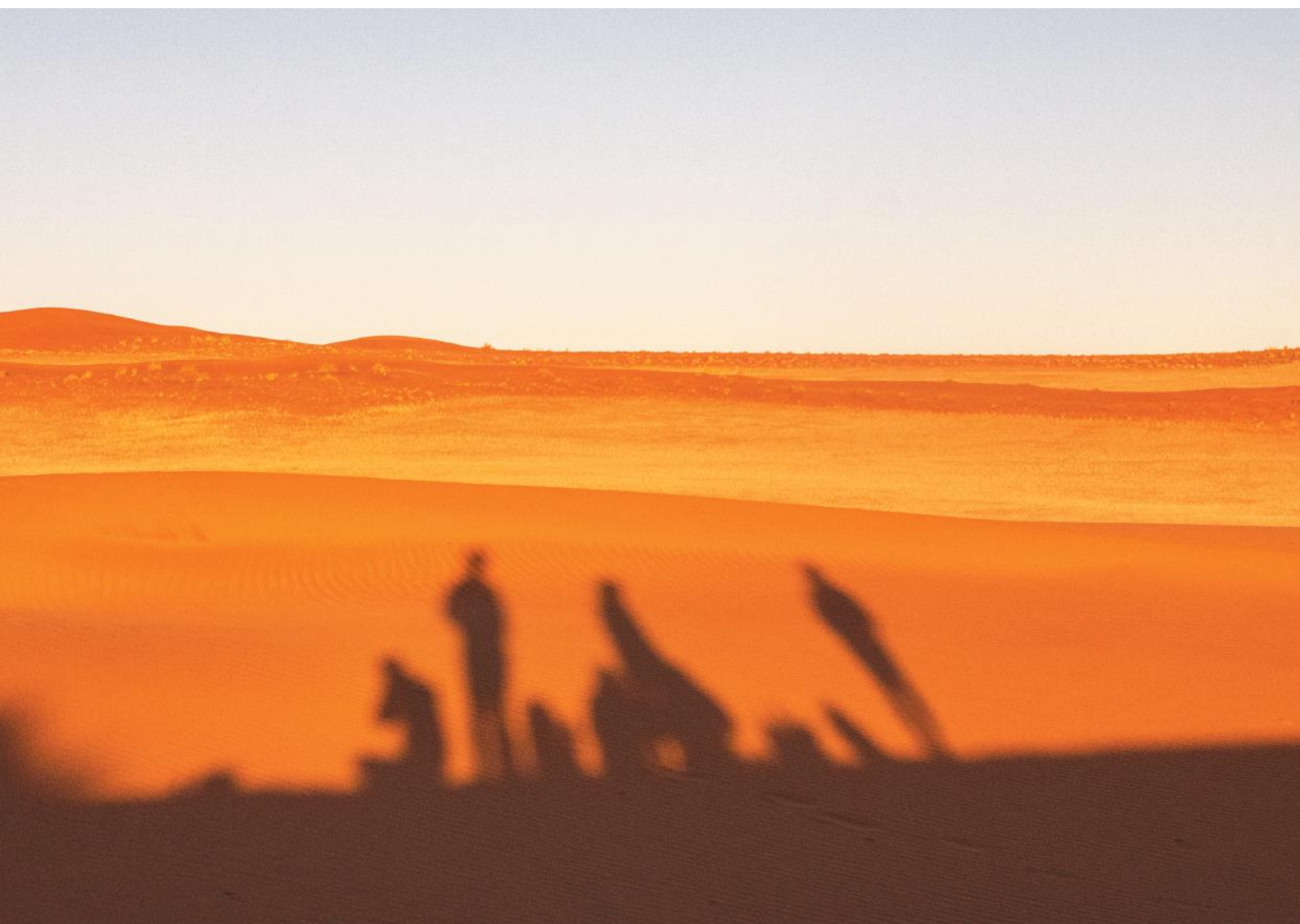




A guide to:

Carnivore Conservation & Research in Kanaan



Carnivore Conservation & Research in Kanaan

Focus: Carnivores
Location: Namibia

Start Date: Every Friday
Arrival & Starting Point: Windhoek

Notable for its iconic red sand dunes and vast, open plains, the Namib Sand Sea has long been a favoured destination for filmmakers, photographers and adventure tourists alike. Towering mountain ranges, camel thorn trees and dramatic skies (particularly around sunrise and sunset) have earned this area of Namibia plenty of fans, but aesthetics aren't all that are on offer here.

Kanaan is a well-loved part of the region, and here a magnificent array of wildlife species roam free: antelope, hyenas and a range of big cats call the area home, making this an excellent location in which to carry out research. Kanaan itself was once used as a film and photography location, but the team at the Namibia Wildlife Sanctuary were keen to take over the plot, acquiring an impressive 33,000 hectares of land in 2014 and working to return it to its natural state. By tearing down structures and fences which had previously been built on the land, the project team have created a greater sense of free movement for Kanaan's native species, in turn creating the perfect grounds in which to carry out vital ecological studies.

This new beginning has allowed the project team to implement fresh methods of conservation management in Kanaan, but the support of volunteers is necessary in order for them to carry out

their work. By taking part on this project, you will be involved in all areas of conservation, including the monitoring of free-ranging carnivores. Together, you will gain an understanding of how wildlife utilises the Kanaan reserve: from tracking their movements to conducting live assessments of the animals up-close, this project has proven to be a fascinating and wild experience for everybody involved!

On top of creating an impressive research site from scratch, the team have created a safe haven in which a number of injured or habituated animals could enjoy more 'natural' surrounds. So, when you're not aiding conservation efforts in the field, you may have the opportunity to spend time at a 7-hectare enclosure, helping to provide a better quality of life for the injured animals resident here.

Whether you're aiding research efforts or helping to look after these victims of human-animal conflict, taking part in this project is certainly a valuable (and memorable) way to holiday - so why not get involved today?





Mapping

Due to the expanse of the land at Kanaan, it takes time to understand all that is needed to be known about the wildlife populations on-site, their habitats, and indeed other important information such as the location of watering holes. The project has worked to develop maps of the region, and you will help to contribute to their ongoing efforts by using a GPS unit to record information such as wildlife observations, notable habitat features and more. Once collected, this data will be processed into up-to-date reserve maps which can be used by the project managers, and in turn will help to guide future decisions.

Capture, Mark, Release

In order to understand more about how the region's wildlife utilise the reserve, indirect monitoring techniques (such as GPS tracking) must be carried out. Techniques such as these are beneficial when it comes to learning about more elusive species, and as a member of the volunteer group you will help to identify areas of regular carnivore activity in order to place trap cages. When species of interest are captured, they will be immobilised and fitted with tracking collars to allow the project team to monitor them continually. The animals are then released while satellite data from the collars allows the team to study them from afar.



Radio Telemetry Tracking

While GPS allows the team to follow the day-to-day movements of collared animals, this information does not reveal other valuable information (such as breeding success, prey selection or health). With this in mind, you will be invited to engage in direct observations of the animals. You will head out into the field, guided by the radio transmitters fitted in each of the collars, in the hopes of finding animals to observe – please note that animal sightings are not guaranteed, but in the instance that you do happen to spot a roaming carnivore, such a moment will be both memorable and unrivalled by other methods of tracking.



Game Counts

Herbivores are an integral part of any ecosystem, but it is important that their numbers and behaviours are carefully managed in order to avoid overgrazing in an otherwise sparse, dry region (such as Kanaan). You will head to one of the project's game count locations either by horse or by car, where you will hope to observe animals such as ostriches, springboks and desert-adapted oryxes, taking note of their numbers and the dynamics between species.





Setting Camera Traps

The use of camera traps allow the project to keep 'additional eyes' on multiple areas of the reserve, 24/7. These devices are set up in areas of interest and are not selective about which animals they capture on-camera. Any movement or activity will trigger the camera to go off, allowing the project team to catch a glimpse of even the most elusive or nocturnal species. You will help to set up cameras at points of interest in the field (such as at watering holes, marking trees or caves), and you may also help to categorise the images captured.

Maintenance

While research is the main focus of this project, it is also important that maintenance and security standards are upheld. Regular anti-poaching patrols will be conducted, and you will also be required to help return the environment to its natural state. Prior to the site being acquired for conservation purposes, parts of the land were used by farmers, who had installed dangerous boundary fences. These fences not only prevented animal mitigation but also killed any animals that had become entangled in them, so it is important that they are removed as to prevent any further deaths or injuries.



Additional Activities

Namibia is well-known for its phenomenal sunsets, and Kanaan's red-desert plains make for the perfect location to capture such a beautiful moment. Whether heading out on a night drive, sleepout or 'sundowner', you will have the opportunity to watch the setting sun paint the sky in dramatic fashion, keeping your eyes peeled for a shooting star or two as the Milky Way comes into clear view.

Elsewhere, you may wish to join your group for a spot of sandboarding: this is a free activity, and provides an added sense of exhilaration to your time at Kanaan! If you don't wish to join in this activity, however, you are welcome to stay at the farmhouse for some well-earned relaxation time.



Itinerary

Day 1

After arriving into Windhoek Airport, you will be collected and transferred to your temporary accommodation at the Namibia Wildlife Sanctuary. Upon arrival, you will have some time to settle in and meet your fellow volunteers before heading to bed – a long drive awaits you the next day, so be sure to get some rest!

Day 2

Your second day on the project will see you transfer to the research site, stopping mid-way on the 7-hour drive for lunch. Upon arrival at Kanaan, you will have the opportunity to explore the site and meet the project coordinators before settling in to your new accommodation.

Day 3-15

Over the next two weeks, you will take part in a range of activities alongside your group, from heading out on game counts to tracking wild carnivores. Each day is sure to be a busy one, and you'll soon learn what it's like to be a part of important conservation efforts!

Day 16

After enjoying breakfast, you will be transferred back to the Namibia Wildlife Sanctuary, stopping off for lunch along the way. Once you arrive at the sanctuary, you will be free to spend the remainder of the evening at leisure.

Day 17

You will be transferred back to Windhoek Airport in time for your flight or to continue your independent travel plans. If, however, you are staying on in Namibia, you may be able to be dropped off at an alternate address in Windhoek (please speak to a member of our travel team).



Accommodation

During your time at Kanaan, you will stay in a beautifully renovated farmhouse. Up to twelve volunteers can be accommodated at the farmhouse, though if your group is larger than this, you may stay in a fixed tent at one of the project's three campsites. These tents are shared on a same-sex, twin basis, while the rooms at the farmhouse are typically shared by three or four members of the same sex, though double rooms may also be available (couples will be accommodated together where possible). Each room has an en-suite bathroom. Electricity can be accessed at the farmhouse, and free Wi-Fi available for all volunteers. Additionally, there is a pool area for you to enjoy, so you can take a dip during your down-time!

If you would like to upgrade your accommodation, you may wish to stay in one of the project's private chalets for an additional cost. Upgrades are dependent on availability, so please speak to a member of our travel team for further information.



Food & Drink

Three meals a day will be provided for you while on the project, with breakfast including cereals and toast and an evening meal consisting of a portion of meat or fish alongside vegetables, pasta, rice or potatoes. Lunches will be provided either at the farmhouse or as packed lunches for when you are active in the field. Please note that any special dietary requirements must be outlined to us in advance of your arrival on the project.

Once per week, you will be treated to a braai night (traditional African barbeque). Braais are often a favourite element of the project for many of our volunteers, providing an excellent opportunity to relax with your group! Elsewhere, a bar can be found onsite, so if you wish to buy yourself any additional snacks or drinks, you will be able to do so.



What's Included

- Accommodation
- 3 meals per day
- All overland transport (including airport transfers)
- Activities on the project site
- English-speaking project leader
- Conservation donation

Not Included

- All flights
- Any vaccinations
- Visas
- Travel insurance
- Soft or alcoholic drinks and extra snacks

Volunteer Reviews

Gaia

"I experienced many unforgettable moments, in particular the cheetah feeding and the night in the desert!"



Jonathan

"My favourite moment that I will never forget is seeing a hyena make a fresh kill!"



Audrey

"My favourite memory was when I first saw the breath-taking oryx running on a sand dune!"





What Next?

Becoming a volunteer on the Carnivore Conservation and Research in Kanaan project is simple, and you can help make a difference to conservation efforts in just a few simple steps...



Visit the website to select your start date and how long you would like to volunteer for.



Secure your place online by paying a deposit of £195. You'll have up to 60 days before your start date to pay your remaining balance.



Prepare for your trip and ask your dedicated travel expert any questions before packing your bags and heading off to Namibia!



Finally, have an incredible time and don't forget to send in or tag us in your photos!

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