

African Wildlife Photography and Conservation, KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA



At African Impact, we see ourselves as the on-the-ground AFRICAN SPECIALISTS in volunteering. Founded in 2004, we have so far hosted over 6000 volunteers on our exciting Conservation and Community Volunteer Projects in Africa.

We are also immensely proud to have been nominated as Finalists for the following Responsible Tourism Awards in 2009: The World Travel Awards; The British Youth Travel Awards and the prestigious South African Imvelo Responsible Tourism Awards. In 2010 we were once again nominated for a World Travel Award and were proud Winners of an Africa-wide Imvelo Responsible Tourism Award. An accolade awarded in 2009 to Sir Richard Branson's Ulusaba Eco-Lodge in South Africa. In 2011 so far we are nominated for a World Travel Award and are entrants once again in the Imvelo Awards, British Youth Travel Awards and Virgin Responsible Tourism Awards.

Our head office is in Cape Town, South Africa, with supporting operations offices in Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Zambia. We are determined to make a difference in the amazing communities and conservation areas in which we work. And so can you...



African Impact

PHYSICAL ADDRESS 6 Carlton Close, Noordhoek, 7985, Cape Town, South Africa.

TELEPHONE +27 21 785 4319 Direct Line or CALL US TOLL FREE 1-800-606-7185 or UK TOLL FREE: 0800 0988 440

Project Highlights:

- Improve your Photography skills in a 3 day intensive course taught by an experienced professional photographer.
- Stay in the heart of a Big 5 Game Reserve
- Take pictures of the extensive wildlife on regular game drives.
- Learn and photograph smaller species of flora and fauna
- Help to create a photo database for awareness and educational purposes
- Help raise awareness in the local community about the importance of conservation
- Assist on conservation initiatives within the Park e.g. Snare Sweeps and Alien Plant control
- Supporting The Thanda Foundation
- Make friends for life!

In the impressive setting of a Private Big 5 Game Reserve, this unique programme offers photography enthusiasts the opportunity to get a different perspective on Africa...



Our **Wildlife Photography and Conservation Education Project** offers a varied range of photography and conservation components. Volunteers will start with an in-depth orientation, followed by an intensive 3 day photography course with a professional photographer to improve on your photography skills. A further 3 weeks will be spent photographing the phenomenal wildlife in the park, which boasts all of Africa's Big 5 (Lion, Elephant, Rhino, Buffalo and Leopard) and also doing conservation partnership with the Thanda Foundation. Those that wish to stay on for an extra 2/4 weeks, will be working closely with the research volunteers to assist them in gathering photo research that is still needed. They will also have the opportunity to visit neighbouring reserves, such as Pongola.

Location: Thanda Private Game reserve, home to the big five with 14,000 hectares is situated one and half hours away from the small town of St Lucia on the North East Coast of South Africa (where Africa Impact have 2 community HIV/AIDS awareness projects).

Age Limit: Minimum 18 years, maximum decided on potential participants' health (You will need to partake in some physical work which may include digging, snare sweeps, removal of alien plants etc. on the conservation work part of the project).

Required Experience: For this project, enthusiasm for photography and African wildlife is essential. Photographic knowledge and experience is helpful, but not necessary. This project has been established for all levels of ability from complete beginners to professionals. Please note that you will be taught how to edit your photos on Photoshop and spend a good deal of time during the 4/6/8 weeks editing your images – for this reason a basic level of computer literacy is required in order to participate.

Minimum Equipment Required to Participate: Volunteers will need to bring their own photographic equipment - they should bring an SLR digital camera with at least an 18-55 mm lens, battery charger and external hard drive (in the form of at least a 100GB external drive). Through past feedback we now have listed a tripod as an essential item to bring with you. You will also need a laptop so you can edit your photos.



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Project Achievements so far:

Originally located in the heart of St Lucia, volunteers have made a significant contribution in the last three years. Recently moving to the beautiful settings of Thanda game reserve volunteers will continue to support and assist with the development of the local surroundings.

Across 2008 and 2009 African Impact volunteers contributed over 21,784 hours to conservation through photography in the St Lucia area of South Africa. Our project structures, together with the support and advice of our charitable foundation team at The Happy Africa Foundation, are continuously assessing our work and projects to ensure the hours are meaningful and making a difference.

African Impact volunteer photos have been used to help African Impact to build a picture database of the wildlife in the surrounding area. These images are then used for educational purposes as we firmly believe that in order to preserve indigenous plant and wildlife it is essential to get local communities involved.

Volunteers have also provided hundreds of fantastic images to The Green Vision Foundation to help raise awareness of iSimangaliso, a UNESCO World Heritage site on the doorstep of St Lucia. These images have been used to create a photographic database of the species and ecosystems in the area to help with conservation education.

Through the Conservation in Action Programme, volunteers have also removed hundreds of alien plants and snares clearing the way for a healthy environment.

At the crocodile centre we have recorded valuable data and tagged 215 baby crocodiles as part of the process to release them and have helped count wild crocodile nests in the area to track how populations are coping with low water levels. In the past, volunteers have also been involved in the release of crocodiles back into the wild.

'Being able to watch the elephants being released into the Boma on Kings Land and staying up with them all night was definitely a once in a lifetime experience and one that I count myself very lucky to have been a part of. Game drives were of course the other big highlight and I looked forward to every single one we had throughout the month. Swimming with the dolphins in Mozambique was the best thing I did outside of Thanda.'

Sarah Schlederer, German – May 2011



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Project Dates 2012:

The project will run for 4, 6 and 8 weeks and volunteers must arrive on the set arrival date below strictly by latest 2h30pm (Durban King Shaka Airport) for transfer to the project:

ARRIVAL DATE (strictly)	DEPARTURE for 4 wk project(strictly)	DEPARTURE for 6 wk project(strictly)	DEPARTURE for 8 wk project(strictly)
8 th January	5 th February	19 th Feb	4 th March
5 th February	4 th March	18 th March	1 st Apr
4 th March	1 st April	15 th Apr	29 th Apr
1 st April	29 th April	13 th May	27 th May
29 th April	27 th May	10 th Jun	24 th Jun
27 th May	24 th June	8 th Jul	22 nd Jul
24 th June	22 nd July	5 th Aug	19 th Aug
22 nd July	19 th August	2 nd Sep	16 th Sep
19 th August	16 th September	30 th Sep	14 th Oct
16 th September	14 th October	28 th Oct	11 th Nov
14 th October	11 th November	25 th Nov	9 th Dec
11 th November	9 th December	-	-

Please note that if alternative transfers need to be arranged for you and you cannot make the scheduled Sunday collection time by 2:30pm at Durban Airport you will incur an additional charge of approximately R3000, one way.

More about our African Wildlife Photography and Conservation Programme:

This project is ideally situated in a private game reserve of 14,000 hectares of pristine bush and is home to the Big 5, the extremely rare African Wild Dog and Cheetah. The area is home to the Zulu tribe, a group of people with a very lively and colourful culture. It is within this impressive setting that we offer you the opportunity to improve your photography skills, to photograph the phenomenal wildlife in the area, and to help raise awareness in the local community about the importance of conservation.

This project has a number of long-term aims to raise awareness and help preserve the precious African environment:

1) Conservation Education and Activities:

In partnership with the Thanda foundation volunteers may be assisting in a number of exciting conservation initiatives in surrounding areas:



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a) Conservation in Action – Volunteers will be involved in a number of activities such as regeneration of the local village back to its natural state, planting of indigenous trees, clearing Alien invasive plants, carrying out snare sweeps and when possible, helping on game counts.

b) Conservation Education in the community – As a volunteer, you may visit the local schools and deliver a class / workshop about the reason for, and methods of conservation.

2) Photography of the Month / Year

Every month all photo's will be reviewed and the best picture will be selected. The winner of the Photograph of the q Month will be framed and put on our picture wall in the volunteer house. In addition, it will be put on the African Impact website. At the end of each year the same jury will select a picture of the year with a prize given to the winning photographer.

3) Creating a Photographic Database

In association with the Green Vision Foundation, African Impact aims to create a complete photographic database, and use it for educational purposes.

Alongside the Thanda Foundation, African Impact has also identified that in order to preserve indigenous plant life and wildlife, it is essential to get local communities involved. We will look for every opportunity to use the photographs you donate to the project to help educate local schools about nature and the precious environment that surrounds them.

4) Conservation Research

Photographers may be involved with helping researchers collect animal identification information and other interesting data research.

The project is a unique opportunity to encounter some of Africa's most beautiful animals on a daily basis, to improve your photography skills, as well as to contribute to conservation efforts.

Please note that these projects are always evolving so are likely to be at different stages upon your arrival. Volunteers should be prepared to be involved in a wide spectrum of project work as things progress.

PROJECT COST:

4 weeks: GBP1725 / USD3095 / EUR2245

6 weeks: GBP2250 / USD 4025 / EUR 2920

8 weeks: GBP 2760 / USD 4950 / EUR 3590

What does the cost include?

- A contribution to the Thanda foundation which acts as a conduit for the raising of funds for community development projects as well as for conservation research initiatives
- Funding educational materials for the schools and tools for conservation work
- Return transport between Durban Airport and Thanda Game Reserve
- Orientation program, including a photography course administered by an experienced photographer
- All daily transfers to and from your projects during your stay
- Full board and lodging, which includes 3 meals a day at our volunteer house
- Assistance at your projects by African Impact staff and volunteer coordinators



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What does the cost exclude:

- Personal travel insurance for the duration of your placement (expected to include cover for repatriation)
- All transport by air or bus to Durban
- All items of a personal nature, such as curios, gifts, clothing (work and other)
- E-mail / Internet and telephone calls
- Soft drinks, wines and spirits
- All visas for border crossings
- Any excursions over-and-above your planned itinerary in St. Lucia
- Airport pickups and drop offs outside of allocated times
- Transport costs into town over the weekends (see guideline of weekend travel highlights)
- A small additional cost for laundry (Roughly R60 for 15 items)

Project Accommodation:

During your placement you will stay in comfortable twin cabins set in the Game Reserve overlooking a water hole commonly visited by the animals in the park. There is a large communal thatched building with areas to dine, relax, watch the animals or to take a dip in the swimming pool. The accommodation is staffed with cooks and cleaners and all bed linen is provided.

You can spend the evenings sitting around a fire under the stunning African sky or chatting on the viewing deck to see what animals visit the area as night falls.

A “Day in the life” of a Thanda Photography Volunteer

Here is an example of the activities you may do on a typical day. Please note that your itineraries may differ from this, depending on your own experience and the number of other volunteers on the placement at the same time; this is simply to give an example:

05:30 - Get up and get ready for your morning drive

06:00 – Depending on the schedule you will head off to the photography area for that day either on a game drive to capture photographs of the wildlife, landscapes or people around the area

09:30 – Return for breakfast and edit your photographs

12:30 – Lunch break.

14.00 - Start of your afternoon projects. You may be working on adding your new pictures to the database, or you may work on a conservation activity

16.30 - End of the working day. You will evaluate the day with fellow volunteers and project coordinators, and discuss the schedule for the next day

18.30 - Dinner. After dinner, you may be presenting your top 5 images to the other volunteers

**Morning times and end of day times do vary depending on where you are visiting and best conditions for taking photographs, for instance if you are going on a day Game drive you will start much earlier e.g. 05:00 am*

Project Orientation:

Upon arrival you will have a comprehensive orientation and a 3-day course, which is included in your fee. This is facilitated by your project volunteer coordinator and includes:

- A 3-day wildlife photography course taught by an award winning photographer
- Overview of the aims of the project and your role as a volunteer
- An introduction to where you are staying
- A brief introduction to all our other projects that we are involved in KwaZulu Natal.
- Optional basic language lessons - You will learn some basic words & sentences in Zulu, the local language.
- An introduction to the Green Vision Foundation and the Photographic database.



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Project Support:

Throughout your stay at your placement you will have the support and guidance of experienced field-workers and coordinators. They are part of our greater African Impact support team, and will provide you with competent 24-hour field support and assistance.

Project Meals:

You will be provided with three meals a day. Breakfast is on a help-yourself basis and usually consists of cereals, toast, tea and coffee. Lunch and dinner are full meals, and will be cooked for you by one of our chefs at the reserve.

Note: *If you leave early in the morning for your photography project, which is often the best time for good pictures, you will be given a packed breakfast/lunch.*

How do I get there and travel around?

The nearest airport to the Game Reserve is Durban. There are daily flights from Johannesburg or Cape Town to Durban and these can be booked on:

www.flightsite.com; www.kulula.co.za; www.1time.co.za; www.flysaa.com; www.flymango.co.za;

You will be met as you enter the terminal building and driven for 3 hours back to the reserve. Whilst on your project you will be transported by our team and park rangers and guides.

Note: *You will be picked up from the airport at 2.30p.m on the Sunday before the photography training course starts, if you are unable to arrive before this time please organize your flight to arrive on the Saturday. We will be happy to recommend overnight accommodation if required. On the Sunday of your departure, you will be dropped at Durban King Shaka International Airport at 10h30.*

“The project has been amazing, I have enjoyed it so much, the staff have been accommodating, friendly and very approachable. The facilities are fantastic and the project was more than I expected.”

Katy Woolley, UK

Thanda Travel Highlights:

It would be unforgivable to be living in such stunning scenery without exploring your surroundings! Here are some of the highlights for you to do in your spare time at weekends. These are not included in your volunteering fee, but our coordinators are able to assist you with making the necessary booking arrangements. All arrangement are made from Thanda and cannot be pre-booked:

- 4 day photographic workshop in the Drakensberg Mountains (R4600)
- Weekend trips to swim with Dolphins in Mozambique (R3 200)
- Visit the rugged scenery of Swaziland and experience the cultural heritage (R3 800)
- 3 night trip and Game drives to the Tembe Elephant park, home to the largest Tuskers in Southern Africa and living with the Thonga people (R1950)
- Weekend trips to the seaside town of St Lucia (accommodation R260) - to do Whale Watching (seasonal – R850) or to spend time on the beach or take a boat trip to see Hippos and Crocodiles up close (R160). Isimangaliso Wetlands tour and surf (R400)
- Hluhluwe National Park day trip (R765)
- Day trip to Sodwana Bay and visit to a Sangoma (witch doctor) (R420 – excludes lunch and tip for Sangoma)

Please note, prices are a rough guideline and are likely to fluctuate. None of these are guaranteed departures and are totally dependent on availability and demand)



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Reasons to volunteer on our Thanda Photography Project:

- Elevate your photographic experiences in one of South Africa's top Game Reserves – capturing the spectacular landscapes, the magnificence of the big 5 and the wonder of the smaller species like insects and reptiles.
- Include your photos as part of the conservation photographic library to help raise awareness.
- Share your knowledge of conservation - teach children in the local village with the help of structured lessons and informative photographs.
- Enhance your skills with the teaching of a professional photographer – 3 days of intense instruction to inspire and teach you how to get the most from your camera.
- Become an agent for conservation – help regenerate areas to encourage wildlife and plants to flourish.
- Enlighten yourself - about the local flora and fauna, and learn about what you are photographing from our experienced and knowledgeable guide.
- Diversify your portfolio – capture images of the Big 5 within the savannas of KwaZulu-Natal, and the local people of Zululand.
- Develop friendships that will last a lifetime – be part of the highly international and diverse group of volunteers who share this amazing experience with you.
- Leave Africa with the Zulu accent and thousands of photos!



Become a Facebook Fan!

For up-to-date news and photos from the projects at Thanda, or a chance to chat to previous volunteers, why not become a fan of the African Impact Thanda group on Facebook.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/African-Impact-Thanda/162528673811797>



http://twitter.com/#!/African_Impact

Meet your Destination Manager for this project!

Emma is a past volunteer and now works in the African Impact head office in Cape Town. Emma will guide you through the whole pre-arrival procedure for this placement. You will receive comprehensive information throughout to ensure you are fully prepared for your project placement with us.



Emma is originally from Cape Town. She has spent many years travelling the world and living in fascinating places, immersing herself in the culture, language and lifestyle. She has also volunteered on various projects and after all her travels has returned home to work in the place she loves most. Africa is where her true passion and inspiration for life is and she loves wildlife conservation and the people of Africa! Her dream is to one day settle on a beautiful beach where the monkeys roam free in the trees above her and she can sleep to the sound of the waves and the calls of nature.

Skype Emma on [emma.berrisford](https://www.skype.com/people/emma.berrisford)



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Thanda Wildlife Photography and Conservation Project notes:

We have found in the past that the more you as a volunteer put in to your involvement, the more you will get out. You are welcome to contact a member of staff to find out how you can best prepare for your stay to assist the local community.

Please also understand that our projects are continuously evolving, being improved, and adapting to the needs of the local communities that we are involved with, so involvement areas do change from time to time. Rest assured your work will be necessary, rewarding and exciting. We invite you to be more than a tourist...

African Impact Quality

African Impact first set up the St Lucia project in Sept 2007. Being an African Impact initiatives means we can assure a high quality experience on all our projects. We have a fantastic support team, based on the ground and available to support and assist our volunteers at all times.

Our head office is in contact with the on the ground staff almost daily ensuring and providing a well structured and well supported system.

We look forward to welcoming you for a unique, rewarding and unforgettable experience!



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Our Travel Insurance Partners



Visit www.worldnomads.com for a great deal on reliable travel insurance.

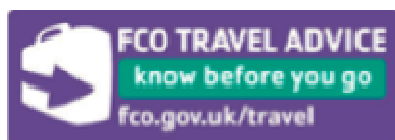


Our Partners

[The Happy Africa Foundation](http://www.happyafricafoundation.org)

www.happyafricafoundation.org African Impact is proud to have been instrumental in the establishment of The Happy Africa Foundation in 2007 and continues to be one of the Foundations major supporters. UK Registered Charity Number: 1123529.

The mission of The Happy Africa Foundation is to empower the African people through the support of community and conservation based initiatives that operate at grass roots level.



We are proudly affiliated to the UK-based **Know Before You Go** campaign that promotes education and knowledge-sharing amongst travelers.



African Impact is proud to be **WINNERS** in the Africa-wide Imvelo Responsible Tourism awards 2010, as well as **FINALISTS** in the 2010 World Travel Awards. We see this as exciting recognition of our position as African specialists in Volunteering with over 6 years experience.



ALERT – The African Lion & Environmental Research Trust

<http://www.lionalert.org>

Founded in 2005 at Antelope Park in Zimbabwe, ALERT is a non-profit organization dedicated to the facilitation and promotion of sound conservation and management plans for the African lion in consultation with governments, wildlife authorities and communities. The aim of this program is to provide a solution to augmenting the sharply decreasing numbers of African lions through the release of wild-borne offspring from rehabilitated captive bred lions by raising awareness and funds to source, secure and prepare suitable release sites for the lions.



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