



## **MPUMELELO WILDLIFE ORPHANAGE AND RESEARCH PROJECT CLOSE UP**

Volunteering at the Mpumelelo Wildlife Orphanage and Research Project will give you the opportunity to work hands on with orphaned and injured animals with the aim to release them back into the wild. You will also have the opportunity to get involved with wildlife research and community work.

### **CONSERVATION IN ACTION**

#### **How does this project make a difference?**

The Wildlife Orphanage provides a haven for orphaned, abandoned and injured animals, as well as contributing to the conservation of rare and endangered species through rehabilitation, research and captive breeding programmes. The team are also involved with long term studies at Matopos National Park of leopard ecology and the population movements of radio-collared leopard, brown hyena and cheetah.

#### **How do, I the volunteer, make a difference?**

The orphanage is a non-profit organisation, relying completely on the support of the public and volunteers. As a volunteer you will be directly involved with the rescue and day-to-day hands on care of orphaned, abandoned and injured animals that come into the centre from all over Zimbabwe. With the EPIC scheme (Environmental Protection Involving Children) run by the centre you will provide education to teach young children from Zimbabwe about conserving wildlife and to appreciate the value of their natural heritage. You will also be assisting in Leopard and Brown Hyena conservation research of real scientific value.

### **CORE ACTIVITIES**

#### **Orphanage and community work**

- Hand rearing of orphaned animals from leopard cubs to monkeys.
- The treatment and care of any sick or injured animals that come into the orphanage and subsequent release back into a wild environment.
- Helping with enrichment ideas to keep the animals stimulated and fit.
- The care and welfare of the permanent residents which, due to the nature and extent of their injuries, cannot be released back into the wild and are used to educate visitors to the centre.
- Assistance in the care and welfare of resident farm animals
- Wildlife veterinary work, much of which is carried out by the centre's own staff.
- Food preparation and feeding of the animals.
- Cleaning out enclosures and helping out with the general maintenance of the centre.
- Helping educate the public by giving tours of the orphanage and talking about the animals.
- Assist in educational visits to schools to teach children about wildlife conservation and why it is important to value and protect it.

#### **Research in Matopos National Park**

- Assisting in the long term study of Leopard and Brown Hyena populations in the park.
- Looking at the local ecology of the park.
- A chance to be involved in the release of Leopard or Lion into the park.





## SKILLS GAINED

Animal care, animal behaviour, hand rearing, assisting with veterinary nursing, speaking to the public (both adults and children) about conserving wildlife, scientific research methods into population dynamics, behaviour and ecology.

## WILDLIFE EXPERIENCE

Due to the nature of animal rehabilitation it is difficult to predict which animals will be brought into the orphanage and how long they will stay there before being released back into a wild environment. However, there are currently a number of resident animals including lion cubs and adults, leopard, spotted hyena, serval, jackal, mongoose, warthog, a genet baby, steenbok, bushbuck, young kudu, crocodiles, tortoise, terrapin, vervet monkey, samango monkey and various owl species.

## LOCATION

The centre is located near Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, on a 200 acre farm.

## FACILITIES

**Accommodation:** Volunteers stay in thatched A Frame cabins with 2 volunteers to each unit. Within each cabin a bed with mosquito net, bedside table, shelves and wardrobe space are provided. There is a communal toilet and shower block provided on camp as well as a large living area where volunteers can relax, watch DVD's and play darts. A pool is also available (towels provided).

**Meal Arrangements:** All meals are provided and staff at the project are happy to cater for special dietary requirements. Volunteers are welcome to cook their own meals or have a braai. Squash, tea and coffee are available throughout the day.

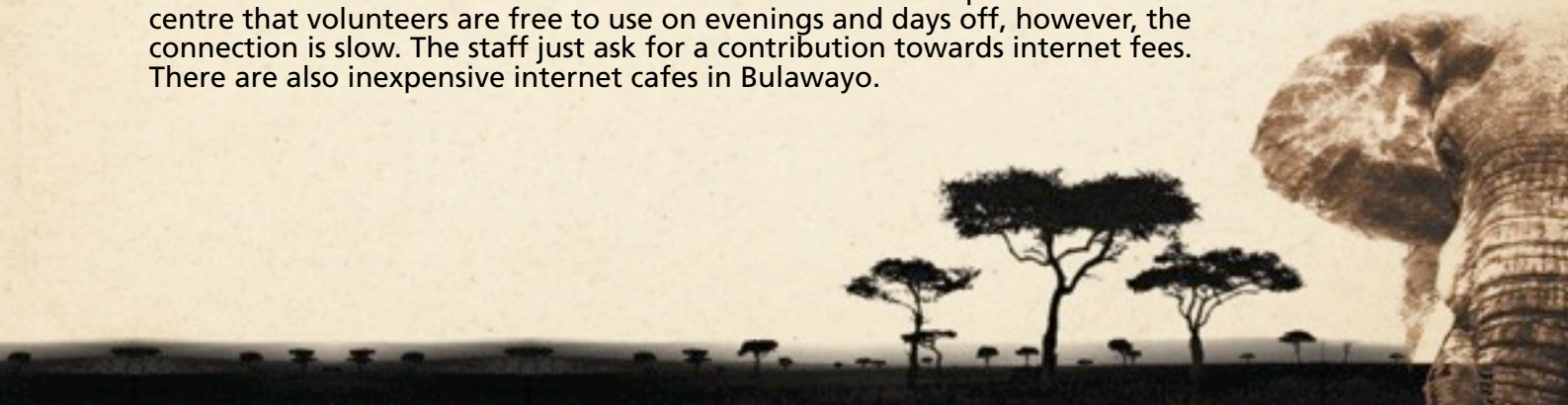
**Working hours:** Volunteers work a 6 day week with Mondays as a day off, however volunteers are asked to do basic feeding rounds on a Monday and will be on call during the fire season and when animals are being hand reared.

**Extra Activities:** The project offers volunteers regular outings from the orphanage which are free of charge. These include:

- The Bulawayo Museum
- Art and Craft Market
- Heavens gate, view site

Volunteers are also welcome to take a few days to travel to the world renowned Victoria Falls, facilitated by a local tourism company.

**Contact with home:** SA time is GMT +2 hours. There is a computer with internet at the centre that volunteers are free to use on evenings and days off, however, the connection is slow. The staff just ask for a contribution towards internet fees. There are also inexpensive internet cafes in Bulawayo.





**Transfers:** Transfers to Mpumpelelo from Bulawayo Airport are done by road. Volunteers are met by a member of staff and taken straight to the Orphanage, which will take around 45 minutes. Volunteers will then be driven back to Bulawayo airport on the day their placement ends.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

**Airport:** All volunteers are met at Bulawayo Airport by the project's staff.

**Road Safety:** All drivers have Public Driving Permits and only new, air conditioned vehicles are used for transfers.

**First Aid & Medical Emergency:** First aid kit on site. Private doctors and the nearest private hospital is in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. A short flight to Johannesburg private medi clinics will be made should we feel it necessary.

**Vaccinations:** Any volunteer having physical contact with wild animals, in education or rehabilitation, must have a current tetanus vaccination (within the past ten years). Zimbabwe is classified as a malarial area and therefore anti malarial prophylactics should be organised before your placement. Bulawayo is however deemed as a low risk area.

**Reserve Insurance:** Students will be required to sign an indemnity form.

## **IS THIS PROJECT RIGHT FOR ME?**

You do not need any previous experience or special skills to volunteer at Mpumpelelo, but you do need to love wildlife! Mpumpelelo is a great project if you want to combine a hands-on experience with the opportunity to get involved with community work through the projects EPIC childrens programme and wildlife research looking at Leopard and Brown Hyena in Matopos National Park. The volunteer accommodation is not luxurious but comfortable, and all your basic creature comforts (hot showers, electricity, internet access) are there.

## **BOOKING INFORMATION**

**What's included?** Return international flights from London Heathrow and internal flight from Johannesburg to Bulawayo, Zimbabwe (both optional, if you decide to take your own international flight we can still include your internal flight), transfers from Bulawayo to the project base camp, optional excursions, accommodation, meals and 24 hour support, ACE T-Shirt, financial contributions to the project.

**What's not included?** Travel insurance and spending money. We can arrange your insurance for you, please contact us for a quote.

**When can I join?** This project runs all year round, including Christmas and New Year!

**How can I join?** You can apply online at [www.conservationafrica.net/apply](http://www.conservationafrica.net/apply) or simply fill out an application form in one of our brochures and post it back to us.

