



South Africa Limpopo

Arrival

Please note that arrival logistics may be altered at short notice – check for updates regularly to ensure you are aware of any late changes.

Visa Requirements

It is your responsibility to ensure you have the correct visa for your trip.

Field staff advise that you enter the country using a **tourist visa** if your stay is 12 weeks or less. For most nationalities this can be obtained upon arrival. For durations longer than 12 weeks, you will require a **volunteer visa**. For most nationalities this must be arranged in advance. Check with immigration authorities of the countries you intend to visit, or see www.cibt.com for visa application advice and information

Keeping in Touch

You will have limited access to long-distance communications whilst on the program, so make sure friends and family know how often they can expect to hear from you. Participants typically use mobile phones to keep in touch, with limited access to internet. MTN South Africa and Vodacom are the service providers that covers both bases. Check with your home service provider that they have roaming agreements with MTN or Vodacom. SIM cards and starter packs/airtime are easily available on the weekly town trips for less than R5.00, but will require a passport for registration purposes.

If your bags go missing in transit, **don't panic!** This does occasionally happen, and you are usually reunited with your belongings within a few days. Consult airline representatives in the baggage claim area. You may be given a file/reference number; it is wise to also ask for a contact telephone number for follow-up.

Living Conditions

Facilities will be more basic than you are accustomed to – please travel with an open mind and a willingness to adapt to local conditions.

Accommodation is in shared (mixed sex) rooms with shared bathroom facilities at both bases. There is cold running water available for showers. Flush toilet facilities are available, and participants share base duties, including cleaning and other chores. If you are joining our long term internship, accommodation during work placements will vary depending on location. Accommodation will not be provided on breaks between program phases, you will be responsible for making your own arrangements.

Food

Participants take it in turns to prepare meals for the group. Food is very basic with about two thirds of the meals vegetarian. Breakfast could be cereal, fresh fruit, rusks etc., lunch is typically sandwiches, salads and a typical evening meal may include rice, fresh veg, etc.

Electricity

Supply: 220V 50Hz

Source: Solar (generator backup) - for limited hours of the day.

Sockets: SA style is most common,

Laundry

Only hand washing facilities are available at base with basic washing powder supplied by the NGO.

Getting Around and Exploring Further

During the expedition you will have 1 day off a week. In this time you could visit the stunning local mountains (Karongwe), go curio shopping, or just spend some time wandering around the local town. At the end of each 4 week cycle volunteers have the opportunity to take 4 days off, during which they are free to arrange their own trips if they wish. Before and after your program you could visit Kruger National Park, the Blyde River Canyon, go bungi jumping or canyoning at Sabie the possibilities are endless!

Finance

Local currency: **South African Rand (ZAR)**

Participants typically spend approximately 400 SA Rand per week for personal items such as snacks, toiletries, drinks, and perhaps internet access on town trip or calling card/ phone vouchers/ airtime. The base keeps a limited tuck-shop with soft drinks, beers, chocolates etc. Having a credit/debit card as a backup for emergencies and to book hire cars/trips is wise. ATMs are commonplace throughout. All towns, even the small ones, have ATM's and these generally allow withdrawal by international cards. Travellers Cheques are not recommended for this project, unless you are planning to continue travelling independently before or after.

Background Check

A background/police check is NOT required for this program

Health & Safety

The nearest emergency medical hospital is located in Tzaneen, about an hour's and twenty minutes drive from base. All staff are trained in Emergency First Response. Detailed Risk assessments are part of training, as are the Emergency Action Plans, including regular drills to ensure familiarity by all. Please note that the NGO cannot provide specific medical advice. Please consult your primary care provider (doctor, GP, etc.) or visit a travel clinic for further information. Karongwe fall within a malarial area, thus anti-malaria prophylaxis should be taken as recommended by your GP or home doctor.

Daytime temps at both reserves are very high during the summer months (Oct - March), reaching 35 deg C + regularly. Days in field are long so make sure you have a wide-brimmed hat, plenty of sunscreen and a water bottle with at least 1.5 litre capacity.

Pre Departure Training

Staff in the field will provide training on the skills required, but you may benefit from learning more about local history, culture and customs before you travel.

Here are some recommended books:

The Behavior Guide to African Mammals: by Richard Despard Estes (Paperback - December 1, 1992)

Field Guide to Mammals of Southern Africa: Chris & Tilde Stuart; - The Bushveld including the Kruger Lowveld: Lee Gutteridge. 2012

Sasols Birds of Southern Africa: Ian Sinclair. Struik (South Africa) or Princeton Field Guides (USA)

Another useful way to brush up on your knowledge before arrival in country is the online resource www.wildlifecampus.com which offers a variety of African wildlife oriented courses.

Packing List

Essential Equipment:

- Large Rucksack (Backpack): (65+ litres / 4,000+ cubic inches) or a suitcase for carrying the bulk of your gear to base.
- Daypack (Backpack): (25+ litres / 1,500+ cubic inches) will be used nearly every day.
- Bed sheet, sleeping bag and pillowcase to fit a single mattress.
- Mosquito net Box shaped nets are preferable. Ideally treated with insect repellent, e.g. permethrin; single-size is sufficient.
- Pair of hiking boots
- Pair Trainers/sneaker/light closed shoes.
- Sandals (flip-flops / thongs) you will need these for wear around base during the day.
- 2 pairs of shorts hard wearing cotton, cargo-type pants are ideal.
- 2 pairs of working trousers dark coloured, cargo pants again. The type with zip-off legs are ideal as the daily temperature range is wide
- 2 working shirts Dark or dull colours essential, bring any old shirts or t-shirts. Avoid holes to prevent insect visitors. Collars are good for insects and to prevent sunburn on the back of your neck.

- Casual clothing Dark or dull colours again, T-shirts/tops and shorts for those hot days. There is likely to be one opportunity to go to a nearby bush-pub for a few drinks and you may want to bring at least a couple of nicer items of clothing for this!
- Long-sleeved clothing Insects can be a nuisance in South Africa, particularly in the evenings in summer. One or two long sleeved shirts and trousers will offer the best form of protection.
- Swimming trunks / costume / bikini
- Underwear cotton pants are best (less hot), at least 5 pairs and 5 pair of socks (light hiking), sports bras- the roads are very bumpy. Dark colours do not show dirt easily.
- Towel an old and worn towel will dry more quickly, or you can buy a quick-drying travel towel.
- A sarong/ kikoi is definitely a useful extra.
- Sunglasses.
- Hat, wide-brimmed the sun gets very hot during the day so a hat is essential.
- Insect repellent we recommend using a natural based product such as citronella
- Re-usable Water bottles / Camelbak / Platypus water bladder - because the planet doesn't need any more plastic waste.
- Toiletries Preferably biodegradable. Most regular brands of toiletries can be bought in SA
- Any prescribed medication you need during your trip. Make sure it bears your name and description of reason and dosage.
- Sun cream high factor, at least SPF15+. We also have some supplies at base.
- Batteries please only bring rechargeable batteries. Torch/Flashlight A GOOD HEAD TORCH will make all the difference to your trip and is more useful than a handheld flashlight or torch.
- Watch time-keeping is essential on all projects.
- Alarm clock for those early mornings!
- Stationery you will need a notebook and pen for use during the training period.
- Electrical adaptor to convert socket style.
- Warm clothing as you will be on the back of a moving vehicle for hours on end, it will be a lot colder than you think in the early mornings! So multiple layers is what you need as when the sun is up you need to be able to strip gradually down to shorts and a t-shirt. You will then start putting it all back on in the evenings around sunset! From April to September you will even need things like a beanie, scarf and gloves. The wind-chill can really take the apparent temp down to freezing and below during winter.
- Good Waterproofs needed throughout the year for Karongwe.

Highly Recommended Equipment

- Camera
- Binoculars They are expensive but will make all the difference to your trip. Try to borrow a pair perhaps. Mid-size optics such as 8 x 32 are suitable and practical. The super-compact pairs are not as useful as they are portable, but any pair is better than none. *For long term interns this is essential kit.
- Basic first aid kit Include headache tablets, band aids, rehydration sachets, immodium, etc..
- Laptop for long term interns, this will be useful when having to complete your written assignments

Optional Equipment

- Pen knife / Leatherman
- Travel games / Cards
- Books some novels have been left at camp by others.
- iPods / MP3 player / World Service Radio remember headphones! These may not be used during research drives
- Snacks / sweets very good idea as town trips are limited, usually once per week. Granola bars, chocolate, dried fruit or beef jerkey serve as good snacks in between the 3 daily meals.

Hints on Buying Kit - You are going to be working in a semi-arid environment so dust is an ever-present feature. It will get into and onto everything. Your clothes will get grubby even if you don't feel you have been doing particularly dirty work. When selecting clothes to buy, the most important thing to remember is the wide daily temperature range, sometimes as much as 25 deg C difference between early morning before sunrise and the hottest part of the afternoon. Therefore, having three lightweight layers to peel off gradually as the day warms up, instead of one very heavy jacket makes more sense.