

Shark Project



Overview

Location	Closest town: Gansbaai (about 3km away), Kleinbaai, South Africa.
Duration	From 2 weeks.
Dates	All year round (this project does not operate on December 25, and January 1 but volunteers can still stay).
Capacity	Max. 20 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 be physically fit and able to swim.
Documents required	Enrolment form, curriculum vitae, letter of motivation, passport copy, proof of medical insurance; medical conditions need to be accompanied by a doctor's note.
Day of arrival	Sunday (arrange own accommodation for this first night in Cape Town) Project start day is Monday.
Day of departure	Monday (flight from Cape Town after 9pm, otherwise departure on Tuesday)



Highlights

- Work on eco-tourism vessels with leaders in the industry, assisting tourists and educating them about conservation.
- Dive with great white sharks and bronze whaler sharks and see them in their natural habitat.
- Experience the Marine Big 5 wildlife: sharks, whales, dolphins, penguins and seals.
- Learn about shark behaviour, biology and ocean conservation.
- Assist with rehabilitation efforts at the world class African Penguin and Seabird Sanctuary.
- Participate in conservation activities like beach clean ups and fishing line bin assembly and monitoring.
- Learn to scuba dive (additional costs apply).
- Take part in amazing tours and excursions outside of the project.
- Make new friends from all over the world.

Project information

The project is focused on shark-cage diving, whale watching and boat-based eco-marine tourism. It is based in Kleinbaai, a small harbour town, part of Gansbaai in the Western Cape of South Africa. This area is known as the best place in the world to see great white sharks in their natural habitat and it is also a hot spot for the breeding and mating waters of the southern right whale. The project works closely with a number of conservation bodies to address conservation challenges and improve living conditions for local communities and to raise awareness about wildlife conservation.

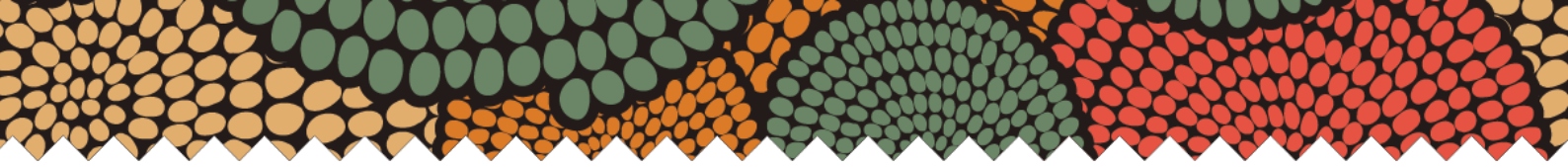
The project offers you an incredible opportunity to experience a wide range of South African marine wildlife: sharks, whales, dolphins, penguins and seals. You will receive presentations from marine biologists about shark behaviour, biology and ocean conservation, fin-ID studies, great white shark wound healing, great white tagging and tracking, and water sampling. You will have informative presentations and you will take part in exciting community projects too, e.g. beach clean ups, education, amazing excursions and tours of the local area etc.

The project allows you access to a diverse area of learning and gives you holistic insight into the challenges and opportunities involved in eco-tourism and ocean conservation at the tip of Africa.

Programme details

On the first day you can look forward to:

- An informal introduction from the volunteer co-ordinator.
- Meeting staff, crew and fellow volunteers.
- Welcome briefing, boat briefing and tour of the African Penguin and Seabird Sanctuary.
- Getting to know the surroundings - the office, the accommodation and also shops so that you can stock up on supplies.
- Being given two volunteer T-shirts, a cap and a jacket.
- Completing indemnities and forms.



The first trip begins with a briefing from the team marine biologist. The launch times will be given the previous day and can vary from 07:00 to 13:00, depending on tides and weather conditions. You arrive at the anchoring spot after 20 to 25 minutes. The anchor is lowered, the cage goes into the water and a scent trial is made. Then final preparations are made for the dive and the rest of the trip is spent assisting and educating tourists, looking out for sharks, diving and enjoying!

Please note that the project cannot take participants who have certain physical limitations (e.g. blindness, being wheelchair bound or severe motion sickness).

Your role

Duties on the boat:

- Report for duty 1 ½ hours before boat is scheduled to launch.
- Clean and dry the boat in the morning and afternoon (before and after trips).
- Check equipment for diving - chum, bait, food, coats, etc.
- Assist in laying and retrieving of the anchor and cage.
- Assisting in dive operation (you will get the chance to dive yourself).
- Education and care of clients and client interaction.
- Constant and vigilant shark spotting and bait watching.
- Clean wetsuits and put them away.
- Storeroom duties - needs to be kept clean daily.
- Assist crew and skipper.
- One trip usually takes a total of 6 working hours, two trips about 8 working hours.

You will receive details of your trips for the next day each evening. For any time off or sickness you need to contact the volunteer coordinator immediately. The project team tries to get you out to sea every day possible, so please stay in touch with your coordinator if this is too much for you. For no-sea days (when the weather is bad), day trips will be organised.

Other activities at the Shark Project could include:

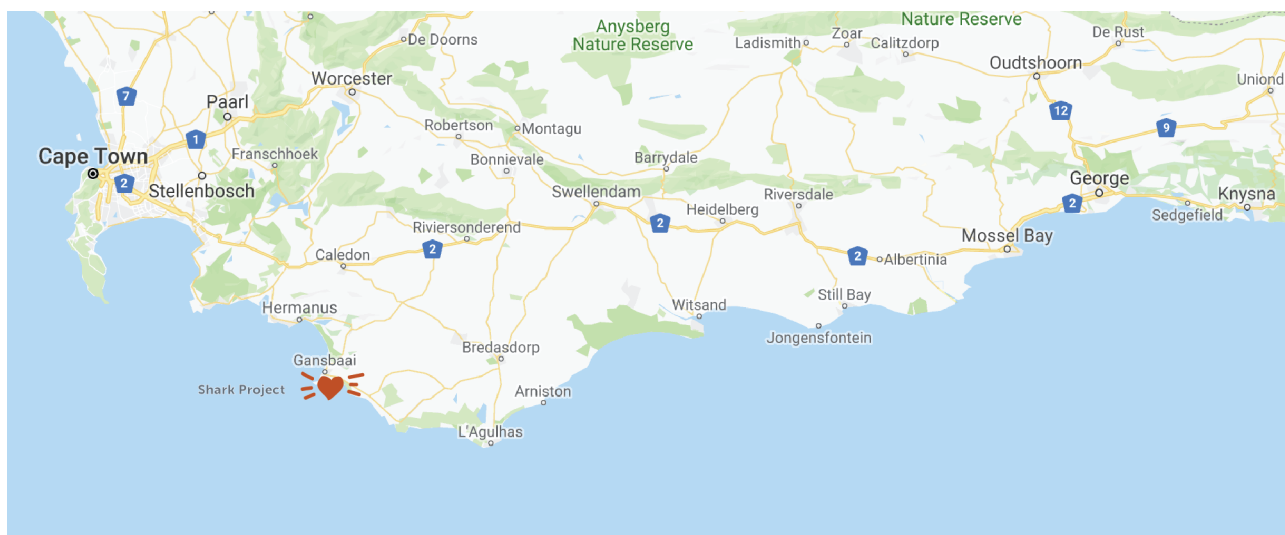
- Beach clean-ups.
- Fishing line bin construction, erection and maintenance.
- Shark egg collection and identification.
- Local Estuary monitoring.
- Assisting with rehabilitation of penguins and seabirds at the African Penguin & Seabird Sanctuary.
- Getting involved in the project's conservation efforts.
- Analysis of trash collected via storm water drain catchment (project storm)
- Helping out the local animal welfare organisation.

If you are a dedicated worker and good at taking initiative then you can get research experience while you are here. You will need to spend time with the biologists and they will explain the work they are doing, techniques used to collect and analyse data and you will also be able to help with data capture and collection.

The project runs 7 days a week as they are completely dependent on the weather. If the weather does not allow the boat to go out to the sea, then you will be taken on one of the following excursions: Hermanus (shopping, wine tours), Betty's Bay (penguin colony), Cape Agulhas (meeting of the two oceans), Caledon hot water spa, Two Oceans Aquarium, hiking, etc.

It is important to note that this description serves as an example only. The daily tasks and challenges depend on the weather and the season. Everything at the programme is dependent on the weather. If there are no sea days, presentations, excursions or conservation work will be arranged. The final job description can therefore vary from the above substantially.

Project location



The Shark Project is based in Kleinbaai, in the Western Cape of South Africa. You need to arrive at Cape Town International Airport.

Getting to and from the project

You will need to fly to Cape Town International Airport.

Arrival

Please arrive on a Sunday, as the project starts on Monday.

You will spend one night in Cape Town at your own expense. We can arrange an airport pick up transfer for you at an extra cost if desired. You will then be collected from your accommodation in Cape Town on Monday morning and taken to the project. This could be as early as 4 am.

The exact pick-up time will be communicated to you at least 1 day prior.

Departure

Return transfers are usually scheduled with drop-offs late on a Monday afternoon/early evening. If you have booked a flight after 9 pm on Monday, you should be fine, otherwise you need to stay an extra night in Cape Town at your own expense and fly out on a Tuesday.

Recommended backpackers:

Sunflower Stop, 179 Main Road, Green Point

Villa Viva Cape Town, 74 New Church Street

Ashanti Lodge, 23 Antrim Road, Green Point



Accommodation

You will be accommodated at the International Marine Volunteer Centre, which is located in Kleinbaai directly at the project. This lodge is equipped with 4 cottages that accommodate between 4 and 6 people per cottage (twin shared rooms). Each cottage has a bathroom (with toilet, shower and basin), kitchen and living area as well as daily living essentials. The volunteer coordinator is on duty and available in cases of emergencies. There is also a very spacious living area in the main hall with a pool table, communal indoor braai and kitchen area that can be used. The lodge has a big, safe swimming pool, a garden, a dartboard, a foosball table, a table tennis table and an activity hall. Minibuses are available to transport you to and from the hub of activities. However, if you are more active, walking or cycling to the office is safe and easy, and will only take between 10 and 15min (1.4km). Bedding is provided. Bed linen are washed weekly. WiFi is available.

Your laundry gets taken to the laundromat weekly and costs about ZAR 20 per kg.

Key things about the lodge:

- Expect to share.
- Fully furnished.
- Satellite TV with a variety of channels.
- Books and board games available.
- DVD player.
- Free WiFi in the main building (remember to bring laptop or phones).
- Emergency numbers are in the house.
- Alarm remotes in all rooms in case of emergencies.
- Sheets are provided and washed once a week.
- Towels are not available.
- Property is maintained regularly.
- Hot water bottles and extra blankets are provided for the colder months. There is no heating inside the buildings so bring clothes that you can wear in layers for warmth.
- Bicycles for personal use.
- Keep your personal belongings safe (there is a safe in each cottage).
- The water is safe to drink.

Meals

Breakfast is provided on a help-yourself basis (tea, coffee, juice, toast, eggs, bacon/veggie sausage, bread, cereals and milk).

Ingredients for a light lunch (juice, fruit, bread, margarine, cheese, tomato, cucumber, mayonnaise, peanut butter, jam, salt and pepper) are provided for you to take to sea or enjoy at home. Should you be doing other activities you may be responsible for your own lunch.

Dinner is at your own expense.

A vegetarian option is available and it is also possible to cater for special dietary requirements. Any dietary needs need to be specified.



Free time

After your work you can spend some time together and relax, read, watch movies/documentaries, play pool and games, go out for dinner, enjoy the local pubs, pizza, sunsets etc.

In your free time you can either decide to do optional activities or simply stay at the lodge and relax. You can do quad biking, horse riding, wine tasting, hiking, and more at your own expense.

Local transport

The project has a volunteer bus that is used on a daily basis for transporting volunteers to the project, selected activities and for food shopping (2-3 times per week). There is a small shop next to the office where daily supplies can be purchased if you need to. There are also some bicycles available for your personal use.

For any excursions/activities outside of the programme (e.g. safari, bungee jumping, horse riding, quad biking, etc.) you need to organise your own transfer. You have the option to hire a car, but this is all at your own expense. Local shuttles are sometimes available but you need to bear in mind that Gansbaai is a small town and therefore you need to be flexible.

What to bring

Items you will need are:

- Towel
- Polarised sunglasses
- Camera, laptop, smartphone, adaptors & chargers as needed
- Swimming costume
- Suitable clothing for being at sea depending on season, layers work well
- Comfortable, non-slip shoes to wear on boat (we provide waterproof boots)
- Warm clothes and a beanie for the winter months
- Clothing that is easy to wash and dry, and doesn't need ironing
- A smart set of clothes (for evenings out, dinner in a restaurant etc.)
- Driver's license if you are planning on renting a car while in South Africa
- Sunblock/sunscreen, lip balm
- Insect repellent
- Seasickness tablets/patches
- Medical kit (pain killers, antihistamine pills and cream, anti-diarrhea meds, band aids/plasters, antiseptic cream, sunscreen, personal medication etc.)
- Toiletries (travel-size shampoo, conditioner, body wash, toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss, deodorant)
- 3-point South African adaptor
- ZAR 200 cash deposit



You will receive the below working uniform:

- 2 T-shirts
- 1 Cap
- 1 Jacket (must be returned after programme, unless you stay for 4+ weeks)

Please note that the length of your shorts should be measured by the finger-tip rule. Shorts, pants and jeans should not be ripped/frayed, and for safety reasons no flip-flops are permitted on board the vessels.

Diving equipment is provided by the project but if you prefer to use your own mask or suit, you are welcome to bring this along. If you need anything else it can be bought at local supermarkets in South Africa.

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, shirts/t-shirts with no sleeves 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.

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.

The project is situated in a malaria free area so no drugs are required.

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.



Safety

While all safety precautions are followed, you are still working with wild animals and must be aware at all times and follow the safety guidelines.

At the accommodation, there are safety precautions in place i.e. Fire emergencies protocol, Alarm security response, Security cameras etc.

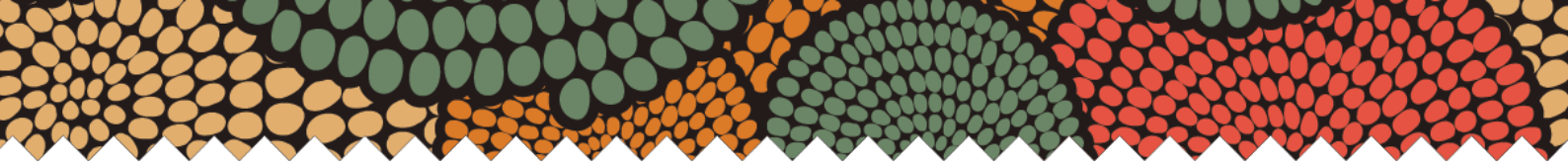
What's included / not included

Included:

- Project placement
- Transfer on arrival from your accommodation in Cape Town and a departure transfer to Cape Town airport
- Accommodation (twin room, self-help breakfast and lunch)
- A donation to the Dyer Island Conservation Trust if you stay for 4 weeks or longer
- An orientation at the beginning of your volunteering
- Welcome pack (2 T-shirts, a cap, use of a jacket which may be kept if staying for 4 weeks or longer)
- Training, presentations, programme materials and conservation activities
- A shark cage-dive
- A Marine Big 5 Tour
- Trips on the boat (weather permitting)
- Free entrance to the Two Oceans Aquarium in Cape Town, either before/after your trip (please let us know a few days in advance so that we can arrange this)
- Transfer to day trips on no-sea days
- Use of bicycles
- Electronic certificate (printed copy on request)
- Local support including a 24-hour emergency number
- Wi-Fi

Not included:

- First night's accommodation at backpackers in Cape Town and possibly last night if flight leaves before 19:00
- Lunch (if not at the lodge or on the boat) and dinner (self-catering)
- Laundry
- Local transport
- Extra spending money
- Towels



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.

Longer stays are only possible at projects that are registered NGO's. This project, however, is not a NGO.

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