

Big 5 Game Reserve Conservation



Overview

Location	Paterson (distance from Port Elizabeth is 85km), South Africa.
Duration	From 2 weeks.
Dates	All year round.
Capacity	Max. 30 volunteers at one time
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum age: 18. • You must have an Upper Intermediate level of English. • Special skills: You must have a love for animals as well as good physical and mental health as much of the time entails outside work that requires focus and concentration.
Your impact	♥♥♥♥♥
Documents required	Enrolment form, curriculum vitae, letter of motivation, passport copy, proof of medical insurance.
Day of arrival	Monday.
Day of departure	Sunday.



Highlights

- Enjoy the peaceful, scenic location of this game reserve.
- Get to experience the famed African Big 5 out in the wild.
- Work behind the scenes with wildlife enthusiasts and learn about nature and conservation.
- Gain exceptional hands-on learning experience in the African bush.
- Get the chance to do Wildlife monitoring, e.g., lions and rhinos.
- Make new friends from all over the world.
- Explore other parts of South Africa, including the Garden Route and some of its adventure offerings.

Project information

This game reserve spans over 6000 hectares and is situated in the Eastern Cape (85km out of Port Elizabeth towards Grahamstown).

The project was founded some 20 years ago to offer education and perpetuate nature conservation, in an affordable and accessible manner, both for local and international visitors.

As part of the project's philosophy, the social upliftment of those around them was integral in its values. This included the local community as well as the fauna and flora. Consequently, the project engaged in activities ranging from school feeding and old age home visits, to the removal of alien vegetation.

After the establishment of the project, those who wanted to assist in the various wildlife and conservation efforts approached the project to also play a part. Thus, the volunteer program came to be. The program grew steadily to ensure that each participant was able to add value and fulfil their ambition, in a comfortable and non-pressured environment, suited to each person's abilities.

This project is designed for volunteers interested in having a truly African experience while making a difference to the local wildlife and environment. Your work will play a valuable part in the sustainability of the region.

Programme details

Activities are dependent on weather and other factors (so please expect the itinerary to change from time to time!). You will be divided into groups, depending on the number of volunteers available. Each group will have an outdoor volunteer coordinator as a leader and mentor. The groups will be engaged in different, daily activities but will all do the same type and number of activities by the end of the week.

In some cases, all the groups might do the same activity at the same time depending on the type of activity, e.g. game capturing.



Your work schedule

There is an itinerary of all the activities which are scheduled for each week and the programme varies on a day-to-day basis and generally runs from Monday to Friday with two sessions per day as follows:

9 am	Breakfast
10 am – 1 pm	Activities
1 pm – 2 pm	Lunch
2 pm – 4 pm	Activities
4 pm – 6 pm	Free time
6 pm – 7 pm	Dinner
7 pm +	Free time

The weekends are normally used for weekend excursions and private travel, or volunteers can relax on the reserve.

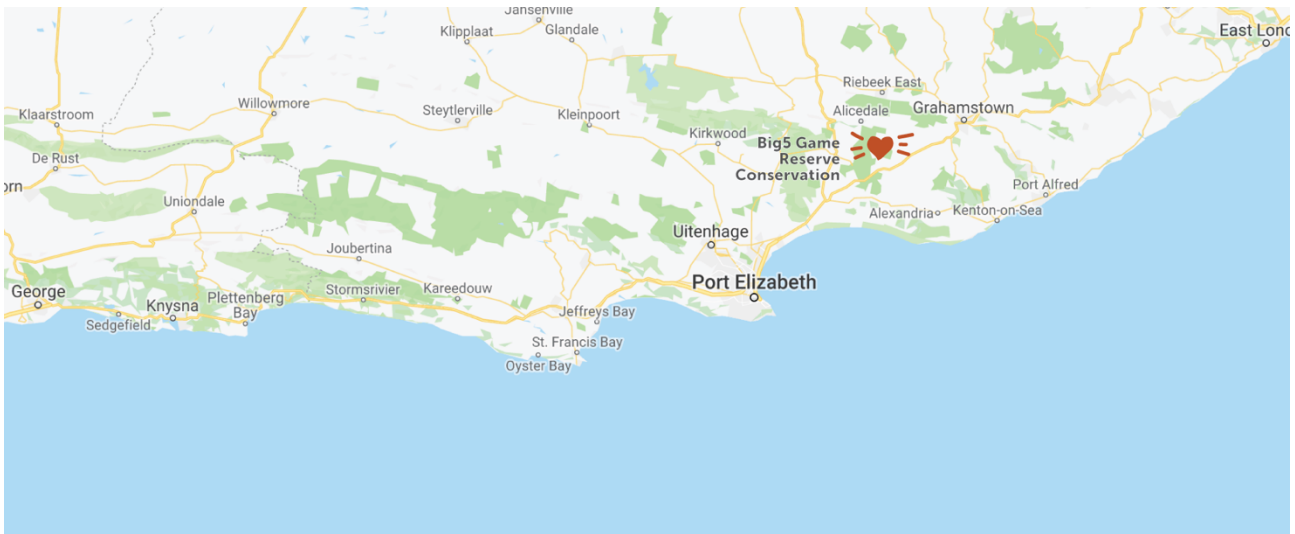
Your role

Volunteers are expected to get involved in various wildlife and conservation activities of the reserve. They will assist the team leader/s in a variety of tasks, which would depend on various factors including the weather and time of year. However, activities may encompass the following tasks:

- Fence patrols and help in fixing fences when necessary
- Wildlife monitoring, e.g. of lions and rhinos
- Road building and maintenance
- Game counts
- Anti-poaching efforts
- Removal of alien vegetation
- Planting of indigenous trees
- Monitoring of the water tables and sources for animals
- Land rehabilitation
- Land contouring

It is important to note that this description serves as an example only. The daily tasks and challenges depend on the volunteer, the time of year and the work that needs to be done. The final job description can therefore vary substantially from the above. The project however tries to keep the activities as exciting and varied as reasonably possible and allowed for by the various dynamic factors.

Project location



The Big 5 Game Reserve Conservation project is located near Paterson, 85km outside Port Elizabeth in South Africa.

Getting to and from the project

You need to arrive at Port Elizabeth Airport where you will be collected by the volunteer staff. Scheduled transport is provided upon your arrival and departure.

Arrival

Airport pick-ups are arranged on Monday before 17:00.

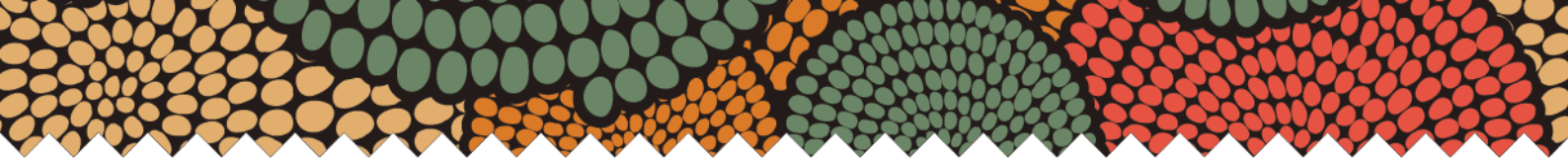
Departure

2 options are possible:

- Depart on Saturday morning at 10:00 and spend a part of the weekend in Port Elizabeth, departure will then usually be any time on Sunday. Please note that you will need to make your own way to the airport on that Sunday. This will also be at your own expense.
- Depart on Sunday evening around 18:00 and get dropped off at the airport or in Port Elizabeth for onwards travel. In case you will only find a flight out of PE on Monday, the Sunday night will be at your own expense.

In both cases, the Saturday night is included either in PE as part of the weekend excursion or at the project, depending on what the volunteer prefers to do.

This project is located in a remote area. In all likelihood, everything will be very different to what you are used to at home. During the first few days, you may find it very difficult to adapt to the new situation; you might even feel homesick. It is important to give yourself time to get used to the new challenges you may face. Within the first week, you will come to find it much easier and will soon be won over by the landscape and the people.



Accommodation

Your accommodation lodge is located directly on the Game Reserve so there is no additional transfer needed; you are already there.

Volunteers will sleep in dorm style rooms, allocated by gender. The bathroom is shared. The lodge is very clean and modern with lots of spacious communal areas to hang out in such as an entertainment room with a pool table, table tennis, darts and a big screen TV.

There is also a little kitchenette where volunteers may get drinks or a cup of tea any time they want.

The outside area invites one to relax and enjoy time at the pool or get involved in sporting activities out on the cricket field or tennis-court.

Wi-Fi is available at the lodge.

Meals

The accommodation offers full board. Enjoy the meals with your fellow volunteers at the communal area of the lodge.

A vegetarian option is available and it is also possible to cater for special dietary requirements.

Free time

After dinner during the weeks, volunteers are free to enjoy themselves on the reserve that offers additional facilities such as swimming pools, a cricket field, tennis courts and an entertainment room.

The weekends are normally used for weekend excursions and private travel.

Scheduled weekend excursions and transfers to Port Elizabeth are offered free of charge. Other than that, it is exciting to explore other parts of South Africa, including the Garden Route and some of its adventure offerings like shark cage diving and bungee jumping (at additional charges).

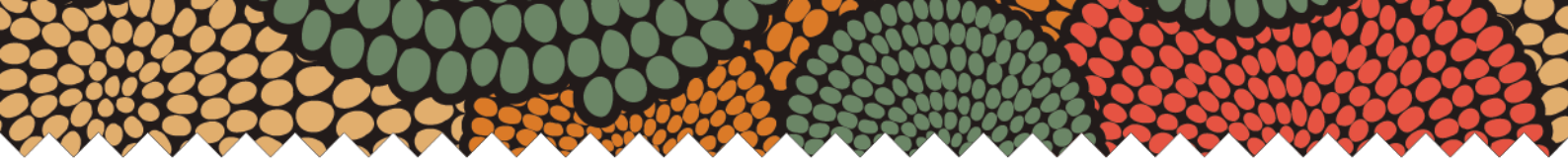
Local transport

No additional transport is needed during the day as you are already at the game reserve. Weekend excursions and transfers to Port Elizabeth are offered free of charge. Please however note that these are scheduled and that transfers needed out of these hours are charged for.

What to bring

The most important thing is to come with a positive attitude.

The Port Elizabeth/Grahamstown area is known to have four seasons in one day. Please pack sensibly for cold and warm weather conditions. You will be working on the game reserve for the majority of the day. It is advised that you dress warmly as the wind-chill factor can be quite sharp during the early morning and late afternoon when on drives, particularly in winter (June – September).



All year-round essential clothing items:

- Warm clothes: hat, scarf and gloves
- Sleeping bag (especially in the cooler months, June – September)
- Waterproof jacket
- Thick fleece/coat
- Working/hiking boots
- Rockies or light canvas shoes for around the house
- Work gloves
- Long trousers

Other items to bring:

- Binoculars
- A backpack for working days
- 3-point South African adaptor
- Personal toiletries (soap, insect repellent and suntan lotion - although a certain number of basic toiletries can be bought in Paterson)
- Sunglasses
- Peaked cap/sunhat
- Beach Towel / swimming costume
- Torch

Your commitment

Please be aware that in applying for a volunteer project, you are making a firm commitment to the project. Our projects depend on the volunteers. It is necessary that you take this commitment seriously.

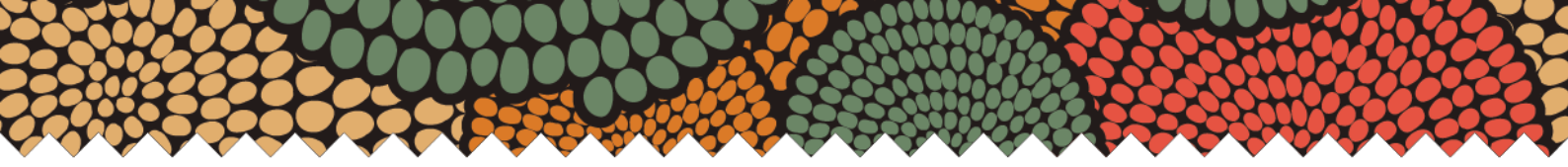
Some projects will appoint specific responsibilities to you; others are less structured and require the volunteers to use their initiative. If you prefer the one type over the other, please ask us for the most appropriate project for your preference.

Your daily presence is required and working hours are to be followed strictly. Not fulfilling your obligation can result in your dismissal from the project.

Cell phone use during working hours

We kindly ask that you refrain from using your cell phone during work hours as this will distract you from doing the work at hand. This is for the safety of the volunteers who work with animals.

Volunteers who would like to take photographs of their projects are free to communicate this directly to their project supervisors for guidance and instruction.



What to wear

You are asked to wear sensible clothing and to be culturally sensitive of the communities you are working with. You are expected to wear modest clothing, which includes jeans, leggings, long shorts, and long skirts. Closed shoes are advisable, especially when working outdoors. Underwear is not to be seen under any circumstances.

Not acceptable are low cut tops, short shorts/shirts, bikinis and swimwear, belly tops, sleeveless shirts/t-shirts for male volunteers as well as flip flops or no shoes.

Please also do not wear any camouflage patterned clothing.

Insurance

Travel insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out full personal insurance cover.

This should include protection against theft and against loss of fees, should the whole or part of a programme or activity or accommodation not be attended.

Medical insurance

You are required to take out medical insurance before travelling.

You must ensure that you are covered from the day of departure in your home country to the day of arrival back in your home country. The minimum coverage must be US\$ 100.000 and, as part of the enrolment process, you will need to email us a copy of your insurance policy documentation.

Safety

Although there is no physical contact with our animals, we are working around large and dangerous predators so we do have strict safety rules in place which will be clearly explained to the volunteers during orientation and before they begin tasks and projects in the sanctuary. Volunteers will sign a document agreeing to our non-negotiable safety rules. If any of our non-negotiable rules are broken, we reserve the right to ask the volunteer to leave the project early, with no financial reimbursement.

Health

No vaccinations are required except for travellers going to the north-eastern areas of South Africa, where anti-malaria precautions are recommended. Clients should consult their doctor for recommendations.

A yellow fever certificate is compulsory for those persons who have travelled from, or intend travelling through, countries in the yellow fever belt:

Africa: Angola, Burundi, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, DRC, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Gabon, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda.

South America: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guyana, Guyana, Panama, Peru, Surinam, Venezuela, Argentina and Paraguay.

Bring medication just in case you suffer from any travel-related illnesses, e.g. stomach upsets, since your body needs to adjust to the change in food and water during your first few days in South Africa.

It is important to keep in mind at all times that HIV and Aids are widespread diseases in South Africa.

Make sure you are up-to-date on routine vaccines before every trip. We recommend that you make contact with your local vaccination services. The vaccines include measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine, varicella (chickenpox) vaccine and polio vaccine. In addition, we recommend Hepatitis A, typhoid and rabies. You can get hepatitis B through sexual contact, contaminated needles, and blood products, so this vaccine is recommended if you might get a tattoo or piercing.

Please contact us at Good Hope Volunteers should you have any questions about this.

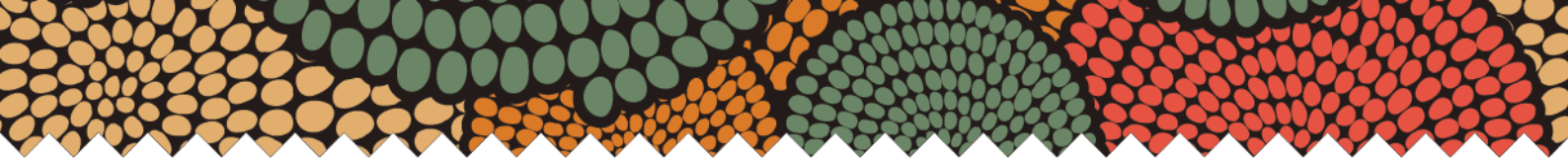
What's included / not included

Included:

- Project placement
- Airport transfer on arrival and departure (scheduled)
- Accommodation (single gender dorm style, full board)
- Weekend excursions (transport and accommodation only)
- Weekend transfers to Port Elizabeth (Sat morning and Sunday afternoon)
- An orientation at the beginning of your volunteering
- Local support, including a 24-hour emergency number
- Electronic certificate (printed copy on request)
- Wi-Fi

Not included:

- Any other transport
- Activities and food during weekend excursions
- Laundry
- Flights and insurance



Visa

You can volunteer in South Africa on a visitor's visa for up to 90 days.

Nationals from certain countries (e.g. Brazil, Switzerland, Germany, Australia, France, the Netherlands, Spain) will receive their visa when entering South Africa. Other nationals need to apply for a visitor's visa at a South African Embassy in their home country before travelling.

If you come to South Africa on a visitor's visa, you can extend once by another 90 days.

If you plan to come for more than 90 days, you need to apply for a volunteer visa at a South African Embassy in your home country. Please ask us for the necessary documents for your visa application.

For the latest information contact the South African Embassy or Good Hope Volunteers.