

Natures Valley Trust (NVT)

Info sheet



Project Overview

Project Duration: Minimum 2 weeks, Maximum 4 weeks (for catered option)

Project Costs: R 4 500 per week

Location of project: Natures Valley, Western Cape, South Africa

Getting there: Arrive Cape Town or Johannesburg international airports. Two options once landed:

1. bus to Plettenberg Bay
2. fly to George airport (pick-up fee R500)

Activities: Volunteers get to spend time on all our programmes, most notably our award-winning Conservation Education programme that reaches 5000 rural kids a year, and our world class ecological research programmes where you get to experience what it is like being an ecologist in a global biodiversity hotspot. All this along a pristine section of coastline, in one of the most beautiful places in the world! You will get hands on experience with all our projects.

Working Hours: 8am to 4pm, Monday to Friday. On occasion work on a Saturday morning may be required.

Getting to the project daily: Transport is provided for all work-related projects.

Requirements: Reasonably fit, good with working in a team environment, well-motivated volunteers with a keen sense of humor!

Project Description

Environmental Education: Our conservation education staff use curriculum based initiatives to reach over 5000 children each year, making this one of the biggest environmental education initiatives in the Western and Eastern Cape Provinces of South Africa. We believe in investing in the next generation, equipping them to understand why conservation should be an integral part of how they live their lives. Our EE program uses 16 specially designed outdoor classrooms where children have access to hands-on experience with nature. We also run programs around national and international environment days, like national water week, world environment week, national arbor week etc. We work closely with many rural schools, where we run eco-clubs linked to the internationally acclaimed WESSA Eco-Schools program. Also included in the EE program are two annual projects which teach children about the marine environment and how to assess the health of the rivers that they use on a daily basis.

Ecological Research: Our scientific staff run long term ecological monitoring projects that enable us to better understand the environment we find ourselves in. The data collected from these research programs is fed directly to the local conservation authorities to assist their efforts in ensuring the long term ecological integrity of the area. Without good quality scientific data, we cannot conserve anything... We work in a variety of biomes, on a number of different projects. Volunteers will be required to assist in studying and collecting data on: the

Fynbos (one of only 6 global plant kingdoms), rivers and estuaries, beaches, marine mammals (whales and seals), and forests. You will also be a part of the animal conservation activities by assisting with catching and tagging the endemic birds and monitoring the small mammals and baboons in the area.

What's included

Accommodation

The intern house is based in Nature's Valley and is 35km from Plettenberg bay (a famous tourist spot in South Africa) it is ideally situated for both your working week and your days off. You will share a room with one other, same-sex, individual. The house has an open-plan Kitchen, dining room and lounge area, a nice sized bathroom with shower and bath, outside deck area and a braai (barbeque) area. There is a garden, and the house is in walking distance of the beautiful beach and small shop and restaurant.



Orientation: On your first day of arrival you will be met by Mark and Kellyn, our Program Director and Volunteer coordinator, and they will show you to your accommodation and talk you through your duties and opportunities. This will include:

- Welcome and introduction to the project
- Tour of the facility
- Meet the team
- Ethics and code of conduct
- What to expect

Support: Nature's Valley Trust staff will be available any time of day or night to assist you.

Donation: Over and above your daily rate, donations are welcome but NOT expected. Most of our programs run on donations, so anything you feel like contributing is put to good use.

Food: Breakfasts, lunches and dinners are included in your weekly rate. Food will be provided for you to make your own breakfast and lunch, and Kellyn will provide you with dinner.

What's not included

Volunteers need to make their own travel arrangements with regards to their flight to South Africa, and should you choose to fly to George airport. NVT will arrange to fetch you from George airport, with a transfer fee of R500. Volunteers who choose to bus from either of the international airports will arrange to get off at the Plettenberg Bay stop, where NVT will collect you at no cost. Non work-related activities and personal amenities are also not included in the cost.

The working routine

The daily routine varies a lot, so expect something different all the time! However, you can expect to work in the field on our research projects at least twice a week, with school groups at least twice a week, and catching up on office admin once a week. There will be occasional early mornings for some of our research projects and every now and then a Saturday morning.

Your role as a volunteer

The awesome part about volunteering with us is that you really do make a difference! We need willing hands to help us on both our EE and research programmes, and you will definitely be more than just a spectator. You will get hands on with all of our projects where you will learn valuable field techniques in research, and what goes into lesson planning and teaching in the conservation education field.

Project rules

NO drugs, no excessive alcohol, please read the VSA code of conduct provided.

Weather

This area is world renowned as one of the best places to go on holiday! We have a Mediterranean climate, and very rarely have bad weather for more than a few days a month.

What to pack

Passport, tickets and visas

Insurance details

ATM cards

Mobile phones, if you are bringing your mobile please unblock the code BEFORE you leave your country.

Charger

Universal adapter plug for South Africa (you can buy these in SA)

Toiletries, soap, shampoo, razors etc.

Sun Block

Hat

Swim wear

Towels

Medicines & mosquito repellent

Torch/headlamp

Comfortable shoes e.g. Trainers and sandals

Clothes, jeans, t-shirts, underwear, shorts, dresses, warm top etc.

Wind proof jacket

Water bottle

Optional, but useful to have: camera and laptop

Other activities after volunteering

In your off time, there is so much to see and do around here! We can provide more info on request.

Health

Reasonably fit and able to cope with full days in the field essential.