



TUTUKA FAMILY CONSERVATION PROJECT CLOSE UP

Work with your family and bring your children's learning to life!

CONSERVATION VALUE

How does this project make a difference?

The wildlife research is a long term, general study of the whole wilderness environment: The focus is on elephants and predators - their behaviour, numbers and movements but also on the relationship between those animals and the other animals in the area and the vegetation therein (general game counts, vegetation mapping etc.) The aim is to produce data which can be used by others doing specific research on any one of those areas and to show any variations on the various ecologies as time progresses. It is likely that this area will become a Trans Frontier Conservation Area and the data the project produces will be invaluable in providing a 'benchmark' of population densities and behaviour - and their effect on the vegetation prior to the TFCA opening boundaries and making the area accessible to populations from other areas such as Zimbabwe and South Africa.

The community aspect assists in providing a future for conservation in the Tuli block of Botswana, by providing local kids at disadvantaged rural schools in the area with a fun way to learn about conservation and develop an empathy for the wildlife and environment that surrounds them.

How do we, the volunteer family, make a difference?

Tutuka, from the Zulu word 'to grow', encourages your family to work together in the African bush. Every focus of this project is aimed at including all ages and differing abilities.

There is a need for volunteers to assist with the wildlife research of populations moving through this vast wilderness. A volunteer presence in the area also actively discourages poaching which has led to a fantastic increase in population size of these notorious and last truly wild elephant herds in southern Africa.

By working with the children from a number of local schools, your family can help to enrich their environment, and in turn their lives, by providing vital resources through your placement contributions. It is a truly moving and possibly even life changing experience.

COMMUNITY WORK

Improving the school environment and facilities:

This can involve working in a variety of different schools during your placement, on dedicated projects, focussed on providing better working conditions for both the children and the teachers. This can involve tasks such as:

- Assisting with the physical maintenance of schools and the provision of crucial elements such as safe drinking water and good sanitation.
- Painting and improving the condition of classrooms, providing a more inspiring learning environment
- Vegetable food garden establishment and maintenance.





Work alongside established charity Children In The Wilderness

CITW works within the local community and schools to support their wildlife club in inspiring children to care and protect their environment. Volunteering as a family, you have an important part to play in assisting CITW reach specific goals through both funding and physical help at the project.

Bush camps in Tuli Wilderness

During South African school holidays, bush camps are provided for the local children to attend, with various eco-based themes. If you join Tutuka during the school camp dates you will act as a mentor for the children. The camps always include topics such as sustainable living, fresh bush facts, new skills to discover in the bush and workshops based on environmental education. You will assist the camps in the following ways:

- Assisting with teaching ecological subjects. In a fun way, technical skills, awareness and literacy are transferred using the natural environment. Children learn to put into practice what they have learnt during game drives in the bush.
- Integrate into the team running the course and assist with duties from food preparation for the group to reading and learning sessions. You often get to learn as much as the children about the unique environment you are working in during these camps!

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION WORK

Elephant population - Being one of the few free roaming populations in southern Africa, these herds are of real scientific value. Approximately 1200 elephants roam the greater Tuli block in which our core project area is situated. Much of the present work is to record numbers of elephants, as well as age and gender structure. Of great interest is their general and seasonal movement patterns. These studies aid our understanding of the the growth rates of the population, which has a big impact on the vegetation of the area.

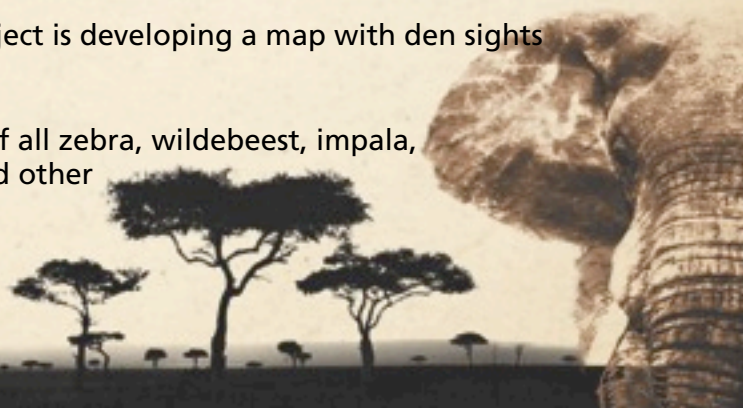
Leopard - The projects' first aim is to establish an accurate population number utilising the study area, then to determine the gender ratio of the population. Territory sizes are determined through tracks, tracking and sightings data collection. A number of other projects are also in place which study their general behaviour.

Lions - The Tuli block of Botswana has a unique lion pride structure, with pride members spending most of their time alone or in very small groups, the pride members are spread out over a vast area. A large lioness and two of her off spring have established their core territorial area within the study area. A collar has been placed on this female for research purposes and telemetry equipment is used in locating her and her offspring.

Cheetah - Cheetah sightings are common and volunteers monitor their movements, numbers, sexes as well as prey selection.

Hyena - Hyena sightings are recorded and the project is developing a map with den sights used by these fascinating predators.

General game - The determination and mapping of all zebra, wildebeest, impala, eland, steenbok, klipspringer, waterbuck, kudu and other general game population numbers and





distributions, with special focus on seasonal movements. The interaction between prey and predator numbers is of real interest to the project.

Conservation management – Poaching, especially using wire snares is a problem throughout Africa. The long stretch of river frontage is especially prone to snare setting. The river is therefore regularly patrolled and snares are removed. Volunteers will learn bush craft such as tracking, the uses of indigenous plants, bird-watching and get educated about all facets of the bush, as well as making the most of anything that the unpredictable bush environment throws their way. When doing town trips volunteers drive through villages and areas of cultural, social and conservation interest.

WILDLIFE EXPERIENCE

Tuli's resident populations include elephant, lion, leopard, cheetah, giraffe and eland. In addition to the common plains game like wildebeest and zebra, there are troops of monkey and baboon, as well as populations of steenbok, the timid duiker, grysbok, impala, common waterbuck, bushbuck, and warthog. Also present are armadillo, armadillo, bat-eared fox, African wild cat, spotted hyena and black-backed jackal as well as a great diversity of bird life, with over 350 species having been recorded to date.

"Suddenly elephants emerged from the bush and crossed our path. Just a few at first, and then more and more. I inadvertently held my breath - a herd of 93 elephants migrated past us!"

Silvia Russenberger

LOCATION

The project is named after the Tuli Block, an area which forms part of the Limpopo-Shashe trans frontier conservation area, which also straddles the borders of South Africa and Zimbabwe allowing for natural migration of elephant herds and other animal species across historically established national borders.



FACILITIES

Accommodation:

As a family you'll stay in traditional huts and tents at Mohave camp but may also spend some time at the very comfortable Serolo camp during other activities. There are communal outdoor showers and flushing toilets, a kitchen, dining area and a outdoor fire pit area. Lighting is provided by gas and paraffin as there is no electricity. An inverter is available to charge cameras, phones and any other 230V electrical equipment.

Meal arrangements: Self catering. The camp is stocked with food on a weekly basis. Sweets, cool drinks and chocolates can only be purchased in town. Vegetarian option always provided. Families may be asked to assist with domestic duties following meals.

Time Off: One day per week, usually Sunday. Town trips variable, usually once every two weeks.

Contact with home: Dependent on cellphone signal. Botswana time = GMT+2hrs. There is no internet access.

Nearest town: Selebi-Phikwe in Botswana; Alldays in South Africa.





Banking: Only Visa cards can be used in Botswana. Cash points in Selebi-Phikwe and Polokwane. Local currency in Botswana is the Pula which can be exchanged for other currencies at Johannesburg airport. South African rand can also be used in Botswana.

Transfers: Transfers to and from the project are done by road. The drive from Johannesburg airport takes approximately 8 hours, broken up with a lunch stop. Once at the border, you will most likely spend the night in a camp right on the Limpopo river on the South African side (the camp is within the reserve area so elephants pass by and there are always antelope in front of the camp.)

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Airport: We meet all our volunteers personally at Johannesburg airport directly off the plane.

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

First Aid & Emergency: First aid Level 5 qualified personnel on site.

Medical: Doctors in Alldays and hospital in Polokwane, South Africa.

IS THIS PROJECT RIGHT FOR US?

Are you a family looking for something more than a conventional holiday in a resort? Volunteering as a family can be one of the most rewarding experiences for everyone involved. It's a great way to see unique destinations, learn about conservation issues and cultures and give something back to the community and ecosystem as responsible travelers. Exposing children to stunning wildlife and landscapes, cultural differences and the struggling communities of our contrasting worlds gives them a valuable education which is not available at school.

"You can teach your child a lesson for a day; but if you can teach them to learn by creating curiosity, they will continue the learning process as long as they live." **Clay P. Bedford**

BOOKING INFORMATION

What's Included? Return international flights from London Heathrow (optional), transfers, food and accommodation, 24 hour support from our ground manager, ACE T-Shirt and financial contributions to the project

What's not included? Travel insurance, spending money

When can I join? This projects runs all year round except over Christmas

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

