



via volunteers

ethical volunteering in south africa

Reptile Conservation & Education

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Work with a wide variety of snakes and other reptiles
at a unique facility near Kruger National Park
dedicated to the conservation of reptiles.

Join for 2 weeks or more.

Via Volunteers, PO Box 1186, Gordon's Bay, 7151, South Africa
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Useful Information

Arrival airport	Johannesburg (JNB)
Arrival day	Sunday or earlier
Join project on...	Monday
Last day of volunteering	Thursday
Fly home on...	Friday or later
Minimum duration	2 weeks or longer
Volunteering hours	Variable: Approximately 8am to 5pm, 5 to 6 days per week
Working with...	Snakes, lizards, crocodiles, scorpions, spiders and chameleons. Checking reptiles, cleaning, maintenance, constructing new enclosures, assisting with rescue operations, catch & release and research
Minimum age	You must be 18 years or older when you arrive

What's Included

Pre-arrival support	Our South Africa based team will provide you with expert advice and assistance to ensure you are fully prepared for your trip
Airport welcome	A driver will be at the airport to welcome you
Airport transfer	Between Johannesburg Airport and Brown Sugar Backpackers
Pre-project accommodation	An overnight stay at Brown Sugar Backpackers
Project transfers	We will arrange your minibus transfers between Johannesburg and the Reptile Centre
Accommodation	At the Reptile Centre you will stay in a wooden bungalow with up to 3 other volunteers
Food	Supplies for breakfast, lunch and dinner are provided during your stay at the Reptile Centre
Orientation	You will receive a comprehensive welcome brief and introduction to the project when you arrive.
Reptile Orientation Course	Stay for 4 weeks or more and this internationally accredited course will be included at no extra cost
In-country support	Being based in South Africa means that we can give you real support during your stay
Certificate of Appreciation	On completion of your placement we will send you a special thank you to accompany your CV or resume

Not Included: *International flights and insurance.*

Citizens from most countries can arrive in South Africa and stay for up to 90 days without a visa. Please refer to our website FAQ section for more details if you are unsure.



Preparation Checklist

Before you apply

1	Consider your motivations and expectations for volunteering.
2	Read this volunteer guide and check the testimonials and photos on our website.
3	Read our standard Terms & Conditions Download Via Volunteers' Terms and Conditions
4	Decide when you would like to join this project, and for how long (minimum 2 weeks).

How to Apply

1	Apply using our online booking form, or email us on info@viavolunteers.com <i>You do not pay anything when you apply.</i>
2	We will reply to you to confirm that we have reserved your placement. We will keep your placement reserved for about a week.
3	We will send you a detailed itinerary and quote, as well as a deposit invoice with a link for secure payment by credit card or PayPal.
4	When you are happy with your preliminary itinerary and quote, you will be able to confirm your placement with a deposit.
5	On receipt of your deposit, we will confirm your placement and begin making arrangements for your stay in South Africa.

Preparing for your trip

1	We will send you a Personal Details form to complete. <i>Please email this back to us as soon as possible.</i>
2	We will send you a Travel Details form to complete. <i>Please email this back to us when you have confirmed your flight details.</i>
3	We will send you useful information about South Africa, Ethical Volunteering, and a recommended packing list to help with your planning.
4	Book your flights. <i>Remember that you can arrive and depart at any time of day. You can also arrive earlier than the normal Friday arrival, and depart later than the normal Friday departure.</i>
5	We will update your itinerary and quote to include your flight details and any additional nights you might need.
6	Your balance will be due 4 weeks before you join us. We will send you a balance invoice with a link for secure payment by credit card or PayPal.
7	Email a recognizable photo to us.
8	We will send you a pre-arrival email with some useful reminders a few weeks before you fly to Johannesburg.



Your Basic Itinerary

Arriving in South Africa

1	<p>The latest arrival day is Sunday. You can also arrive any day before if you prefer.</p> <p><i>If you would like to add extra nights in Johannesburg to your stay and arrive earlier, please let us know when you have your flight dates. You can arrive at any time of day</i></p>
2	<p>A driver will be there to meet you when you land at Johannesburg International Airport – You will see him holding a welcome sign with your name on as you enter the arrivals hall</p> <p><i>From the time your flight lands, it may take you anything from 15 minutes to an hour or more to reach the Arrivals Hall, depending on how busy the airport is, and how quickly the baggage is unloaded. The driver won't leave without you, so don't worry if there are any delays</i></p> <p><i>You don't need to worry if your flight is late either. Via Volunteers monitor the expected landing time for your flight, so your driver will be there to meet you no matter how late your flight is</i></p>
3	<p>Your driver will transfer you to Brown Sugar Backpackers (about a 30-minute drive) where you can check-in for an overnight stay.</p>
4	<p>If you arrive before Sunday, there are many interesting things to keep you busy. Here are some links to the most popular activities that can be arranged with the reception team at Brown Sugar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apartheid Museum: http://www.apartheidmuseum.org/• City Sightseeing Bus & Soweto Tour: https://www.citysightseeing.co.za/tours/entry/Red-City-Tour-and-Soweto-Combo• Gold Reef City – Theme Park, Theatre & Casino: https://www.tsogosun.com/gold-reef-city-casino• Sterkfontein Caves & The Cradle of Humankind: http://www.maropeng.co.za/

Joining the Reptile Conservation & Education Project

1	<p>On Monday morning, a Brown Sugar driver will transfer you to the bus stop at the airport. You will travel by air-conditioned minibus and should arrive in Hoedspruit by about 13:00</p>
2	<p>On arrival, one of the project team will be there to welcome you and transfer you to the Reptile Centre</p>
3	<p>The project team will help you to settle in and you will have a full orientation shortly after arrival.</p>

Flying home

1	<p>Your last full day at the project will normally be on a Thursday</p>
2	<p>The Shuttle Bus driver will collect you from Hoedspruit on Friday morning. You will travel by air-conditioned minibus and should arrive at Johannesburg Airport by about 18:00</p>
3	<p>To ensure that you have plenty of time to check-in, please book your international flight to depart no earlier than 20:00 on Friday evening</p> <p><i>If you would like to add extra nights in Johannesburg to your stay and depart later, please let us know when you have your flight dates. You can then depart at any time of day.</i></p>



Reptile Conservation & Education

Project Overview

The Kinyonga Reptile Centre is a unique facility that is dedicated to the preservation and conservation of reptiles. As a volunteer you will become part of the team and play an active and rewarding role in helping them to achieve this goal.

During your stay you will have opportunities to work with a wide range of indigenous and exotic reptiles, amphibians and arachnids, and get practical, hands-on experience in the day to day running of the centre.

You will be assisting with cleaning and checking the animals, preparing food, feeding, the upkeep of animal enclosures, general day to day maintenance, constructing new enclosures, helping with reptile rescues and also catch & release operations. You will also interact with guests at the centre and help to educate them about the importance of reptiles in a natural ecosystem.

Although you can join for just 2 weeks, we recommend staying for longer if you are interested in experiencing as many activities and duties as possible.

If you are volunteering for 4 weeks or more, an internationally accredited Reptile Orientation Course will be included at no extra cost.

To join this project, you will need to be in good physical condition and aged 18 years or older by the time you arrive. Good social skills are an advantage and a willingness to help where needed is vital as you will be part of a small team of staff and volunteers. Personal characteristics like commitment, flexibility and the ability to use your initiative will also be key. To ensure effective communication between all team members, a good understanding of the English language is also required.

Academic interns are also welcome at the centre, so if you are interested in joining the centre on this basis please contact us for more information. The centre can assist you with guidance and recommendations for research projects and advise you of any extra costs for field work, petrol and other expenses.

This project is limited to 4 volunteers at any one time, so we advise you book as early as possible.

Working Routine & Activities

You can expect to be busy from 08:00 to 17:00 for 5 to 6 days each week.

A one-hour lunch break is normally taken between 12:00 and 13:00, but hours and lunch times can vary in response to the nature of the work at the reptile centre.

If you would like to arrange activities or excursions on specific days, you must speak with the volunteer coordinator or management in advance to pre-book your time off.



Accommodation

Pre-Project Accommodation: Brown Sugar Backpackers in Johannesburg

As one of Johannesburg's best backpackers, Brown Sugar has a great range of facilities and is well positioned in the Observatory suburb to provide the perfect place to relax and explore.

An overnight stay is included for Sunday night before your transfer to the project. We can add extra nights if you would like to arrive earlier and spend some time exploring Johannesburg:

- Separate male and female dormitory accommodation with all bedding and linen provided.
- Self-service breakfast is included with cereals, egg, cheese, ham, toast, jams, milk, yoghurt, fruit, tea, coffee & juice
- Free Wi-Fi and an internet café with laptops for the use of guests
- A fully equipped shared kitchen with fridge/freezers for storing your groceries
- All bedding including linen, duvet and pillows
- Self-service laundry
- Lots of showers and toilets
- A travel desk for booking tours and activities
- A pool area with sun loungers and a BBQ
- A large bar with Satellite TV, a pool table, and an outdoor balcony area with seating and BBQ facilities
- Lockable storage for your valuables (please bring your own padlock for this)
- CCTV Security with controlled gate access, and a night manager
- The lodge and rooms are cleaned and serviced daily.

At the Reptile Conservation & Education Project

During your time with the project, you will stay in a comfortable wooden bungalow behind the Reptile Centre which you will share with up to 3 other volunteers. Your accommodation facilities include:

- Dormitory accommodation with all bedding, linen and mosquito nets
- A fully equipped kitchen with pots, pans, utensils, cutlery, plates, bowls, mugs etc
- Groceries are supplied to enable you to prepare your breakfast, lunch and dinner
- Filtered water is supplied if you prefer it, but the tap water is very good too
- A lounge area with satellite TV and DVD player
- A computer is available in the lounge with a slow internet connection speed. If you have a laptop you can get a better signal at the centre's café.
- Wi-Fi is available for about R40 per day or R15 for 2 hours.
- A shower and toilet with hot and cold running water
- A house maid cleans the bungalow twice a week
- Please note that there is no hanging space in the cabin, so you will need to keep your suitcase or bags organised
- A safe is available at reception for locking up passports, tickets and valuables
- You can hand wash your laundry or ask the housemaid to do it for a small fee
- Shopping trips are available if you need to purchase personal items, or extra food, drinks and snacks.

Useful Information

Reptile Orientation Course

The centre conducts several internationally recognised reptile courses for medical professionals, wildlife personnel and the general public, including a Reptile Orientation Course. This course is included at no extra cost if you are volunteering for 4 weeks or more and can be added for R500 if you are staying for a shorter period.

You will be treated to a high energy interactive session involving the use of live animals, museum items of interest and a power point presentation. A course welcome pack and a "Reptile Awareness and Safety Hand notes" booklet is also included. The presentation is designed to be both useful and a lot of fun... an experience never to be forgotten.

The course takes about 5 hours in total and covers snakes, lizards, spiders and scorpions.

An ISZS accredited certificate will be issued on successful completion.

During the course you will learn about the following:

- Identification and methods of identifying snakes
- Physiology
- Habits and habitat
- Safety Techniques
- Safety Protocol
- Venoms and venom apparatus
- Up to date first aid and safety precautions
- Phobias (Assessment of one's fear levels)
- Introduction to handling
- Reproduction
- Parasites
- Husbandry techniques
- Public relation techniques.

