

BIG 5 WILDLIFE CONSERVATION & COMMUNITY OUTREACH, ZIMBABWE

EXPERIENCE THE EPIC ADVENTURES OF A BIG
5 CONSERVATION EXPERIENCE IN ZIMBABWE



An exciting combination of community engagement and wildlife conservation, set in the heart of the African wilderness.



*"Nature breeds curiosity;
it helps to grow explorers rather than robots.
It reminds us that we are part of something bigger."*

About the programme

This project is all about fun and family, and we invite volunteer groups of all ages to enjoy an absorbing and unforgettable stay on this piece of unadulterated African wilderness.

The Savé Valley Conservancy is home to all of Africa's Big 5 game, plus large populations of the endangered African wild dog. Here you'll take part in a community service project, experience life living in the bush and learn to track and identify Africa's most iconic animals.

Families will enjoy an exciting mixture of conservation activities, plus learn about the bush and about animals and birds from experienced rangers. and get involved in teaching and other community projects at the local school - the only school within the Conservancy's boundaries.

Where is the programme located?

This project is located one of Zimbabwe's most historic and beautiful wilderness areas. The Savé Valley Conservancy is one of the largest private game reserves in Africa. Located in the South Eastern lowveld of Zimbabwe, bordering on the Save River on its eastern side, the Conservancy comprises 750,000 acres of diverse wildlife habitat.

Volunteers will have the opportunity to see iconic African species, including the Big 5 (elephant, lion, leopard, buffalo, and rhino). The Conservancy is home to one of Africa's largest populations of black and white rhino, and to a healthy population of rare African Painted Dogs. Both of these critically endangered species are carefully monitored and protected within the Conservancy.





Logistics and overview



Max volunteers: 8



Transfers: we will provide safe and fully licensed transport from Harare International Airport to the Save Valley and back to Harare at the end of your stay. The journey is around 5 hours and the last 30km are within the conservancy itself - great for game viewing!



Accommodation is in purpose-built self-contained cottages, each sleeping 4. Each cottage has two bedrooms with two ensuite bathrooms. There is hot and cold running water, showers and flush toilets. The cottages have a small kitchen and dining area plus a small communal living space.



Food and drink: three meals per day plus tea, coffee, juice and drinking water are provided. Vegetarians and vegans can be catered for. Those with more specific dietary requirements, e.g. coeliacs and dairy intolerance may be asked to bring some foodstuffs with them (e.g. dairy substitutes and gluten free products).



There is 3G signal at the cottages and in some areas around the reserve. WiFi is available in emergencies.



The minimum recommended age for this project is 8 years. Please enquire if any of your children are younger.



The project is closed from mid-December until March because of the high temperatures and summer rains, when many of the roads in the conservancy become impassable when rivers burst their banks.



Programme highlights

- ☉ Experience living and learning in a Big 5 Conservation area.
- ☉ Experience new cultures and different ways of life. Engage with diverse communities and learn about how other people live.
- ☉ Improve your knowledge of African wildlife and what is being done to protect endangered species.
- ☉ Undertake physical work to improve the environment for both humans and wildlife.

Learning outcomes and experiences

- ☉ Demonstrate knowledge of Shona culture and history.
- ☉ Understand the challenges facing rural communities and the work being done to overcome the human-wildlife conflict in Africa.
- ☉ Gain an appreciation for the differences between the way people live.
- ☉ Learn about conservation issues and what you can do to help.



Programme structure

Days are usually be split into three parts - one activity early in the morning (e.g. a game drive or nature walk), one between breakfast and lunch and one in the afternoon. Some days we will include an evening activity or nighttime game drive.

- ☉ Every activity has a purpose and goal, focused on learning, contributing and experiencing.
- ☉ Activities are 2 to 4 hours long, depending on the age of your children and the activity.
- ☉ We will guide you in your choice of activities, matching them to your family's interests and ages to ensure everyone is engaged, and to build a well-rounded experience.



Programme activities: wildlife conservation

Wildlife-based activities

Every encounter with wildlife is an opportunity to increase you and your family's understanding of Africa's animals and to raise awareness of the challenges they face to survive in the wild.

Anti-poaching

Game drives

Wildlife relocations

Any wildlife operations scheduled for that time (e.g. rhino tagging, lion collaring)

Big game tracking

Snare patrols

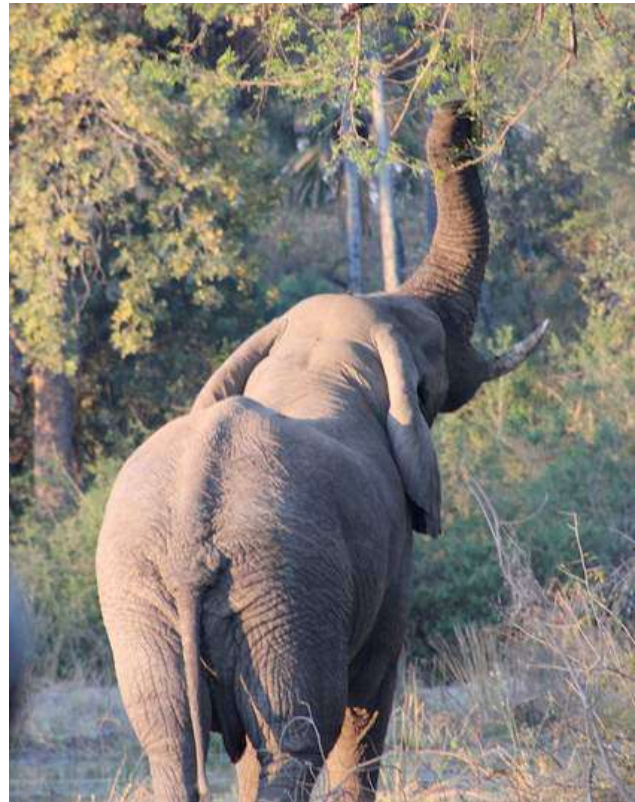
Monitoring trail cameras

Animal and bird identification and behaviour

Night drives to see the kingdom of the nocturnal animals

Star gazing

*"No one will protect what they don't care about
And no one will care about what they have never experienced."*





Programme activities: community and culture

Sustainable conservation cannot exist without the support of local communities. The conservancy supports a large rural community within its boundaries and you will be based close to its only school.

Interacting with the community is a chance for volunteers to share ideas, opinions, and perspectives and learn important lessons from the people who know the area best.

Understanding cultural practices, history, and current challenges that the people of Zimbabwe face is an important and enriching cultural exchange. Shona people are known for their fun-loving, gentle and hospitable nature and any visit will be one filled with laughter, learning, dance and song.

Teaching, sports and English literacy in the local school.

Building, maintenance and painting work in the school and/or community.

Visit local homesteads and learn about how people live.

Work with local community groups on income-generating projects.





Programme activities: leisure time, team building and bush skills

There's plenty of leisure time to play volleyball and football in the river beds, go swimming, fish in the rivers and dams, have a braai (that's an African BBQ!), go for sundowners and enjoy incredible views!

Orienteering and bush survival

Making fishing rods and catching fish

Learn to make fire

Team-building challenges

Obstacle courses

A typical day

There's no such thing as a typical day in Africa, where things are likely to change depending on the weather, the animals and all those unexpected and usually wonderful things that can happen at any time! If we have to give you an example, here's a day that's happened before!

Get up between 6.00 and 6.30am depending on the time of year and what activities are planned - you will sometimes do night-time game counts or waterhole monitoring which means your day will end late in the night and start later in the morning.

Before breakfast; go on a foot patrol and collect all the camera trap films. Write down all the tracks you see and try and identify what animals have been doing during the night (this is especially fun during the rains when you may find amazing lion tracks). Count the number and species of antelope which you pass on the way and note the condition of the animals. Your tracker will teach you how to identify spoor and you will learn about the plants, trees and birds you see.

After a big breakfast you will go to the school and spend the morning with the primary school children and teachers. They will all be VERY excited to see you. You'll meet your group of kids and start with their reading. Spend some time with the teachers finding out what challenges they face.

After lunch you will have a short rest during the heat of the day. Then you'll take a drive into the conservancy with your guide where you'll learn how to navigate using only the natural world. Learn how to find food in the bush and even how to make a toothbrush and comb!

As the day cools down, go for sundowners and enjoy the noises of the evening bush as the daytime animals bed down and the noisy nighttime begins!

Accommodation and facilities

Family volunteers are accommodated in one of two self-contained cottages in the heart of the conservancy. Each cottage sleeps four people in two bedrooms - one or two more single beds can be added if needed. The cottages each have a dining and kitchen area and a small lounge area. There is also an outside seating area. Each bedroom has an en-suite bathroom with toilet, basin and shower. There is a laundry service and a daily housekeeper.

Food and drink

You will receive three home-cooked meals a day during your stay, prepared for you by our resident cooks. On a Sunday volunteers may be responsible for preparing meals for themselves (food will be provided).

Should you have any dietary requirements or intolerances please let us know before you arrive. Clean, safe drinking water and tea and coffee are available all day.

Vegetarian and vegan options are available, but should you have any further dietary requirements or allergies, please let us know before you arrive. It is difficult for the project to cater for gluten, dairy or wheat intolerance, so you may be asked to bring any specialist foods with you. The chefs will be able to prepare these alongside other standard meals.

Food and drink

Internet: it's time to get away from it all! There is no internet at the volunteer houses and intermittent 3G signal. WiFi is available in emergencies at the main house. We suggest that you buy a local ECONET SIM card at the airport when you arrive, so that 3G signal can be used when it is available. Make sure your phone is unlocked before you leave home.

Electricity: there is mains electricity but power can be intermittent in Africa, especially during the rainy season.

Plug sockets: 3 square pin, UK style. There are plug sockets throughout the cottages.



How do I get to Zimbabwe?

FLIGHTS

Flights into Zimbabwe usually arrive on either Emirates, Qatar Airways, Ethiopian Airlines or Kenya Airways, depending on your route.

VISAS

Nationals of the UK, US and most European countries do not need to apply in advance for a visa to enter Zimbabwe. Check this website for your eligibility - www.evisa.gov.zw/regime. Tourist visas can easily be obtained on arrival (usually \$30-75 depending on nationality). If you do need to apply in advance, we can advise on the best process.

ARRIVALS

You will be met at the airport on your arrival. Once you have cleared Immigration, gone through screening and collected your luggage you will be met by your group co-ordinators or driver.

TRANSFERS

You will transfer by vehicle from Harare International Airport either to your B&B in Harare for a one-night stay or, if you are arriving before 10am, you will transfer directly to the project. We will organise your transfer back to the airport on your final day.

What do I need to do pre-departure?

VACCINATIONS

Malaria - the Save Valley is a malaria area so anti-malaria tablets are required. Ensure your childhood vaccinations (MMR, Diphtheria, Tetanus, Polio) are up to date. A Yellow Fever vaccination is not required.

**We aren't doctors, so please check your own specific requirements with your GP or local travel clinic!*

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Insurance is compulsory for all participants on the programme. Ensure travel insurance covers you for lost or delayed luggage, medical treatment and repatriation.



Programme gallery

