

Health

No vaccinations are required except for travellers going to the north-eastern areas of South Africa, where anti-malaria precautions are recommended. Clients should consult their doctor for recommendations.

A yellow fever certificate is compulsory for those persons who have travelled from, or intend travelling through, countries in the yellow fever belt:

Africa: Angola, Burundi, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Gabon, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zaire.

South America: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guyana, Guyana, Panama, Peru, Surinam, Venezuela, Argentina and Paraguay.

Bring medication just in case you suffer from any travel-related illnesses, e.g. stomach upsets, since your body needs to adjust to the change in food and water during your first few days in South Africa.

It is important to keep in mind at all times that HIV and Aids are widespread diseases in South Africa.

The project is situated in a malaria free area so no drugs are required.



Safety

While all safety precautions are followed, you are still working with wild animals and must be aware at all times and follow the safety guidelines. HIV and AIDS are a major public health concern. You should be aware that you are working with children that could be affected.

What's included / not included

Included:

- Project placement
- Airport transfer on arrival and departure (Port Elizabeth Airport)
- Accommodation (shared rooms, food for self-catering, laundry with self-service)
- An orientation at the beginning of your volunteering
- Daily transport to and from the game reserve (Mon – Fri)
- 1 excursion per week including entrance fees
- Electronic certificate (printed copy on request)
- Local support including a 24-hour emergency number
- WiFi

Not included:

- Any other transport
- Weekend activities/excursions

Visa

You can volunteer in South Africa on a visitor's visa for up to 90 days.

Nationals from certain countries (e.g. Brazil, Switzerland, Germany, Australia, France, Netherlands, Spain) will receive their visa when entering South Africa. Other nationals need to apply for a visitor's visa at a South African Embassy in their home country before travelling.

If you come to South Africa on a visitor's visa, you can extend once by another 90 days.

If you plan to come for more than 90 days, you need to apply for a visa at a South African Embassy in your home country. This visa is restricted to registered NGO's and therefore not available for this project.

For the latest information contact the South African Embassy or Good Hope Volunteers.