

Black Rhino and Elephant Conservation Project - Zimbabwe -



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 Award.*

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 +27217854319 Direct Line or CALL US TOLL FREE 08005200926 (UK) 1-800-606-7185 (USA)



This Black Rhino Breeding Station on a private Safari Ranch offers volunteers the amazing opportunity to experience hands on interaction with Black Rhinos, an endangered species, who have suffered greatly at the hands of poachers. You will also work with the Ranch's few adopted Elephants, as well as interact with local school children through conservation education...

Project Location: 1.5 hours drive East of Zimbabwe's capital, Harare

Conditions of Participation:

- Genuine love and concern for animals and the environment
- Minimum age 18 years
- You must be able to read, write and speak English
- You must be in good physical condition, as you will be expected to walk long distances and participate in physical activities
- You would have an advantage if you ride horses [riders are required to bring their own riding helmets]
- Ability to work as part of a team, be flexible and cooperative
- Understanding and willingness to adapt to Zimbabwe's unique situation – it is a country where much help is needed to protect and maintain what is left of our dwindling wildlife resources. You as a volunteer can make a serious and worthwhile impact on many of these facets

Project Highlights:

- You will live in close contact with black rhino, elephants, buffalo and all the other species of wild animal on the 10,000 acre conservancy... You will witness incredible animal relationships, hear their sounds, record vital information, and learn the appreciation of simplicity from the surrounding rural communities.
- Be a part of a world renowned programme to save this ancient animal from extinction. You will play an important role in rehabilitating these endangered animals back into their natural environment.
- Experience the African bush in a very special way on this private reserve. Explore the savannah grasslands on horseback or whilst riding on African Elephants

More information on the Black Rhino & Elephant Conservation Programme:

During the late 1980's, at the peak of the rhino-poaching era in Southern Africa, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife decided to remove the remaining 120 black rhino out of the danger zones of the National Parks and into the Intensive Protection Zones of Conservancies.

This Safari Ranch offered their expertise and was awarded 7 baby rhino between the ages of 4 and 6 months; 3 males Noddy, Fumbi, Sprinter and 4 females Cuckoo, Mvu, D.J. and Amber.

Initially all efforts were centered around stabilizing the calves condition, introducing them to the correct milk formula, and generally adapting them to their new environment in which we would play a vital role.



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All 7 calves have been hand-raised on a bottle for at least 8 years. The rhino were kept on the milk formula for that length of time to continue the human contact and of course as a comforter. They have been raised together as a semi-domesticated herd.

The black rhino have since bred successfully with a total of 13 Black Rhino births!

All in all the Safari Ranch has handled a total of 32 black rhino since the project began in 1987. We have returned 10 rhino back to the Matusadona National Park in Zimbabwe. As the rhino adjusted to their new environment, so they were released. The females have bred successfully within the Park.

The black rhino project continues. At present we have 3 sub adult rhino on the ranch who are hand fed and handled daily at close quarters. The rhino are penned in a boma nightly and during the day are taken out onto the ranch with their handlers to browse. Noddy, our alpha male, has been recently exported to Botswana to a Conservancy where they had no male rhino to serve their females.

Our intentions at The Safari Ranch are to continue the breeding programme on an intensive scale. We believe that our policy in removing the calves from their mothers at 8 months has been successful as the mother then reunites to breed with the herd again. The calves, once weaned, are monitored and then released back into the National Parks. This has helped boost the numbers tremendously.

At present the National Park Policy is to hold the rhino on The Safari Ranch, which is a Conservancy, until the poaching is under control again.

The Safari Ranch is honoured to be the custodians of Zimbabwe's black rhino, and we are proud that our breeding station is successful.

Volunteer Involvement with the Rhino:

- Learn to handle the rhino
- Clean out pens and gather the evening browse
- Walk with the rhino and spend quality time with these wonderful animals in order to collect valuable data on their behaviour and ecology
- Interaction with the baby rhino providing the contact and security they need during this important time in their lives

Volunteer involvement with the Elephants:

Be part of the The herd! You will love your time with these magnificent animals... It is a privilege to be in the company of elephant and to work closely with them and their handlers. Makuvusi, Toto and Mandebvu, known as the 3 Musketeers, add the colour and humour to Reserve. Mandebvu and Makuvusi are the proud parents of baby Katanga, who was born at the end of April 2009. Nzou, our 35 year old elephant, is the matriarch to a herd of buffalo, has great wisdom and is loved and respected by us all. Nzou's presence is grand and her size is mighty.



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Duties with the elephants will include:

- Handling and checking on the training of the elephant
- Pen cleaning and feeding
- Chores such as, wood collection, ploughing, and farm work using the elephant
- Elephant patrols and snare sweeps
- Observing the elephant in their natural habitat and spending valuable time in their company
- Help teach cooperative elephant handling
- Gathering research and data
- Elephant back safaris - camping out in the bush – a treat for you at the end of your stay.

Involvement with Numwa Primary and Secondary School:

- Assist in teaching classes
- Help teach conservation methods – teach their conservation / permaculture club!
- Potential coaching of sports as an extra-curricular activity
- Involvement with the school is encouraged at least 2 afternoons per week.
- Should you wish to increase your time at the school, this can be arranged.

A day in the life of a volunteer..

Anti poaching:

- Volunteers will be expected to go out on anti poaching patrols (though you should not come into contact with poachers, you will merely be gathering data). These are conducted on foot, horse back or with the elephant.
- Patrols can last up to 2 days and nights with at least 2 members of staff...you will carry your own supply of food.
- Anti poaching sites are recorded and photographic evidence taken.
- Snares will be collected and recorded as evidence.

Animal Monitoring:

Animals will be monitored on a daily basis. You will be expected to help record all information:

- Mapping and photographing species in their herds
- Water dependency
- Interactions with own species and others
- Competition within and between species
- Aggression within species and between species
- Dominance and hierarchy
- Dead animals...Postmortems and genetic sampling
- Breeding successes and failures
- Data collection, Plant and tree Identification



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Boma duties:

- Handling of orphan animals and pen cleaning
- Early morning rhino / elephant feeds and handling
- Lion, hyena and crocodile feeding

Other Duties:

- Game counts and observations
- Maintenance of game fences, roads, fireguards, pens, stalls and equipment
- Building and maintaining bush camps
- Tree planting and bush clearance
- Ranch patrols on foot and horseback
- Ploughing and wood collection with elephant
- Safari lodge management

Community Involvement:

We are involved in a local primary and secondary rural community school. This is a very important part of our volunteer programme... Each volunteer will be required to spend time in the various classes and help teach the following:

- HIV/AIDS awareness lessons using colourful posters, video films, discussions and playgroups.
- Involvement with home based care lessons for the children
- Teaching skills for self-sufficiency
- **Permaculture** - establishing organic gardening and educating rural children and their parents on vegetable gardens and cropping using this method
- **Conservation** - teaching the children the value of conserving wild animals and environmental issues using Imire Safari Ranch facilities

Possible projects for those who wish to study:

There are a wide variety of projects available. Due to the semi-habituation of the large mammals they are easy to study.

Some ideas:

- Monitoring, through close observation, behaviour of rhino, buffalo, elephant and all the antelope species
- Mal imprinting in wildlife e.g. waterbuck joining blesbok, elephant with rhino, Nzou (cow elephant) who has become a matriarch with a herd of buffalo
- Effects of early summer burning on the bush and grassland
- Liver fluke and tick born diseases in wild animals and cattle
- Grazing effects on legumes and grasses
- Flora identification



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“Please pass on to everyone at African Impact what a wonderful time Georgia had in Zimbabwe. It has been a life-changing experience. I was a little concerned before the trip but you seem to have got the balance of genuine adventure alongside common-sense safety just right and the things she learnt have given her a new perspective. I would thoroughly recommend it as a Gap year experience. Many thanks”

- Jan Wilson-Ward [for her daughter Georgia, UK]

Project Cost 2011:

2 weeks GBP 780 / EUR 1015 /USD 1285
4 weeks GBP 1470 / EUR 1895 /USD 2425
6 weeks GBP 2160 / EUR 2795 /USD 3565
8 weeks GBP 2845 / EUR 3695 /USD 4695

Project Cost 2012:

2 weeks GBP 970 / EUR 1260 /USD 1545
4 weeks GBP 1835 / EUR 2385 /USD 2895
6 weeks GBP 2695 / EUR 3505 /USD 4275
8 weeks GBP 3545 / EUR 4605 /USD 5630

Project Cost Includes:

- Project Fee: this entails financing that goes directly back into the project that you are involved with This project fee facilitates funding for items such as food for rhinos and elephants, management and maintenance of rhino pens, and the development of the conservation programme
- All transfers to and from Harare International Airport upon your arrival and departure
- Assistance in your projects and comprehensive orientation by various trained guides and staff during your stay
- Full board and lodging which includes 3 meals a day
- Unlimited tea, coffee and juice throughout the day
- Weekly laundry service during your stay
- The service of a cleaner to attend to your room

Project Cost Excludes:

- All items of a personal nature, such as curios, gifts, clothing (work and other)
- Arrival and departure flights to and from Harare International Airport
- E-mail and telephone calls made during your placement (charged out at cost)
- Any excursions over and above your planned itinerary in Zimbabwe e.g. visit to the Victoria Falls
- Personal insurance cover for the duration of your placement, which is expected to include cover for repatriation

Project Orientation:

Volunteers' introduction to Imire and orientation upon arrival (duration 2 – 3 days):

- Introduction to all senior camp staff including Guides, Handlers of elephants, lions and horses, Heads of departments and Assistants.
- Familiarization of the ranch – including the park boundaries, internal roads and tracks and some of the wildlife species.
- Further information on the rhino breeding
- How to conduct “Snare sweeps” and “Boundary patrols”.
- For those of you who have not ridden horses before you may also spend time being instructed in the basics of horse riding. Should the project managers decide that you are suitable and capable then horses may possibly be used for some of your duties.



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Project Support:

Throughout your placement you will have the support and guidance of our experienced volunteer project managers. They are part of our greater African Impact support team, which will provide you with competent 24-hour field support and assistance.

Project Accommodation:

- You will be staying in comfortable twin or triple room accommodation in a thatched volunteer farmhouse near a lake. Two communal sitting rooms with fire places are where everyone meets in the evening to relax and talk about the days events
- A prolific vegetable garden is maintained by the volunteers
- Volunteers have separate clean shower & toilet facilities
- Your room will be cleaned by the housekeeping staff, and laundry will also be done for you

Extra outdoor activities include fishing right on your doorstep, bird watching, rock climbing, horse riding, canoeing, and more.

Project Meals:

You will be provided with three meals a day - breakfast will be on a help-yourself basis and will usually include, cereals, toast, tea and coffee. Lunch is usually casual with sandwiches/pies and other home made dishes. Dinners will also be cooked dishes or barbeques.

How to get there: *We will meet you at the airport!*

Fly in to Harare International Airport (in Zimbabwe's capital) where you will be met by project staff and transferred 2 hours by road to the wildlife ranch

We organise all volunteer pick-ups, overnight accommodation at respective volunteer lodges where necessary, and transfers to your programme of choice as part of your fee.



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- For news and updates on all of our projects please join us at African Impact's official main page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/African-Impact-Ofical-Page/140942759303157#!/pages/African-Impact-Ofical-Page/140942759303157>



- Follow us on Twitter - Want to hear what is happening at the projects in real time Follow us on Twitter @ http://twitter.com/#!/African_Impact



Meet your Destination Manager!

Kirsty Coetzee will take you through the entire process of your Volunteer placement, and will be available to answer any questions you may have. Based at our head office in South Africa, she was born and bred in the beautiful city of Cape Town. With a love for Africa and a passion for Conservation and Humanitarian efforts, she feels proud to be part of an organization which strives to make a difference.



Our Partners

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



African Impact is delighted to have been nominated as a **2009 World Travel Awards Finalist** and see this as exciting recognition of our position as African specialists in Volunteering, with over 5 years experience in sharing Africa with travellers who have a passion for making a difference.

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