



**via volunteers**

ethical volunteering in south africa

## **African Penguin and Seabird Rehabilitation with Homestay Accommodation**

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Help to rehabilitate endangered African Penguins  
and other marine bird species at the  
SANCCOB rehab centre near Cape Town.

**Join for 6 weeks or more.**

Via Volunteers, PO Box 1186, Gordon's Bay, 7151, South Africa  
[www.viavolunteers.com](http://www.viavolunteers.com) | [info@viavolunteers.com](mailto:info@viavolunteers.com) | +27 21 856 4220



## Useful Information

Arrival airport	Cape Town (CPT)
Arrival day	Monday or earlier
Join project on...	Tuesday
Last day of volunteering	Thursday
Fly home on...	Friday or later
Minimum duration	6 weeks or longer
Volunteering hours	Variable: Average 5 days per week (approx 8am-5:30pm)
Working with...	African Penguins and other seabirds
Minimum age	You must be 18 years or older when you arrive

## What's Included

Pre-arrival support	Our Cape Town based team will provide you with expert advice and assistance to ensure you are fully prepared for your trip
Airport welcome	Janice, your homestay host, will be there to meet you when you arrive
Airport transfers	Between Cape Town Airport and your homestay accommodation
Welcome brief	With Janice
Accommodation	Homestay in the Cape Town suburb of Parklands <i>Private room, or sharing with another volunteer</i>
Food	Breakfast & lunch supplies and a homecooked dinner every day
Transport and transfers	Between the Homestay & SANCCOB
Orientation	At SANCCOB on your first Tuesday
Wi-Fi	Free Wi-Fi at the Homestay
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

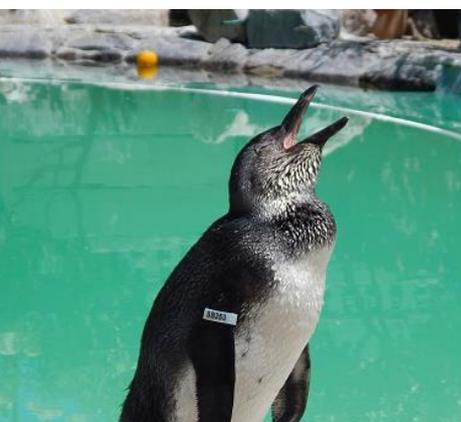
1	Consider your motivations and expectations for volunteering.
2	Read this volunteer guide and check the <a href="#">testimonials</a> and <a href="#">photos</a> on our website.
3	Read our standard Terms & Conditions <a href="#">Download Via Volunteers' Terms and Conditions</a>
4	Decide when you would like to join this project, and for how long (minimum 6 weeks).

## How to Apply

1	Apply using our online booking form, or email us on <a href="mailto:info@viavolunteers.com">info@viavolunteers.com</a> <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, Things to do in Cape Town 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 Monday 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 a few useful reminders about a week before you fly to Cape Town.



# Your Basic Itinerary

## Arriving in South Africa

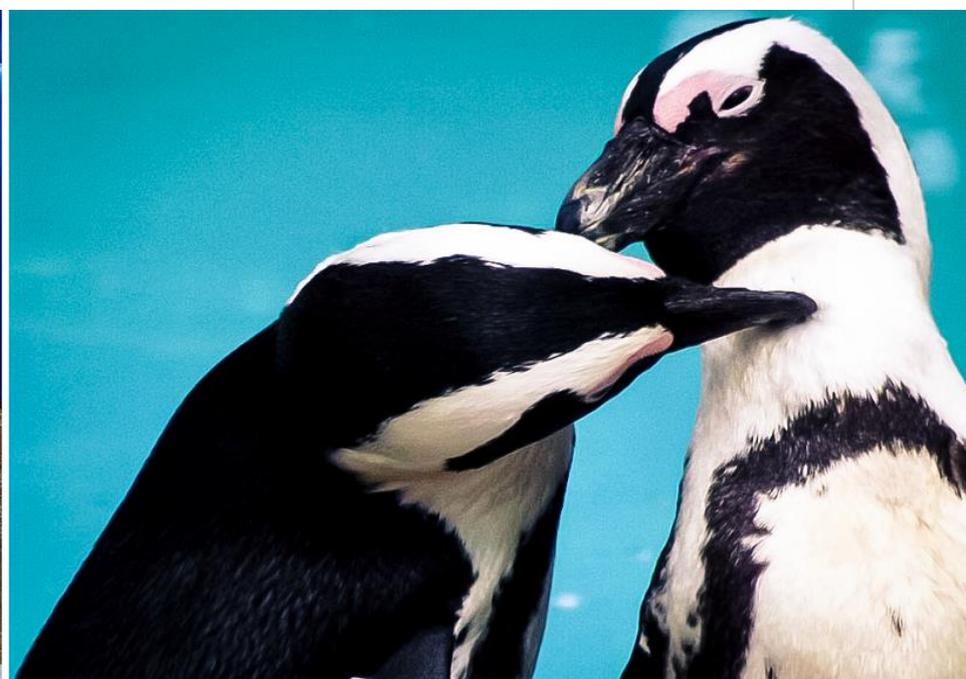
1	<p>The normal arrival day is Monday</p> <p><i>If you would like to add extra nights in Cape Town to your stay and arrive earlier, please let us know when you have your flight dates. You can arrive at any time of day.</i></p>
2	<p>Your homestay host (Janice) will be there to meet you when you land at Cape Town International Airport – You will see her 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 more to reach the Arrivals Hall, depending on how busy the airport is, and how quickly the baggage is unloaded. Janice 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 Janice will be there to meet you no matter how late your flight is.</i></p>
3	<p>Janice will transfer you to her home in Parklands (about a 30-minute drive) and help you to settle in with a welcome brief. She will also introduce you to the local area over the weekend</p>

## Joining SANCCOB

1	<p>Your first visit to SANCCOB will be on the first Tuesday after you arrive in Cape Town</p>
2	<p>Janice will collect you from Elements Lodge at 07:30 and take you to SANCCOB. She will introduce you to the on-site volunteer coordinator, who will organize your orientation, provide you with a tour of the facilities to help you settle in, and then get you started with your training</p>
3	<p>At the end of each volunteering day, Janice will collect you from SANCCOB</p>
3	<p>On your days off, there are literally hundreds of wonderful things to do in and around Cape Town</p> <p><i>We will send you our useful 'Things To Do List' when you apply. This includes some of the most popular activities that previous volunteers have enjoyed</i></p> <p><i>Janice can help you with advice during your stay, and assist with arranging tours or activities.</i></p>

## Flying home

1	<p>Your last day at SANCCOB will normally be on a Thursday, so you can fly home on Friday</p> <p><i>If you would like to add extra nights in Cape Town to your stay and depart later, please let us know when you have your flight dates. You can depart at any time of day</i></p>
2	<p>We will transfer you to Cape Town International Airport in plenty of time to check-in for your flight home.</p>



# African Penguin & Seabird Rehabilitation

## Project Overview

SANCCOB (Southern African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds) was established in 1968 and is a non-profit organisation whose primary objective is to reverse the decline of seabird populations through the rescue, rehabilitation and release of ill, injured, abandoned and oiled seabirds – especially endangered seabirds like the African penguin.

SANCCOB is an internationally recognized leader in oiled wildlife response, rehabilitation and chick-rearing; contributes to research which benefits seabirds; trains people to care for the birds and educates the public to appreciate this unique heritage. As a non-profit organization, they rely heavily on assistance from dedicated local and international volunteers like you.

In the last 50 years, SANCCOB have treated more than 95,000 oiled, ill, injured and abandoned African penguins and other threatened seabirds. Independent research confirms that the wild African Penguin population is 19% higher directly due to SANCCOB's efforts.

The centre is located in Table View, one of Cape Town's large suburbs and sits on the banks of a lake with great views of Table Mountain and Cape Town. The lake is home to a wide variety of birds including Pelicans, Cormorants and a colony of Pink Flamingos. Close by you will find Blouberg Beach where you can use your camera to capture classic postcard views of Table Mountain and the bay while you enjoy the fresh sea air coming off the Atlantic Ocean.

As a hands-on volunteer at SANCCOB you will find out what it means to be a member of the team at one of the world's leading seabird rehabilitation centers.

During your placement, you will receive training and supervision to get you up to speed in the first couple of weeks. You will learn about the various aspects of seabird conservation & care and can expect to be actively involved in catching, holding and feeding African penguins and a variety of other seabirds by the end of your first week.

African penguins have a lot of character and they will bite given the opportunity. The training you will receive combined with the protective equipment provided by SANCCOB will enable you to handle all the birds safely.

You will be involved with other duties at the centre including preparing fish, maintaining cleanliness and hygiene standards in the pools and pens, pressure spraying mats and many more.

To join this project, you will need to be in good physical condition (fit and healthy enough to stand and work for at least 8 hours per day) and aged 18 years or older by the time you arrive in Cape Town. Spending much of your time in the fresh air on a variety of physical tasks will leave you feeling tired at the end of most days, so personal characteristics like commitment, flexibility and the ability to use your initiative will be key. To ensure effective communication between all team members, a good understanding of the English language is also required. You must also have an up to date tetanus vaccination.

It is important that training in all aspects of seabird care is completed as quickly as possible. Training opportunities are affected by the type and number of bird species at the centre, so the time it takes from joining SANCCOB to handling the birds can vary from volunteer to volunteer. The learning curve in your first week is steep as you become accustomed to daily routines, preparing food, learning about seabird care and helping with general duties. Don't expect to be handling birds on your first day, but certainly by the end of your first two weeks. At this stage, you should find that you have become a real asset to SANCCOB, and will be able to carry out any task asked of you.

One of the most rewarding moments for any volunteer is to see the birds they have nursed back to health return to the ocean. During your time with SANCCOB, you will have opportunities to join one or more penguin releases, either from a boat off the Cape Town coast, or from one of the local beaches. This is a great time to bring your camera for plenty of smiles and some unforgettable images of the birds as they waddle or dive back into the sea.

# African Penguin & Seabird Rehabilitation

## Working Routine & Activities

You will be provided with a schedule so that you can see in advance when you will be helping out. You can expect to be busy for an average of 5 days each week, including some Saturdays and Sundays. Your volunteer coordinator will let you know if there are any changes to your schedule, which is likely at some point during your stay as the schedule has to revolve around the needs of the birds.

You will normally begin your day at around 7:30am when you depart from your homestay with Janice. When you arrive at SANCCOB you will have some time to get into your boots and oilskins in time for the team briefing at 8am. *Please note that your oilskins, boots and gloves are provided by SANCCOB.*

Your working day at SANCCOB is normally from 8am to 5:30pm. Working hours can vary at short notice, so you will need to be flexible and be prepared to work through to 6:30pm during particularly busy periods or in response to a late intake of birds. Your day includes a 1-hour lunch break and shorter breaks for tea or coffee in the morning and afternoon.

Please note that there are peaks and lows with seabird admissions during the year, but unfortunately there is no way to predict when these will occur.

**You can expect to be involved with the following seabird care duties for approximately 50% of your time:**

- Handling and Bird care - (mostly different types of gulls, cormorants, terns, African penguins, Cape gannets as well as the odd pelican, albatross, skua or petrel)
- Catching and handling different seabirds
- Defrosting and preparing fish for a variety of seabird species
- Administering medication such as ointments or tablets to a variety of species
- Hydrating (tubing) different seabird species
- Feeding (force feeding or free feeding) different seabird species
- Holding birds for basic medical procedures
- Assisting with bird release preparation
- Assisting in the Intensive Care Unit
- Assisting in new seabird admissions
- Holding birds for washing and rinsing
- Participating in a bird release (weather and bird depending).

**For the remainder of your time, you may be involved in any or all of the following general duties:**

- Scrubbing and cleaning of bird enclosures, mats, crates and pools
- Washing and drying of towels and sheets
- Cleaning of all food preparation and feeding equipment used
- Kitchen duty
- Centre maintenance duties occasionally (including painting, weeding, enclosure construction)
- Assisting in the Education department from time to time.

# Homestay Accommodation

## Homestay with Janice

You will stay with Janice in her lovely home throughout your placement. A Homestay is a great way to learn more about how real South Africans live and has the added bonus of including all your meals and transfers to SANCCOB and back. Your homestay is safe and secure and includes the following facilities:

- Two private bedrooms (one with a double bed, and one with a large single bed)
- Three meals a day – Breakfast (cereal, tea, coffee and toast), supplies for making lunch & a cooked evening meal
- All bedding including linen, duvet and pillows (linen is changed weekly)
- Shared shower/bathroom
- Towels
- Free laundry service
- Free Wi-Fi

*Janice has friendly pets at home. If you are allergic or averse to cats and dogs, please let us know. Please note that smoking is not permitted in the homestay.*

## Important Project Notes

These notes will help you to make the most of your time at SANCCOB and enable you to make a positive and beneficial contribution to the penguins and other seabirds that you encounter:

- Smoking or the consumption of alcohol is not permitted on SANCCOB premises
- SANCCOB will provide oilskins and boots for overall body protection, and protective neoprene sleeves and gloves for your forearms and hands
- Set aside 3 sets of comfortable clothing for working at SANCCOB and wash them regularly. It is essential that you have a clean set of clothes on each day as you are a member of the team, and will need to look the part. To protect your skin from scratches and bites, you must wear clothing (e.g. t-shirts) which covers your upper arms, shoulders and chest
- A shift plan will be available to allow you to plan for your days off. Breaks normally consist of 2-3 days, so if you are hoping to include longer tours, please make sure you allow extra time to do these before or after your placement. SANCCOB is a crisis driven centre, so you will need to be flexible regarding short notice changes to your schedule
- Please remember that SANCCOB has to plan ahead for staffing requirements, so requests for extra time off can impact on them and other volunteers. For this reason, requests for extended periods of time off during your project are unlikely to be granted
- Any requests for shift swaps or days off must be passed to your volunteer coordinator at SANCCOB for approval
- SANCCOB and the birds you care for need you at your best, so we highly recommend an early, alcohol free night if you are on duty the following day. If you arrive at SANCCOB under the influence of alcohol, or suffering from the effects of a late night, you will be asked to leave. Repeated occurrences will result in you being removed from the project. You need to be fully alert when handling wild birds, not only to ensure your safety, but also to ensure that the birds receive the best possible care.
- Consult your doctor before volunteering If you are pregnant, on medication or allergic to animal dander or detergent
- If you have chronic respiratory ailments or impaired kidneys or liver, you should avoid working around crude oil.