

WELCOME TO

Volunteers Without Borders



Dear Potential Volunteer,

Thank you for taking the time to locate our organization and we would like to personally send you a warm welcome. We are pleased to hear you will be volunteering with Volunteers Without Borders. Although there are numerous avenues for volunteering, we can assure that we offer **life changing volunteering opportunities** at the **LOWEST possible cost** to you, the volunteer. Now that you've filled out the online application and that you're on board, our goal is to take care of you every step of the way. We will ensure that you are fully prepared before you leave to the country of your choice and begin working on your first volunteer program with us. This information package was designed to serve two purposes. The first purpose is to give you more detailed information about the country you have chosen to volunteer in as well as providing some additional insight into the various types of programs we offer. The second purpose is to provide you with specific items that you will be expected to bring along with you, what types of vaccinations you will be needing before you leave, and what we recommend for your emergency/medical travel insurance. Not only do our volunteering programs benefit the organization and community you will be working with, but they also provide volunteers with an appreciation and gratitude for others, sense of fulfillment, as well as new perspectives. Our goal is to inspire volunteers to raise awareness, share their stories and continue to support or contribute to our programs in any way possible in the future. Although our programs can be quite demanding at times, we ensure that you will be given adequate time and days off to tour around the area you are working in and get the opportunity to participate in any outdoor activities or adventures you would be interested in.

It is your job to explore this information package and then reply back to us at: info@vwbinternational.org to let us know that you are ready for the next step of the enrollment process. If you have specific questions please our frequently asked questions page as this covers most questions that the volunteers may have. To locate this page, visit our website and click the 'About VWB' tab.

Like most developing countries in the world; political instability could arise at any given time, so we encourage you to check with your local government travel advisory just to be sure that nothing is expected to occur in the location while your over there. With that being said, we can ensure you that every country that we offer has been checked out by our team to ensure the security and safety for our volunteers.

While volunteering on any of our available programs, you will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of health, educational, community development, or wildlife and marine conservation programs. This will give you a chance to make an important contribution to the local community and while doing so, gain an in depth understanding of the country and its culture. We assure you that this experience will leave a lasting impression and stay with you for the rest of your life.

Information to help you prepare for your trip

If it's your first time volunteering or going abroad, there are several things you will need to make sure you bring on your trip before you leave. Here is a list of the following items that we have deemed necessary to bring to make sure you can enjoy your time on the program. The list below is a general suggestion; each volunteer may prefer more specific items that we have not included in this list. Please make sure that you remember to bring any special items that you are used to having back home, that may only be purchased in your own country.

What to Bring:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comfortable shoes and sandals | <input type="checkbox"/> Camera and/or iPod |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shorts and pants | <input type="checkbox"/> Cell phone - You can buy simcard) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rain Coat/Jacket | <input type="checkbox"/> Rechargeable batteries w/charger |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping Bag | <input type="checkbox"/> Laptop |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunglasses and Sunscreen | <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight/head torch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Travel Guide | <input type="checkbox"/> Lock |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mosquito net & insect repellent | <input type="checkbox"/> String |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hand Sanitizer | <input type="checkbox"/> Eyeglasses/Contacts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Kit | <input type="checkbox"/> Medication (Anti Malarial Tablets) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Duct Tape and/or superglue | <input type="checkbox"/> Picture Book / Journal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Binder or notepad | <input type="checkbox"/> Country Map |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toilet Paper | <input type="checkbox"/> Ear Plugs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small water heater or kettle | <input type="checkbox"/> Clothes or Electronics for donation |

Vaccinations:

The World Health Organization recommends that all travelers be covered for diphtheria, tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella, polio and hepatitis B, regardless of their destination. The consequences of these diseases can be severe and outbreaks do occur. [Click here](#) to learn more.

“As the President and Founder of Volunteers Without Borders Association, I’d like to offer you a warm welcome! I have done a lot of volunteering myself and believe it is the most fulfilling and gratifying way to give back to countries around the world that need all the help they can get. Whether you’re an adventurous traveler or looking to help make a difference, we are happy to have you join us. By volunteering, you will make a difference to the local people that you come in contact with overseas. Our volunteering opportunities expose you to the often-harsh everyday realities of life for many people around the world in underdeveloped areas. We thank you for your time and consideration.”

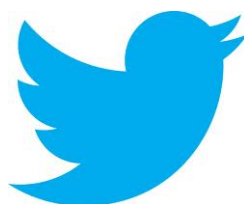
~ Kevin Francis

President & Founder of VWB



Website:
Email:

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SOUTH AFRICA



South Africa is a nation of approximately 50 million people of diverse origins, cultures, languages, and religions. It is a country that has gone through numerous struggles in the past century, and faces more in the future. The spread of AIDS is an alarming problem in South Africa with up to 31% of pregnant women found to be HIV infected in 2005 and the infection rate among adults is estimated at 20%. Malaria is also a growing problem in Africa. Unemployment Issues also pose major problems, as 1/4 of the population remains unemployed, living on less than \$1.25 USD/day. Another problem in South Africa, as well is poaching. When this horrible act is carried out, it leaves both the wildlife and marine life on the brink of extinction. Off the coast of South Africa, Sharks are being killed for their fins faster than they have time to fully mature and reproduce. As it stands, there is now less than 10 % of the original population in our oceans. Due to high amounts of poaching, a lack of laws, and low levels of enforcement, the animals and marine of Africa and our world are quickly diminishing. If pressure is not put on governments to change ways, educate locals, and enforce laws, we may lose our precious wildlife in the near future. While volunteering in South Africa, the projects we offer allow volunteers unique experiences to educate themselves on these issues, get involved in the local community and learn more about the African culture and the way of life.

Currency Advice

The local currency accepted in South Africa is the **South African Rand (ZAR)** or USD is also accepted in many places. In most places in South Africa, credit cards are accepted. Where they are accepted, it can very well be with steep commissions, which means that you will need to rely here more heavily on cash, ATMs and (in major centers) travelers checks. The best currency to bring is USD in a mixture of large and small denominations, a few travelers' checks for emergency and a Visa or MasterCard card for withdrawing money from ATMs. Euros are not accepted.

Travel Document Information

To enter South Africa, a valid passport and entry visa are required. Most nationalities can obtain a visa at South African border posts or upon arrival. Please check with a travel expert from your country for requirements. A 30-day visa upon arrival costs approximately **\$70 CAD**. Alternatively, longer visas can be obtained from a South African embassy or consulate in your home country.

Medical Insurance and Facilities

South Africa is a rather developed country so there are hospitals, doctors, or chemists in any major city area or even small town. Please arrange vaccinations and travel insurance in your home country before you arrive.

Communication

As like most of the world, mobile phones have taken over and having an international unlocked phone and a local SIM card is necessary if you wish to use your phone here. SIM cards can be purchased and registered in most areas. Internet access is also very limited in most areas.

Transport

The easiest way to reach the project is to fly into Capetown and stay overnight at a local hostel/guesthouse of your choice. We can also recommend a hostel or guesthouse for you to stay at to if you request so. Transport to the project will be arranged to pick you up at your accommodation in accordance to the dates of the program start date.

Dangers and Annoyances

South Africa is a relatively safe, hassle-free country and can be a relief if you've recently been somewhere like Tanzania or Kenya. With that being said, you do still need to take the usual precautions. Avoid isolated areas; especially stretches of beach, and in cities and tourist areas take a taxi at night. When using public transport, don't accept drinks or food from someone you don't know and ensure your bag or belongs is secure. Be skeptical of anyone who comes up to you on the street asking whether you remember them from the airport, your hotel or wherever. In the majority of cases, they are just trying to get money from you.

In tourist areas like Cape Town or Johannesburg there are almost always a few touts and flycatchers and they can be a bit aggressive, especially around bus stations and budget tourist hotels. Do your best to minimize the impression that you're a newly arrived tourist. If somebody is following you or you feel the need, duck into a shop if you need to get your bearings or look at a map and don't walk around any more than necessary with your luggage. While looking for a room, leave your bag with a friend or reliable hotel rather than walking around town with it. Buy your bus tickets a day in advance (without your luggage) and, when arriving in a new city, take a taxi from the bus station to your hotel. Be very wary of anyone who approaches you on the street, at the bus station or in your hotel offering tour deals or a safari package, and never pay any money for a tour in advance until you've thoroughly checked out the company.

A Few Tips

- Avoid external money pouches, dangling backpacks, camera bags, and leave jewellery, fancy watches, and fancy headphones at home. Carry your passport, money and other documents in a pouch against your skin, hidden under loose-fitting clothing. Or, better, store valuables in a hotel safe, if there's a reliable one, ideally inside a pouch with a lockable zip to prevent tampering. It never hurts to make a photocopy of your identification and cards and store it separately in another bag.
- Arriving for the first time at major bus stations can be a bit stressful. You may be hassled by touts as you get off the bus, and they may try to sell you a cheap hotel rate or packaged tour.
- Have your luggage as consolidated as possible, with your valuables well hidden under your clothes. Try to spot the taxi area before disembarking and make a beeline for it. It's well worth a few extra dollars for the fare, rather than attempting to walk to your hotel with your luggage.
- Take requests for donations from 'refugees', 'students' or others with a grain of salt. Contributions to humanitarian causes are best done through an established agency or project.
- Keep the side windows up in vehicles when stopped in traffic and keep your bags out of sight (ie) on the floor behind your legs.
- When bargaining or discussing prices, don't do so with your money or wallet in your hand.

Water

The water in South Africa is perfectly safe and there are no issues of drinking water from the tap. In saying so, we encourage you to avoid drinking from streams, rivers and lakes unless you've purified the water first.

Cultural Awareness

South Africa is a relatively safe country and almost all locals speak English. Female volunteers should be aware that in the towns and villages, it is normally respectful to have your knees and your mid-riff covered (and in some cases, your shoulders). Some practices in South Africa are very different to what volunteers may be used to at home. Visitors do not have to agree with all the customs around them, but should respect them and endeavor to understand the complex cultural history that shaped them.

PLEASE NOTE: There is a **ZERO TOLERANCE** policy in place for alcohol consumption, during volunteer work hours, while on the project. The consumption of alcohol is looked negatively upon and even forbidden in certain countries and it is essential that you abide by this rule. We need to ensure that you are giving the project the right impression of

Volunteers Without Borders during your stay. **If volunteers choose not to follow this policy, they will be removed from the project immediately, and no refund will be issued.**

AFRICAN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Education, Research, Tracking, Locating, Observation, Monitoring & Analyzing



Location: Makalali Private Game Reserve (approx 60 km from Kruger National Park)

As a volunteer you will be given an incredible opportunity to view the spectacular wildlife of Africa, learn about them, and experience the African bush whilst making a personal contribution to conservation. As a volunteer you will be involved in the following activities:

LOCATING & TRACKING USING TELEMETRY

Before you can observe animals in the wild, they must be located. To become an expert animal tracker, it takes years of practice and expertise. A professional Guide (animal tracker) often uses a combination of several different techniques to be able to do so. To see the majestic animals of Africa, there are many ways to doing this but what a lot of outsiders believe is that the best way to spot them is to simply drive around an area and hope a bit of luck will bring you to the animals. It doesn't take very long in a wildlife game reserve to realize this is not the best way. Gaining valuable knowledge of a particular species and being able to understand how to track particular animals by using footprints to determine their whereabouts is one thing that a good Guide must eventually master. This is no easy task but lucky for us, it can be learned. Another viable technique of locating wildlife is by using Telemetry. This can only be performed if a particular animal has been tagged and with a radio collar. With a little practice and a lot of hard work, one can master the technique of using radio waves and frequency, to be able to locate their whereabouts and marvel at their beauty.

OBSERVATION, MONITORING & DATA COLLECTION

We monitor and record locations, demographic composition and any significant behavioral displays of general game on the reserve such as elephant, lion, impala, giraffe, hippopotamus, zebra, and wildebeest. This helps to determine trends in habitat utilization as well as helping to correlate animal population sizes with game counts conducted every alternate year. Monitoring drives are conducted everyday in the mornings and afternoons. Each week a schedule is posted which states specifies which specific mammal is to be monitored. During the drive, volunteers are explained the importance of monitoring, what to look for, and encouraged to participate in the surveying of the smaller mammals and birds seen on each drive. During the drive, data is collected pertaining to animal movement patterns, reproductive behavior, grouping and association patterns, and predator/prey interaction of all big game animals on a daily basis. The data collected is also used for long-term analysis. Identification kits have already been produced so that these animals can be easily recognized and observe their behavior patterns over an extended period of time.

RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

The analysis of data collected during monitoring episodes over the long term to assist in the decision making processes and challenges associated with management of enclosed game reserves. With the data that volunteers help to collect we hope to eventually create a management model which can be applied to other conservation areas, in order to prove there is indeed a future for long term private conservation development.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROJECTS

You will have the opportunity to get involved in a number of community projects close to Makalali Game Reserve namely the Holy Family Orphanage and St Martin's Community Crèche. These projects are often provided with basic support and volunteers often buy food, toys, stationary and other things they may need. We try to visit every two to three weeks. Mostly the children just enjoy the attention they get and it is a wonderful feeling to be able to bring a smile to their faces at the mere sight of you.

Holy Family provides a home to children affected by HIV. If you would like to know more about the orphanage please visit their website to see the amazing work that is being done there (www.holyfamilycentre.fkraak.com). St. Martin's Crèche is a small community crèche that relies on They do not receive assistance from local government so all the help they can get is very much appreciated all those who volunteer are very welcome to bring things, buy them locally or make a donation.

BUSH CAMP EXPERIENCE



Volunteers will have the opportunity to participate in bush walks and sleep-outs. You will be accompanied by armed and trained guides who will lead these bush experiences and all volunteers will be part of a standing guard routine at both siesta and night times. These bush experiences will prove to be exciting and challenging; nothing can beat falling asleep under the stars listen to the distant lion roar and whooping calls of hyenas. As a volunteer, you will get a stimulating and practical experience focusing on key species monitoring - an element of existing research projects, and a physical component through reserve management activities. Occasionally, management is required to capture or anaesthetize wild animals for various reasons e.g. game sales, lion contraception etc. Whenever possible and with the consent of the Reserve Management, volunteers will have the opportunity to be a part of these actions. Volunteers' daily activities will be interesting and varied.

The Bush Camp Experience is ideal if you want to truly experience the "wild" side outdoors of Africa. The program is based in the 26,000 hectare Makalali Game Reserve, home to the Africa's "Big Five" - lion, leopard, elephant, rhino and buffalo. The eco-friendly tented camp has no electricity and is set amongst trees overlooking a watercourse in a magical, out-of-the way spot, providing a real wilderness experience. By day you will take part in walking safaris through the reserve, approaching wildlife on foot and learning skills essential for surviving in the bush. By night, cooking food and telling stories around an open fire, listening to the melodious sounds of the bush and sleeping under the African sky. You will definitely walk away from the Bush Experience with a feeling of true intimacy with Africa and its wildlife. Full training will be given in all aspects of the African bushveld, including wildlife conservation, tracking and survival skills. The

Bush Camp provides practical experience of living in the bush. The program is very hands-on with plenty of staff/volunteer interaction. Daily activities are interesting and varied, including:

- Bush survival skills (how to find food and water, how to stay warm and dry, how to make fires, etc).
- Bush orientation/navigation skills (finding your way day and night) and Tracking skills
- Approaching animals on foot and walking amongst dangerous game (theory and practical)
- Shangaan skills, like use of sling shot and making snares
- Sleep-outs and bush-walks
- Big Five game drives, Birding walks and drives
- Lectures on the history of the area and biodiversity conservation, snakes and spiders to list a few, which will be given at Twines Research Base
- Plant and tree identification, uses and myths/traditions

Every second Sunday Bush Campers will join volunteers from the research base for the fortnightly excursion. On Sundays you are welcome to just relax in the bush or organize excursions to Kruger National Park or other areas of interest (at an additional cost).

FIELD CONDITIONS

A 6 bed tented camp (4 double luxury tents) built on wooden decks, each tent with its own ablution facility and shower, however water needs to be heated over the stove if you would like a hot shower. There will be no electricity but there will be plenty of lamps as well as a gas stove/fridge/freezer. Volunteers participate in the creation of menus, the preparation of meals and general up keep of the Camp on a rotational basis.



VOLUNTEER CHECKLIST FOR FIELDWORK

- ☐ A pair of binoculars
- ☐ Adequate container to carry water/liquid
- ☐ Appropriate clothing: Neutral colored clothing i.e. greens, blues, and khaki's, grays or browns. Avoid white and brightly colored clothes.
- ☐ Boots or lace-up shoes
- ☐ A hat and/or applied sunscreen – the African sun is merciless.
- ☐ A jumper, jacket or raincoat depending on environmental conditions (use your own discretion).
- ☐ Your own field guides (if you have any).

PLEASE NOTE:

This program starts every MONDAY. Please bear in mind that the sooner you apply, the better your chances of securing your placement! Volunteers are required to sign an indemnity form acknowledging and accepting the consequences of working in close contact with wildlife. Applicants must be over 18 years old.

TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

BUS

Coaches depart from Johannesburg to Hoedspruit daily. Transportation will be arranged to pick you up once you arrive in Hoedspruit. Please visit <http://www.translux.co.za>, <http://www.intercape.co.za/home/>, <http://www.computicket.com/web/> for booking details.

AIR

Two flights are available from Johannesburg to Hoedspruit airport daily with South Africa Airways. Please check their website for details or feel free to search for other budget airlines on the web. <http://www.saa.co.za>

CAR HIRE

Hiring a car and driving on your own from Johannesburg to Hoedspruit is also possible. Once you arrive at the airport, you may arrange your own car hire but will need a valid credit card and driver's license. If you can obtain an International Drivers license this would be best. When you finish the project and wish to hire a care from Hoedspruit, one can be arranged for you Please speak to a member of staff regarding this once you arrive.

HERE ARE THE STEPS TO COMPLETE OUR ENROLLMENT PROCESS

Step 1) - Review this information package and decide which country you want to volunteer in and what program you are most interested to volunteer on. Once you have done that, please fill out the online application form available on our website and click submit. Please make sure to include the necessary required information.

Step 2) Once we receive the application form, we will send you a temporary confirmation for your desired program. If you need to make any changes, please feel free to email us and let us know. If we do not receive any further correspondence from you, we will send you the program fee payment request via Paypal within 3 business days.

Please note: A \$225 CAD one-time registration/enrollment fee will also be added to your program fee.

Step 3) - When we receive confirmation that your program fee has been paid, you will receive a confirmation email from us. In this email, there will be a waiver/release form that will be required to fill out and send back to us at your earliest convenience. You are also encouraged to book your flights at this time. Once you have done so, please send us a copy of your flight itinerary so that airport pickup/transfer (if available) can be arranged for you upon arrival.

Step 4) - After we receive your waiver/release form, we will confirm your placement on the program and detailed program specific information will be provided to you at this point.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Our enrolment and registration process begins by applying online. Once you have filled out and submitted the online application form, you will receive a confirmation email. To continue on in our enrolment process, all volunteers will be required to pay a Registration Fee of \$225 CAD, which will be added to the Program Fee. This fee helps to cover the administration and processing costs. Once we receive your payment, we will send you a confirmation email with the program details and encourage you to book your flight at that time. Our team will be readily available to correspond with you and answer any questions you might have from the time you apply until you reach the project. If you have any further questions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact us at: info@vwbinternational.org

OUR PROGRAM FEES INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- **Registration Fee** - (refundable if you choose not to go), ongoing support from VWB staff, program marketing costs, information pack, administration costs, travel costs to develop and ongoing costs to sustain programs and communication costs with volunteers.
- **Program Fee** – airport pick-up, orientation, program supervision, accommodation (lodge or tent at bush camp) and meals during volunteer program period along with snacks and fruits, in-country 24/7 volunteer support and in-country administration costs.

WHAT ADDITIONAL COSTS WILL I HAVE?

- Visa, flights, travel insurance (mandatory), immunizations / vaccinations, in-country trips or tours, transfer to other areas of the country, and spending money.



During this entire process, we will always be available to correspond with you to answer any other questions you might have from now until you reach the program. Thank you for choosing Volunteers Without Borders.

We can assure you that you've come to the right place!