



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

SOUTH AFRICA



LION AND BIG CAT CONSERVATION IN A LION SANCTUARY, NEAR BETHLEHEM

Volunteer with Lions and other big cats in a highly-regarded sanctuary for mistreated lions. The sanctuary, run by an international animal welfare charity, is the largest of its type in South Africa. It offers a new home to big cats that have been abused, kept in cramped conditions or confiscated from hunters.

The interaction between lions and humans can be absorbing and as such, being close (but safe) to lions can be a moving experience. You will get to know the animals as individuals and assisting with research into their behaviour can be very rewarding.

Thank you for your interest in volunteering on 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 helping conserving animals in their natural environment and knowing that you made a difference to them.
- 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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Prices: From **£1,395**, excluding flights.

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

Duration: From 4 weeks to 6 months, subject to visa requirements

Start Dates: All year round - you choose your start and finish dates.

Requirements: You will need to have a keen interest in animal welfare, either studying a relevant subject or with hands on experience with animals. Minimum age 17.

What's Included:

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| ▶ Arranging your Programme, | ▶ Full pre-departure support and assistance, |
| ▶ Payment Protection insurance | ▶ Accommodation |
| ▶ Certificate of Completion | ▶ Transfer to your on-site accommodation |
| ▶ Meeting you at the nearest airport | ▶ Local in-country team support and backup |
| ▶ 24-hr emergency support. | ▶ Food |

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

SUMMARY

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The sanctuary is home to Lions and other big cats, as well as a rich variety of game species. These include Zebra, Wildebeest, Impala, Springbok, and many more.

As well as contributing to some valuable rescue and rehabilitation work you'll also carry out research into the behaviour and interactions of lions within a group, and between neighbouring lion groups.

You'll witness and be involved in the extraordinary and complex work for animal welfare and appreciate the experience of learning how highly sensitive big cats are.

You'll also enjoy some of the best countryside South Africa has to offer. The Sanctuary is situated against a backdrop of magnificent mountains, with spectacular views of the Eastern Free State Plains below. In your time off, you can visit local towns, Bethlehem and Clarens, or go further afield to the Golden Gate National Park and the stunning Drakensberg Mountains. Our representative will be able to advise and help on trips and places to visit.



WORK CONTENT:

Work at the sanctuary involves caring for the lions and other big cats, monitoring their progress and behaviour, helping with visitor education and refreshments, administration and maintenance work. Typical tasks include:

- feeding the lions and cleaning their enclosures
- observing the behaviour of the lions and the progress of any new arrivals
- helping with any medical treatments required
- building new structures for enclosures and helping with maintenance work
- helping with game drives and guided horseback tours for guests
- getting involved with the other activities at the lodge, such as the reservation departments, presentation, accommodation, conferences, weddings, hiking trails and more
- marketing activity, like brochure distribution to local towns and the surrounding area
- guiding school children as part of their education program

This project is a great opportunity for someone who has a keen interest in big cats, enjoys being part of a team and is prepared to get involved in all aspects of conservation work.

A TYPICAL DAY

You will be set a timetable that is generally Monday - Friday between 8 and 4. This does however vary dependant on the weather and animal activity.

A typical day starts with 2 hours of animal monitoring. You will either monitor the social interactions of a group or the interaction between two groups to see if they can be put together in the future. Dependant on the day of the week you will then help with the feeding of the predators which is when you recognize that despite being in captivity these are still wild animals, feeding provides the real sense of what your role is; to create the most natural environment possible for these remarkable animals.

Afternoons are spent with building and/or implementing enrichment activities to enhance the lions' life at the sanctuary. You will quickly find that like humans each have their own personality and what may work with one may not work with another.

You may also find yourself doing one of numerous activities to help the park including helping during educational school visits as well as tourist activities at the lodge that raise significant awareness and funds necessary for the long term success of the project.

WORKING TIMES

5 days a week, generally flexible within the week, 2 days off not necessarily on weekends (it will be done a weekly schedule) you must be prepared to work sometimes also early mornings or until dawn, because it is the most active time for predators also in captivity.

"It was such an amazing experience and I only wish I could have stayed longer. I had a blast, met so many unreal people and cannot wait to return to South Africa!"

Caitlin Nyhu

"I absolutely loved my time there and was extremely sad to leave again. I would definitely go back myself. I think it would suit someone who loves all types of animals and is interested in their welfare."

Zoe Trevett



ACCOMMODATION

ACCOMMODATION:

You'll stay in comfortable, brand new accommodation located at the heart of the sanctuary with other volunteers and some staff.

There is plenty of space to relax, to get involved with cooking and even swimming in the on-site swimming pool. If you don't fancy cooking, you can enjoy discounts at the lodge restaurant.

FOOD:

The food is included on this project. You also have a shopping mall, where you can buy whatever you like.



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

“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

WHAT IS 'CANNED' HUNTING?

Canned hunting is a cruel and gruesome 'sport' in which lions are solely bred with the sole purpose of being killed as 'trophy' animals. Approximately 1,000 lions per year are shot by trophy hunters that travel to South Africa from Europe and North America.

These animals are placed within fenced surroundings with no chance of escape, hunters pay between 25,000 to 45,000 euro per head. The animals are bred at specialist breeding farms where lionesses produce a litter every 6 months rather than every 2 years as it is in the wild, losing their cubs within 3 days and the unnatural frequency of breeding leads to trauma and health problems.

The cubs are raised by hand without their mother's milk which can lead to bone deformations, respiratory problems, and digestive disorders - a life of suffering, and a tourist attraction for those keen to pet or even walk a lion.

Many tourists and even some volunteer programs unknowingly support this cruel lion industry, despite their best intentions. Those involved in 'canned hunting' disguise the truth by calling what they are doing as animal or species protection.

There are more than 160 breeding farms in South Africa, in which more than 4,000 lions are currently threatened with being shot. This statistic becomes especially shocking when you consider there are only 3,000 lions living in the wild of South Africa. The South African government has attempted to prevent 'canned hunting' by including lions on the protection list. However, the lion industry is blocking this progress with a constant string of legal processes – leaving the lions being bred and hunted without any protection.

Vier Pforten are fighting for the prohibition of 'canned hunting', commercial lion breeding farms and lion 'patting' offers. For now they have to rely on this project to support their petition and raise awareness of this issue so that others don't unwittingly support this industry in the future.

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 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, like how to use the transport system, banks, safety issues, tipping, and lots more.

THINGS TO DO IN SOUTH AFRICA

LOCATION, EXPLORING AND SIGHTSEEING:

Bethlehem is a town in the eastern Free State province of South Africa that is situated on the Liebenbergs River along a fertile valley just north of the Rooiberg Mountains on the N5 road. It is a wheat growing area and named after the biblical Bethlehem.

The town lies at an altitude of 1,700 metres (5,600 ft) and this contributes to its cool climate with frosty winters and mild summers. The average annual temperature is around 24 °C (75 °F).

Bethlehem is situated approximately 240 kilometres (150 mi) north-east of Bloemfontein, 140 kilometres (87 mi) east of Kroonstad and 90 kilometres (56 mi) west of Harrismith. The town is strategically situated in the heart of the picturesque north-eastern Free State and originally developed as a service centre.

You should visit **Clarens**, which is renowned for its arts and crafts and also has a good collection of restaurants and bars. Clarens also borders the Golden Gate National Park which is well worth a visit. Entry is free and there are walks and wildlife to be seen as well as a traditional Basoto Village Museum which costs just 50 Rand.

For those wishing to be more adventurous, there is the opportunity to go **quad biking**, plus **white water rafting** is available out of Clarens, as well as other activities.



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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