



Kenya Community and Conservation Volunteer Expedition Assist with research on dolphins and terrestrial wildlife, and teach in rural schools in East Africa

Översikt

This expedition takes its volunteers to Kenya in East Africa to combine marine, primate and forest research, and become involved in local community development projects, including teaching English and sustainable tourism programmes. Living and working in the beautiful Shimoni Archipelago, off the coast of the Indian Ocean on the border with Tanzania, volunteers can experience the amazing white sand beaches and biodiversity of the area. You will conduct humpback whale and dolphin research from a surface vessel, snorkel to observe turtles, and help vital wildlife conservation with Angolan Black and White Colobus monkeys in the coastal forest. Volunteers will also have the opportunity to journey in-land to the heart of East Africa's savannas, working alongside rural communities to develop livelihood alternatives to wildlife poaching and so protect Kenya's big game. This expedition is run in partnership with the world renowned Kenyan Wildlife Service and other local partners.

Expeditionen

The Government of Kenya has expressed a strong interest in developing a marine conservation area along the southern coastline, but lacks the finance and scientific expertise to do so. GVI supports Kenyan organisations by examining how the local communities affect and utilizes the region's natural resources. The expedition also assists communities in development initiatives, such as on how to use resources in a sustainable manner. GVI assists partners in promoting this local framework as the basis for a larger conservation-research initiative in tropical coastal waters and terrestrial areas around Shimoni. Volunteers live and work alongside local researchers, students and staff from the Kenyan Wildlife Service.

Through collaboration with local conservation groups, tourist operators, and local villagers, the expedition combines ecological research with grass-roots conservation efforts. The ultimate aim is the self-financing of conservation through regulated ecotourism and resource use. Community interaction via English language and environmental education is central to the success of the expedition, alongside the scientific research itself. Volunteers have the opportunity to teach English to children and adults, and take Swahili lessons themselves.

The expedition projects include: collecting population and distribution data on marine mammals, determining residence rates and habitat relationships, assessing current anthropogenic impact on cetaceans, assisting partners in developing a 'code of conduct', conducting population and behaviour studies of Angolan black and white Colobus, aiding wildlife conservation and community development projects around the national parks, reducing community conflict with wildlife, and helping community environmental education programmes, including low-literacy TEFL teaching through games, activities, art, etc.

GVI volunteers are helping to expand the marine mammal research projects. This includes the observation of Indian Ocean bottlenose dolphins, Indo-Pacific humpback whales, spinner dolphins,

and other seasonal mega-fauna such as whale sharks and manta rays. Due to extremely limited knowledge of East African delphinids, local and international researchers have initiated the project, and GVI is focusing on examining population ecology of the dolphin species inhabiting the Shimoni area and the Kisite-Mpunguti marine protected area. Once the basic data on population ecology is gathered, levels of anthropogenic impact will be assessed to identify potential problem issues, problem areas and (if required) propose appropriate mitigation measures. Subsequently, we will: a) identify species-specific critical habitats, b) identify sites that should be considered priority conservation areas (refuges with limited human impact), and c) map future dolphin-watch 'hot spots'.

In addition to the marine work, GVI operates a satellite camp in Shimoni village for the primate surveys in the forest. Volunteers learn rare coral rag forest exploration techniques, and survey the rare black and white Colobus monkeys, studying their behaviour. GVI also operates a satellite camp bordering inland national parks in conjunction with The Kenyan Wildlife Service and local partners. Volunteers attend the satellite camp for a week at a time, on rotation. Projects vary depending upon the needs of the partners at any particular time, but can include elephant relocation and other big game and community projects. Volunteers are also taught some tracking and bush skills. All projects offer volunteers a fantastic experience – camping in view of Mount Kilimanjaro getting a chance see spectacular wildlife and explore classic inland Africa.

På utflykt till Tsavo National Park



Mera om expeditionen

Volunteers will have the opportunity to journey in-land to the heart of East Africa's savannas, working alongside rural communities to develop livelihood alternatives to wildlife poaching and so protect Kenya's big game. The satellite camp will take you to villages bordering the vast Tsavo national parks with the opportunity to spot elephants, giraffe and other plains game as well as views of the iconic ice-capped Mount Kilimanjaro. Trips to some of Kenya's best kept secrets, such as the stunning crater lake at Challa, as well as bush walks and nights around the camp fire drumming and dancing with the villagers will give you a rare insight in to the landscape, history and culture that tourist safaris simply don't get. You will live and work alongside the communities, developing their skills to replace economic dependence on poaching with sustainable alternatives and so reduce the illicit bush-meat trade, now the greatest threat to wildlife conservation in Kenya. By planting your own tree at the end of your stay you not only leave a lasting gift but help the communities reverse the devastating impacts of charcoal burning.

The expedition will supply volunteers with a very wide range of opportunities that incorporate terrestrial, marine and community projects. The expedition also gives you the opportunity to:

- * Immerse yourself in a truly remote tropical paradise, living and working alongside local people and fishermen and experiencing their culture, food and way of life, within a 5, 10 or 15 week period.
- * Learn a variety of marine and terrestrial survey skills within the tropical environment, including turtle and primate studies.
- * Spend days on the research boats on warm, crystal-clear waters in one of the most spectacular examples of a tropical marine environment in the world, seeing turtles, dolphins, whales, manta rays or whale sharks up close in their natural environment (depending upon the season and your luck).
- * Experience lowland tropical coastal forests and enjoy the magical variations of the colourful bird life.
- * Spend your day studying the Angolan black and white colobus monkey.
- * Visit prime breeding areas for turtles.
- * Explore inland Africa, camping in and around national parks and working on wildlife and community conflict projects (such as poaching and the bush meat trade).
- * Assist in teaching English to children and adults, learning skills from GVI's TEFL course, which has been designed especially for teaching conversational English for tourism.
- * Assist in environmental education and awareness programmes, visiting and teaching in local schools and with tour operators in and around the expedition base.
- * Take optional locally taught Swahili language and cooking lessons.
- * Immerse yourself in the area's Swahili culture, their food, clothing, legends and knowledge.
- * Relax and party with your new-found friends at the well deserved Saturday Night Fiesta in Diani!

Tidigare volontärer berättar

"My alarm goes off at 6am and when I roll out of my tent it's still dark. Breakfast, consisting of mandazi is delicious and soon after everyone is ready to head into Shimoni forest to start the day. With our packs full of water, first aid kits and lunch and with our binoculars, compasses and whistles around our necks, we head off through the village along the path that leads us to our transect.

Stepping into transect 3; we take out our pangas so we can clear a path wide enough to walk through. Conveniently, the person in front of me is much taller than I am and is clearing my path of the millions of spider webs that happen to be at about face level, no matter how tall you are. After about 20 minutes of trekking over fallen trees and overgrown vines, a troop of Angolan Black and white Colobus Monkeys are spotted. We survey their behaviour and identify the group size and sex of the individuals and then we take a short break. After everyone has had a samosa or two and some water we continue on in hope of finding more monkeys. 32 sections later, or 1.6km, the transect ends abruptly at the ocean. Lucky for us, we can eat lunch in front of a beautiful ocean view. We've all starving after working our way through 32 sections and the sandwiches we made this morning don't last long. We spend some time relaxing and re-hydrating before returning home.

On the way back, we conduct canopy and fruit & flower surveys so that we might be able to link the presence of primates spotted with habitat characteristics. It's about 2:30 by the time we finish and almost time to go home, but first we stop by the butterfly traps to identify the species caught since baiting them about this time yesterday. A fellow group member learns quite quickly that now isn't the best time to have a phobia of insects, especially flying ones! Luckily, everyone survives and we've even found a new butterfly species in one of the traps. We're hot, sweaty and tired but the days not over yet and the swimming pool at Shimoni beckons. After a refreshing swim, we enter the data we have spent all day collecting and we gear up to venture into Shimoni to teach the local dolphin tour operators about dolphins – which species they're seeing and what behaviours they are exhibiting. They're all really eager to learn and a lot of fun but by the time its over I am definitely ready for dinner. Dinner in Shimoni is a weekly highlight, at a local restaurant we're served rice, beans, cabbage, spinach and fish - Yum. The best part though is the glass of cool passion fruit juice that comes with dinner. With full bellies we walk back to our Shimoni satellite base and relax a bit before bed and well earned sleep."

Kaylynne Parkes

Masaibarn



Vilken skillnad gör denna expedition?

The GVI Kenya Expedition is making a difference by supporting our partners, including Kenyan Wildlife Services, in three focus areas; cetacean research, community development and Terrestrial ecology studies. Through education, environmental awareness and current wildlife monitoring studies, our collaborative work has been building capacity within the communities, assisting them in developing sustainable tourism practises and protecting cetacean and primate species within the area. Volunteers choosing to join this project will focus on the community development side of the program but will ultimately aid all aspects of this long term multi focused program

Höjdpunkter

Assisting local and international researchers to monitor wildlife; camping out under the African stars; living on an African island; developing your knowledge of marine studies, including about dolphins and whales; experiencing the amazing mega-fauna of the island that includes whale sharks and manta rays; studying primates; gaining some bush and tracking skills; exploring beautiful national parks that are filled with a variety of spectacular flora and fauna; spending a week with the Kenya Wildlife Service having some amazing, close-up big game encounters; integrating with the local community and learning some Swahili.

Plats

If you are looking to go on an adventurous expedition that takes you to a truly exotic location, this is the one for you! Shimoni is a peninsula located next to the Kisite-Mpunguti Marine Protected Area, which lies at the tip of the Pemba Channel, 76km south of Mombasa, as part of a large bay area which makes up the Shimoni Archipelago. With long stretches of white sand beaches fringed coral reefs and scattered with islands, Shimoni is a tropical haven and divers' paradise. The expedition's main base is located on Wasini Island, which is situated alongside the famous Kisite National Marine Park. A satellite camp is held at Shimoni Village where volunteers can study primates in the rainforest. Every five weeks volunteers spend a week camping and working on the borders of an inland national park (normally Tsavo) to work with anti-poaching community groups, in conjunction with the local partners.

Ute i fält

Accommodation is in shared housing that has a large communal banda where volunteers can eat and have lectures. The communal area has a beautiful view of the channel and Mkwiro beach. The base camp will have limited electricity, powered by solar panel and backed up by a generator. Volunteers can wash either in the ocean or using bucket-style showers on the base. Wholesome and varied meals will be cooked on a rotational basis.

Utbildning

Volunteers receive comprehensive training that is continuous and rigorous, and involves both indoor lectures and field practicals. The first two weeks of training consist of presentations and field lectures, combined with practical field experience to build upon the theoretical knowledge. This provides Volunteers with a baseline and holistic understanding of all aspects of the region's terrestrial and marine environment on which to build throughout your stay. The topics training covers include: oceanography, marine mammal identification, marine mammal behaviour, turtle biology and identification, terrestrial environments, threats and conservation, primate survey techniques, English language teaching techniques and certification, and an internationally-recognised first aid course.

Förkunskaper

No previous experience or foreign language skills are required, but volunteers must be able to work as part of a team, have a strong interest in wildlife and conservation, a sense of adventure and be prepared to enjoy Africa in a rustic way. Days are hot and dusty, and volunteers can expect to experience all the adventures and rigors of Africa on a continual basis. In addition, all volunteers will have to complete a swimming test on arrival at the expedition base (an unaided 200m surface swim, followed by a ten minute float in the open sea environment). Participants must be enthusiastic, adventurous and respectful of their host country's culture and environment.

Annat att göra

Being based on the Kenya / Tanzania border means during this expedition, you will be close to some of the most renowned national parks in East Africa, including Tsavo, Serengeti, Amboseli, Maasai Mara and Ngorongoro. During the expedition you can visit these parks to explore the wild and beautiful home of wildlife that includes lions, rhinos and zebras, and there are also other opportunities during the project for you to go on excursions. The islands of Zanzibar and Pemba are a 30-minute flight away from Mombasa – the second largest city in Kenya which offers its visitors an excellent and vibrant cultural insight into the coastal Swahili culture. We recommend that you spend a bit of time exploring before or after your project, if you have the time.

At weekends you will have Saturday afternoon and Sunday off, and you can choose whether to stay on the base and relax in the community or go further a-field and explore. You have opportunities to:

- * Hire a sailing boat and visit Funzi Island, where you can stay in a traditional home, eat local dishes, and participate in turtle nesting surveys and nest relocations with Funzi Turtle Club in the evening.
- * Visit Bodo Village to help the Bodo Turtle Conservation Group re-plant their mangroves and the community to sustain their natural resources. After a morning's work you can sit back, relax and eat lunch with the group, before taking a boat trip through the mangroves to look for crocodiles.
- * Go on a safari to the Shimba Hills National Reserve and stay in the KWS bandas that sit amongst the coastal forest and beautiful grasslands. Here you can see elephants, giraffes, buffalo and the only breeding population in Kenya of the beautiful sable antelope. Take a guided walk down to the beautiful Sheldrick Falls and cool off in the pool beneath.
- * Visit Pemba and around Shimoni, where the scuba diving is world-class and PADI courses can be taken at good rates. The bird watching is also excellent.
- * Visit the East African coastal town Mombasa, to listen to some Taraab music or watch a Kenyan Premier League football match.
- * Enjoy the other numerous local attractions and activities that are available in the area, including safaris. Yet simply visiting the areas of great natural beauty is more than enough to give you the sights of a lifetime!

Foton från expeditionen



För startdatum, priser och bokning, se www.blueberry.nu