



Travellers Worldwide is a leading International Provider of
Volunteering Programmes, Work Experience Internships
and Cultural Courses Abroad

SOUTH AFRICA



WHALE AND DOLPHIN MONITORING IN KNYSNA

Work on this project with the only licensed and permitted close encounter whale-watching organisation in Knysna.

As part of their Whale Watching agreement, the company collects valuable research material for future conservation use, including daily sightings of the various species of whales and dolphins, recurring visits and the migratory habits of the whales and dolphins in the area.

Volunteering on this Marine Research programme will expose you to all aspects of this exciting industry, from conservation and research to all other aspects of the day-to-day running.

Thank you for your interest on volunteering in this Project. Below is a description of what you can do and expect. You can volunteer whether you're taking a gap year, on a career break, retired, or on a holiday with a purpose. No matter what your age or experience, we look forward to welcoming you to the team!

WHAT DO YOU GET?

SELF-DEVELOPMENT:

- New skills, more confidence, a greater understanding of a different culture, invaluable personal and professional development.
- The enormous satisfaction of knowing that our work is contributing to marine conservation.
- An entry on your CV or résumé that will put you head and shoulders above most others in the job market.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Your safety is our top priority. We risk-assess all destination countries, projects, accommodation and more to ensure that they are stable and safe.
- We have experienced local staff with 24/7 back-up and support who are there to assist you and look after you, starting with an in-depth induction on your arrival.

AN ADVENTURE!

- An exciting, never-to-be-forgotten adventure into Africa and the many diverse cultures in South Africa! And best of all ... **an unforgettable experience!**

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TravelQuest Ltd t/a Travellers, registered in England & Wales, Registered Office: 7 Mulberry Close, Ferring, West Sussex, BN12 5HY, Reg. No. 3072191, VAT Registration: 786540201

Prices: From **£795** excluding flights.

Please see Full [Price List Online](#).

Duration: From 1 week to 12 weeks or longer, subject to visa requirements

Start Dates: All year round - you choose your start and finish dates. Not available between 10th December and 10th January.

As availability on this project is very limited, we strongly advise that you book early.

Requirements: You'll need to be hard working, have a love of marine life, boating, being outdoors and at sea. You don't need prior knowledge or experience, although this would be advantageous, as would experience at sea or on eco boat safaris and research.

What's Included:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| ▶ Arranging your Programme, | ▶ Full pre-departure support and assistance, |
| ▶ Payment Protection insurance | ▶ Accommodation |
| ▶ Certificate of Completion | ▶ Food |
| ▶ Transfer to your accommodation | ▶ Free T-Shirt. |
| ▶ Meeting you at the nearest airport | ▶ In-country team support and backup |
| ▶ 24-hr emergency support. | ▶ Transport to and from your project |

What Not Included: Flights, Insurance, Cost of Visas (if a visa is required), Return transfer to airport.

SUMMARY

PROJECT OVERVIEW

WORK CONTENT

The estuary holiday resort town of Knysna has a prolific amount of marine life off its coastline; all through the year there are large groups of Common Dolphin and the occasional Bryde's Whales found in the deeper waters. Closer to the shoreline in the Buffalo Bay area, Humpback and Bottlenose dolphins are often spotted. Add to this Humpback and Southern Right Whales (migrating from the months of June all the way to January), Cape Fur seals, sharks seabirds, the occasional Orca and other species and you will find an ocean and coastline teeming with life.

The organisation provides trips out to sea in their own boats to tourists who want the experience of seeing whales and dolphins close-up in their natural environment. The tours are very weather-dependant. In addition to the eco boat ocean safaris, they also do sunset lagoon cruises.

Much of your role will be involved in monitoring and data collection, but you'll also have the opportunity to assist in and learn about the tourism side of the exciting activities involved in watching dolphins and whales in their natural habitat.

Your Responsibilities will include some or all of the following:

- On arrival, you'll be trained firstly in the area of boat safety, maintaining equipment and basic skippering.
- You'll initially job shadow one of the skippers and work in the office to gain a basic understanding of the business and of the marine life that is encountered out to sea.
- Your duties will include being a spotter, which would entail sitting on one of the Knysna Headlands and using binoculars and then directing the skippers.
- The boats need to be cleaned, covered, fuelled and life jackets got ready and you'll also assist guests with boarding and checking onto the boat and safety procedures.
- You'll occasionally go on one of the 3 daily trips with the skipper and sometimes-another crewmember.
- Daily observations need to be made of the marine life encountered and the records are sent to DAFF. For this, you'll need to photograph dorsal fins for identification, observe behavior and photograph and plot GPS coordinates. Occasionally research trips are also done with post grad students from local universities who will capture the data and study it themselves.



- Other marine animals and life found along the trips also need to be monitored. All this data will then need to be captured onto spreadsheets and photographic software.
- You'll also help with daily updates of records, blogs and social media. These are done from the main office, which is found where the whale watching boats are docked.

You'll start the day at 9.00 am and finish at 16.00 with an hour break for lunch. Work takes place 5 days a week spread over the 6 days of Monday to Saturday, with no work on Sundays.

WHAT THIS PROJECT ACCOMPLISHES:

- The company has embraced the opportunity to do marine research and make a positive difference to the marine ecology of this area. To this end the following initiatives have been taken:
 - Accurate logs are kept of all trips and sightings
 - The exact GPS position of each sighting is recorded electronically and manually, and where possible to photograph and plot these on relevant software.
 - Assisting or despatching assistance to any animal in distress.
 - All collected data is shared with relevant conservation and government bodies as stipulated by the Marine Living Resources Act of 1998
 - Educational material is compiled by the company and shared with the community via talks, visual material and newspaper articles.
 - To grow a unique tourism attraction which is socially and environmentally responsible, has a low impact on the lagoon and marine environment;
 - Creates awareness in the community of the need to conserve and protect the estuary, wetland areas and the marine eco system surrounding Knysna.
 - The owners of the company are also committed to providing employment and training to previously disadvantaged community members.



EXTRA ACTIVITIES YOU MAY BE ABLE TO INCORPORATE INTO YOUR PROJECT

You may also have the opportunity to provide help and support to the local community through the various afternoon activities we have to offer. This is an excellent way to immerse yourself in the African culture, but most importantly to give a caring hand to the local community. The activities could range from helping out at:

- **The Safe House:** Make the afternoons fun and exciting for these lovely children by playing games, helping them with homework and just being there to give them the attention that they so appreciate.
- **After-school drama or sports** - Take some time out after school to set up after school sports or drama clubs, the children love it and it's a great way to get to know them better in a relaxed and fun environment. If you'd like to set up a drama or sports club, please let us know when you apply so that we can arrange it with the school before you arrive.)
- **Other community projects** - Past volunteers have helped to paint the outside of a crèche that was in desperate need of a lift. The crèche is now looking very cheerful with brightly coloured walls. A jungle gym was donated to this orphanage and volunteers also helped to put it together for the crèche too! There may be other similar projects available at the time you're there that you might want to participate in.
- **Township soup kitchen:** On days that your school roster might allow you to finish a little early, our volunteers sometimes help at a local township soup kitchen

LOCATION

The whale-monitoring placement is approximately 1 kilometre away from the Knysna main town and it is a beautiful walk along the side of the lagoon.

“The area is beautiful and travelling is easy. The house we stay in is lovely and the Travellers workers are such kind, loving people

which really makes it feel like a home away from home. What with all the other volunteers and the Travellers staff, it really does feel like our own little family ... well, our own very big family, I suppose!!” Luke Brennan

ACCOMMODATION

THE VOLUNTEER HOUSE:

The volunteer house in Knysna is within walking distance of the town, yet set against a natural green belt. The bird life is prolific and often the local Vervet monkey troop comes to visit to entertain the volunteers with their antics. The sunset views from the top balcony of the volunteer house of the Knysna lagoon are beautiful and great way to relax after a day working at your placement or to catch up on your tan in the summer. See photo on right-hand side.

The house is large and spacious and also has a self-contained flat downstairs for couples and families. The bedding in the two same sex dorms and the towels in their ensuite bathrooms are changed regularly every Friday by our much loved cleaner, pretty, and there is plenty of cupboard space to store your clothing.

Facilities include a kitchen kitted out for cooking, dining area, a few bathrooms, TV, DVD player, free Wi-Fi, garden and several wooden verandahs.

There is an outside courtyard and garden in the secure grounds where you can have a typical South African barbeque known there as a 'braai'. Make sure you try the local spicy sausage known as 'boerewors' and the Karoo lamb chops are to die for on a 'braai', but if fish is more to your taste then a fish 'braai' with South African 'snoek' is a must.

You'll live in a house in Kleinbaai. It is very comfortable, quiet and has some lovely views.

The house has a dorm room and two double rooms, one bathroom, a nice kitchen, a lounge area and an outside patio for those hot evenings. With a comfortable seating area, television and video for entertainment, you will be very relaxed in your new home and shark briefings will take place here from time to time too.

You will be taken into Gansbaai for shopping and anything else you may need.

FOOD:

You'll be given a food budget which will cover your basic essentials (but not extras like alcohol, snacks and eating out). The kitchen has all the cooking amenities that you might need to take advantage of preparing meals with some of the great seafood, meat, fresh fruit and vegetables South Africa has to offer.

There are supermarkets and local shops where you'll do your food shopping.

There are plenty of excellent restaurants within walking distance that offer the most incredible local and international cuisine which our volunteers rave about. Knysna is also famous for its oysters and even has an annual Oyster Festival where everyone eats and drinks far too much!

The waterfront and marine is beautiful and full of restaurants and cafes with cuisine that ranges from breakfast, coffees, cakes and snacks, through to sumptuous meals and various different nationality menus.



WHY TRAVELLERS WORLDWIDE?

- Over 20 years' experience of sending thousands of participants overseas, plus the largest variety of flexible projects that are value for money!
- Accredited projects helps appeal to future employers
- Excellent support! And 24/7 emergency helpline for you and your family
- Your own dedicated Project Co-ordinator to answer all questions before, during and after your trip of a lifetime!

- Detailed information on your project and country and suggestions, safety guide, tips and checklists, via our EXTRANET, available from anywhere, 24/7.
- Free pick up from the nearest airport.

HOW YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE:

By joining a Travellers Program you enable us to keep donating money to worthwhile projects around the world; from clothing and feeding school children, building playgrounds or funding vital conservation research - your participation makes these donations possible.

Donations to **Bridge The Gap Foundation**. This Foundation was set up by us to donate directly to particularly worthwhile and necessary projects for children and animals around the world, and partners with other NGO's to raise match-funding for worthy projects.

The price of this project is a reflection of the following costs:

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| ✓ Accommodation and Food | ✓ UK administration |
| ✓ Full pre-departure support | ✓ Marketing (brochures, website design and maintenance, attending careers fairs, advertising, website listings and presentations) |
| ✓ Meeting you at the airport | ✓ Project Research/Site Inspection |
| ✓ Transport to the placement site | ✓ Staff Training/Equipment |
| ✓ Local in-country team support and backup | ✓ Donations to worthwhile project |
| ✓ 24hr emergency helpline | |
| ✓ Free T-Shirt | |

“Travellers is an amazing organization that offers life changing experiences to people of all ages, I will highly recommend it to everyone, and I will be planning another volunteer experience for myself as well as for my sons.

Thank you so much for the experience of a life time!”

Deanne Peterson

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Got any questions? Please email us: info@travellersworldwide.com

Once you have applied for a placement, we'll contact you and send you our Welcome Pack. You'll also receive Log-on details and password for our Volunteer Extranet where you'll have access to all the documentation and information which we've put together to facilitate preparations for your adventure!

Your dedicated Project Co-ordinator for your country will liaise with you throughout the arrangements process, as well as while you're on your placement and on your return home.

The documents you'll have access to also include a Country Fact file, Safety Guide and any manuals that may assist you on your particular programme (for example, Teaching Guide, Sports Manuals, Enrichment Suggestions for Animal Care, etc.). We do all we can to make your stay one that you'll never forget.

As with all our destinations, the culture and heritage is different to what you're used to ... which, although one of the most exciting aspects of travelling, should be borne in mind. Self-reliance and independence are highly appreciated in all our destinations and will help you to make the most of this wonderful opportunity! This is a truly awesome, elegant and beautiful country.

On Arrival, your Introduction to the Country:

When you arrive you will be welcomed by a member of our South African staff who will take you to your accommodation and introduce you to everyone. During your first few days you'll be given an induction so that you can learn about the country and its culture, as well as other useful information.

ABOUT WHALES AND DOLPHINS

MARINE LIFE YOU MAY ENCOUNTER

Bryde's Whale (*Balaenoptera edeni*)

Appearance: The Bryde's whale is an elongated baleen whale with twin blowholes with a low splashguard to the front. It has no teeth, but has two rows of baleen plates. They have a sleek dark smoky gray body with a lighter underbelly and an upright prominent dorsal fin

The females are the largest with the ones of the South African coastline measuring up to 14.4 meters in length and weighing between 12 and 25 metric tons.

Behaviour: Bryde's whales display seemingly erratic behaviour because they surface at irregular intervals, can change directions for unknown reasons and are known for their deep diving.

They usually appear individually or in pairs, and can be found off the Knysna coast with large groups of Common Dolphin occasionally and can be very active of the water's surface.

Common Dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*)

Appearance: Common dolphin adults range between 1.9 and 2.5 m long, and can weigh between 80 and 235 kg although the range . Males are generally longer and heavier. The back is dark and the belly is white, while on each side is an hourglass pattern colored light grey and yellow in front and grey in back. There are two species, the long beaked and the short beaked.

Behaviour: They are very social living in groups from hundreds to as many as 10 000 thousand and are known to be fast swimmers (up to 60 km/h) that breach and perform aerial acrobatics like somersaults, pitch poling, breaching, and bow riding . They do not migrate but do move around for food. They have numerous threats on a conservation level and do not do well in captivity

Southern Right Whale (*Eubalaena australis*)

Appearance: The Southern Right Whale is a baleen whale distinguished from other Right Whales by the callosities on its head, a broad back without a dorsal fin, and a long arching mouth that begins above the eye. Its rotund body is very dark grey or black in colour, occasionally with some white patches on the belly. They can be up to 18 meters in length and weigh 80 tonnes.

Behaviour: They are fairly active on the water surface and are curious and playful towards human vessels and tend to interact with humans. They are known for breaching, sailing, "lobtailing", or "spyhopping" and are listed as endangered by CITES.

Humpback Whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*)

Appearance: Humpback Whales or as they are known "the angels of the sea" are black or grey with a lighter underbelly. They have distinctive rows on their heads and grooves on the underside of the throat and chest. They have a small triangular shaped dorsal fin making easy photo-identification with long tapering wing-like flippers. They can also be identified by their individual flukes. They can be up to 15 meters in length and weigh up to 40 tonnes.

Behaviour: Humpback whales are able to launch their entire body out of the water which is known as breaching and have been recorded breaching over 100 times in succession. They are also very vocal and are known for their haunting "whale songs". They can be sighted off the South African coast in small groups from as long as June to



January when they follow their migratory pattern up the east coast to mate and calf in the warm waters of Mozambique and Madagascar. They are listed as endangered.

Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphins (*Sousa chinensis*)

Appearance: The humpback dolphin is known for the large hump ahead of its dorsal fin, for which it's received its name. They have a long, slender beak, and their body is grey with a white underbelly. They measure between 2 and 2.5 meters long with an average weight of 150 kg. Each dolphin has a unique elongated dorsal fin- both with regards to shape and notches along the edge of their fins- and therefore different individuals can be recognized and data captured.

Behaviour: These species of dolphins tend to be inshore dolphins rarely found in water deeper than 20 meters. They live in small pods of 1 to 12 individuals. They are fairly shy creatures and normally avoid boats and humans and are more leisurely swimmers than the other dolphin species but on the odd occasions when they are seen to surf and leap; they are probably the most spectacular acrobats of all the dolphins.

Bottlenose Dolphins (*Tursiops aduncus*)

Appearance: Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins are a subspecies of the Bottlenose Dolphin and have a longer and more slender beak and their dark upper body fades to an off-white underbelly which can become speckled with age. They have a large, curved dorsal fin and are fairly large for dolphins measuring between 2.5 and 3 meters in length and weigh between 200 and 320 kg.

Behaviour: They are usually found in coastal waters normally no deeper than 30 meters. Bottlenose dolphins live in groups from 5 to 15 individuals but can sometimes be seen in groups of 100 animals or more and have complex social behaviour. They are the most inclined to interact with humans and are often found surfing in the break of waves. They do not seem to be bothered with boats and will bow ride, back-splash and somersault in their presence.

Other marine life that can be witnessed out at sea and on the surrounding coastal area can be numerous varieties of sea birds, sharks, Cape Fur seals, Orcas (killer whales), Minke Whales and a few years back a Pygmy Sperm whale even swam through the Knysna Heads into the lagoon and beached itself.

THINGS TO DO IN SOUTH AFRICA

LOCATION, EXPLORING AND SIGHTSEEING:

The best advice you'll get from us is to try to see some of the country while you're in South Africa. It's big (huge!) and each different region is exciting and very, very beautiful. **Cape Town** is probably the most beautiful city in the world (I can say that, I grew up there :-). **KwaZulu-Natal** comes a very close second, albeit very different. **Knysna** is where South Africans go on holiday, which gives you some idea of how lovely the region is. When you lie on the beach and watch dolphins jumping the waves, you'll think you're in Paradise.

LOCATION:

Knysna is approximately 500km from the beautiful capital city of Cape Town and voted South Africa's favorite town 4 years in a row! Its mountainous backdrop, impressively sized estuary and indigenous forests really give the town a natural feel to it. Although it still has that 'small-town' feel, Knysna is growing rapidly, and has all the amenities you could ask for such as banks, hotels, internet café's, cinemas and shopping malls.

About 20-30 minutes' drive away from Knysna you'll find **Plettenberg Bay** (better known simply as Plett), which is a bit smaller than Knysna, but equally stunning. Its' pure white beaches stretch as far as the eye can see and there is a lot to do, from whale and dolphin watching, to hiking trails and awesome nightlife.

The Garden Route is famous for all sorts of activities from adrenalin sports such as bungee jumping, skydiving and shark cage diving to more relaxed pursuits such as hiking, quad biking in the forest or visiting one of the many animal sanctuaries in the area. Your local Travellers liaison will be happy to assist you in finding interesting things to do and places to see so make the most of it!

Knysna nestles on the banks of a beautiful lagoon in the heart of the 'Garden Route' of South Africa. It is surrounded by a natural paradise of lush indigenous forests, tranquil lakes and golden beaches, making it a real natural wonderland. Knysna is a vibrant town, buzzing with creativity and energy, and the pulse of good music. It's a place where you can enjoy the mellow atmosphere of street cafes, watching the world go by. The main street is very leafy with trees along the pavements and it has a wonderful holiday atmosphere with sun umbrellas everywhere.

Most cafes have outdoors seating areas overlooking the street or on the pavements, with colourful sun umbrellas - a perfect place to sit with the sun on your face, watching passers-by ambling along, sipping a steamy cappuccino or staving off the heat with a cold drink.



HOW TO BOOK

TWO EASY WAYS ...

Complete a [booking form](#) online.

Telephone
01903 502595 (UK)
or
1-603-574-4935 (USA)



THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN OUR PROGRAMME!

We hope you'll join us!

Don't hesitate to contact us with any questions.

We're happy to help you plan your exciting adventure!

www.travellersworldwide.com

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