VOLUNTEER WITH UmPhafa

What: Conservation, environment

Where: South Africa

When: 2 weeks in April or September/October 2018

Cost: £1400-1600
Umphafa project

The UmPhafa Private Nature Reserve, situated in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa, is a 6,000 hectare reserve comprised of three farms previously managed for cattle and encompasses a wide range of habitats from acacia savannah and bushveld to mountainous terrain. Due to previous agricultural practices many of the natural inhabiting species had been lost. The project is partnered with Colchester Zoo.

UmPhafa’s goal is to "To rehabilitate the habitat of UmPhafa as an example of the region’s previous natural condition through the management of indigenous flora and fauna in order to achieve a model of sustainable conservation for the development and promotion of environmental education"

UmPhafa Private Nature Reserve offers internships to people who have a passion and an interest to learn about African Wildlife Conservation and Reserve Management. The internships are run by the Reserve Management Team which ensures that interns are mentored by our most senior and experienced staff members. It is a fantastic and rare opportunity to work alongside a team with many years of experience and gain creditable work experience whilst knowing that the contribution is having a direct influence on the wellbeing of the flora and fauna on the reserve. Data that volunteers collect will be vital in making key management decisions.

KwaZulu-Natal, South African region where the project is located is safe and popular tourist destination with most people spending time in Durban and the wildlife reserves. South Africa is known for high crime rates which mostly occur in townships and isolated areas and usually away from tourist destinations. Weather conditions are generally very good with very little adverse weather conditions.

Website: www.umphafa.org

Volunteer role

You will play a crucial role in the operation of the reserve by helping to collect vital data necessary to make key management decisions. You will also have the satisfaction of developing the necessary skills required to make in-roads into the field of conservation, whilst working closely with large animals and knowing that your contributions is having a direct influence to the wellbeing of the fauna on the UmPhafa Reserve.

Days will be varied and some activities are seasonal but the following activities are what most volunteers will be undertaking:

- Animal behavioural Studies (large game such as Rhino and Giraffe)
- Feeding studies & Game Counts
- Species Identification (an important element of the general learning experience)
- Camera Trap Surveys
- Large Mammal Tracking and Monitoring & Small Mammal and Pit Fall Trapping (seasonal)
- Vegetation Surveys (an essential element with regards to animal carrying capacities)
- Animal sighting data collection, entry and analysis
- Bush Walks & Bush Skills & Night drives
- Fence Patrols & Erosion Control
# Dates and schedule

## Session 1 (April 2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3rd October 2017</td>
<td>Applications are open – apply online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15th November 2017</td>
<td>Essex Abroad Expo 11am until 2pm Square 3, Colchester Campus</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 2017 – end February 2018</td>
<td>Fundraising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31st January 2018</td>
<td>Deadline to apply, deposit payment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28th February 2018</td>
<td>Full payment due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22nd March 2018</td>
<td>Pre-departure session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd April 2018</td>
<td>Departure to Durban, South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th April 2018</td>
<td>Arrival, airport pick up, orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th April – 18th April 2018</td>
<td>Volunteering activities in the reserve, excursions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18th April 2018</td>
<td>Departure back to London, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19th April 2018</td>
<td>Arrival to London, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th May 2018</td>
<td>Debrief and reunion at the University of Essex</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Session 2 (September-October 2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 2018 – mid July 2018</td>
<td>Fundraising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31st May 2018</td>
<td>Deadline to apply, deposit payment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15th July 2018</td>
<td>Full payment due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2018</td>
<td>Pre-departure session</td>
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<tr>
<td>18th September 2018</td>
<td>Departure to Durban, South Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>19th September 2018</td>
<td>Arrival, airport pick up, orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20th September – 3rd October 2018</td>
<td>Volunteering activities in the reserve, excursions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd October 2018</td>
<td>Departure back to London, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th October 2018</td>
<td>Arrival to London, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19th October 2018</td>
<td>Debrief and reunion at the University of Essex</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**What’s included:**
- Minibus transport to UK airport & airport pickup and drop off in South Africa
- Return flight to Durban
- Accommodation in single sex dorm rooms
- Food (3 meals per day – you do your own cooking)
- Orientation and ongoing training and 24/7 Field leader support
- Internet access
- Excursions (Nambiti drive, Spioenkop, Monks Cowl, Reptile Centre and Bird of prey display)
- Travel insurance

**What’s not included:**
- Personal expenses – approximately £100
- Personal kit including some specific clothes and equipment (sturdy walking boots, rain jackets, leather work gloves, head torch, sleeping bag etc.) – around £100
- Vaccinations – visit your GP at least 4 months before planned travel date (usually free)
- Visa fee – most nationalities including UK and EU countries don’t need Visa to enter South Africa

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**Accommodation**

Rooms are comfortable, single sex dorms with bunk-beds and lockable wardrobes for storing belongings. A safe is also available for locking away valuables, such as cash, passports, phones etc. however theft has never been a problem at the lodgings. Under-sheets and pillows are provided, although a sleeping bag, liner and towel must be brought as part of the personal kit. The house is fully equipped with hot water showers, electricity, and laundry facilities. Unlimited Wi-Fi access for e-mails and Skype is available!
Visas

- Not required for UK and most EU students
- Some international students may require Visa to enter South Africa, please check if you required a Visa to visit South Africa - [www.dha.gov.za/index.php/applying-for-sa-visa](http://www.dha.gov.za/index.php/applying-for-sa-visa)

Interested?

1. Apply via MoveOn – the Essex Abroad online system – [click HERE](http://click HERE)
2. Provide basic information including your details and short cover letter explaining your motivations to apply
3. Deadline to apply is 31st January 2018 for Session 1 and 31st May 2018 for Session 2 and full payment is due on 28th February 2018 for Session 1 and 15th July 2018 for Session 2. Please apply as soon as possible as we may close the applications earlier once we recruit sufficient amount of students.

More info?

Contact
stpabroad@essex.ac.uk | 01206 872208 | Essex Abroad @ Square 2
[www.essex.ac.uk/essexabroad](http://www.essex.ac.uk/essexabroad)

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can I take part?

Are you interested in conservation, wildlife protection and research and volunteering in South Africa? Have you got good levels of fitness (you will be undertaking strenuous work in nature including surveying sites in location only reachable by foot)? Are you free during the Easter break in 2018 or in September 2018? Are you a current University of Essex student?

Yes – then you are in! Register [HERE](http://HERE) and we will be in touch.

2. I want to go but I am not sure?

Come to Essex Abroad to chat with us and learn more about the project, itinerary and other useful info.

What is the deadline to apply and to pay?

The deadline to apply is 31st January 2018 for Spring Session and 31st May 2018 for Autumn Session! We encourage all interested students to apply as soon as possible as applications will close once sufficient amount of students are registered.

The deadline to pay the full amount is 29th February 2018 for Spring Session and 15th July 2018 for Autumn Session! We will confirm with you what the exact amount is you have to pay before the deadline. This is because the prices are subject to change due to exchange rate and flight price fluctuations.
3. What will I learn?

You will get an interesting, exciting and valuable experience. You will help to collect vital data to make key management decisions. You will develop skills in conservation, dealing with large animals and working with other like-minded people. You will also build your resilience, experience different culture, give something back, make friends for life, get practical experience and challenge yourself!

Have a look at the placement pack for more info – click HERE.

4. The price for the project looks expensive!

The programme fee is £700 and includes accommodation, 3 meals a day, airport pick up and drop off, excursions, supervision by University staff, orientation, full training. You will also support the UmPhafa reserve which is run by the Action for the Wild Charity and Colchester Zoo.

The flight to Durban is the biggest cost item between £700 – £900. We will be arranging a group booking so rest assured you will get the best flight deal possible!

Other costs include personal expenses and personal kit (around £300). See last page of this document on what to bring – click HERE.

Terms and conditions

1. The Essex Abroad volunteering activities abroad are co-ordinated by the University of Essex and are only available for current enrolled University of Essex students.

2. Essex Abroad works with carefully selected organisations that offer appropriate, safe, ethical and relevant volunteering opportunities.

3. All students taking part in Essex Abroad organised volunteering activities abroad must abide by the University of Essex code of conduct. Students will also need to follow specific code of conduct that the host organisation(s) has in place. This will be provided at the time of arrival to the location.

4. Overseas volunteering programmes may have only a limited number of places available and students are selected based on the mixture of the following criteria: Academic programme, motivations for taking part, level of studies, suitability for the programme and interview.

5. Each student must register on the Essex Abroad application database and provide the required information, with may include personal details, medical and next of kin info, CV, contact details and other details.

6. To ensure that the Essex Abroad volunteering activities abroad run smoothly, we need to use information that you provided us with, such as your name and address, special needs etc. We ensure that appropriate security measures are taken to protect this data. However, this data must be passed to suppliers of the travel arrangements, including transport companies and accommodation providers. We may also supply your details to public authorities such as customs and immigration. When you register on Essex Abroad database for an international activity abroad, you consent to this information being passed to relevant parties.

7. All British Citizens require a Passport to travel outside of the UK. International Passport holders must ensure their Passport allows them to travel to the chosen country and be in possession of
the relevant travel documents or visa required if applicable. Most Countries require your Passport to remain valid for a minimum period after your return date to the UK, this is normally 6 months. It is your own responsibility to ensure you have a valid Passport and visa (if required). We do not accept any responsibility if you cannot travel because you have not complied with any passport, visa or immigration requirements.

8. Insurance:

- You are covered by the University of Essex travel insurance policy. You will be provided a copy at least 1 month before the departure.
- We also recommend buying private travel and health insurance.

9. Overnight Accommodation:

- You may be accommodated in variety of types of accommodation and these may be of different sizes and layouts
- Rooming allocations will be based on maximum occupancy of each apartment as defined by the supplier in the rooming plan
- You will be sharing rooms with others and whenever possible we will endeavour to provide separate rooms for female and male students
- You will be informed about what is included with the accommodation (e.g. breakfast, towel, linen etc.)
- You accept full responsibility for any damages or loss caused by you. All local laws, including those relating to the consumption of alcohol and noise, must be obeyed at all times

10. In the case of any dispute, the Head of Global Mobility will investigate the issues involved and the resulting decision will be provided within 14 days of the receipt of your e-mail. All complaints must be made to Ivan Hutchins, please e-mail: saoadmin@essex.ac.uk. Should you be not happy with the outcome of your complaint, you can appeal using the University of Essex complaint procedures.

11. Essex Abroad cannot take any responsibility for any student who does not adhere to these terms and conditions.

12. Essex Abroad reserves the right to amend these terms and conditions, if deemed necessary.

13. You will need to pay for the programme fee and transport in full before a specified deadline. This deadline is clearly visible in the project sheet and also available upon request from Essex Abroad. Failure to pay before the deadline will result in withdrawal from the volunteering programme.

14. The Essex Abroad volunteering activities abroad will only take place if sufficient number of students apply and pay for the programme fee and transport in full. Essex Abroad reserves the right to cancel the activity should insufficient number of students sign up. When this unlikely event happens, you are entitled to a full refund of the fees you already paid.

15. In order to guarantee your place on the programme, you will need to pay a non-refundable deposit and a full payment before specified deadline(s).

16. We understand that in some circumstances you may not be able to take part in the Essex Abroad volunteering activity abroad once you paid for the programme fee and transport in full. If this is the case, we will investigate your situation and will endeavour to provide you with a refund. You will need to notify us at least 2 months before the planned start of the Essex Abroad volunteering activity abroad. Please note that it may not be possible to offer you a full refund as certain items such as flights, minibus bookings, deposits etc. may not be refundable.
Photos of UmPhafa
View the 2017 video by clicking on the picture below: