



# LILONGWE WILDLIFE TRUST **PLACEMENT PROGRAMME**

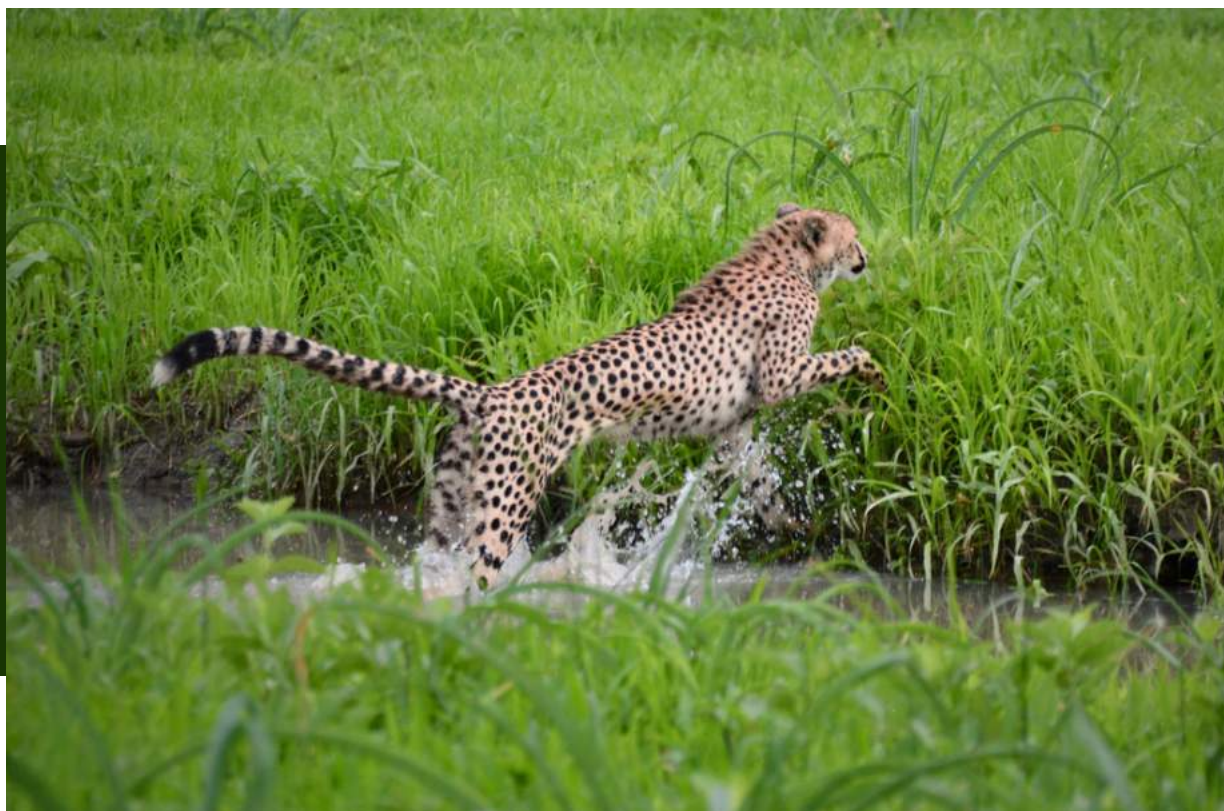
# LILONGWE WILDLIFE TRUST

## LWT VISION

A future in which Malawi's wildlife  
and wild places can thrive.

## LWT MISSION

We save wildlife, campaign for conservation justice, and  
inspire people to value and protect nature in Malawi.





# CONTENTS

- 5** Introduction
- 6** Why join Lilongwe Wildlife Trust?
  - 7** Our 'hands-off' ethos
  - 8** Where does your money go?
- 9** Placements
  - 11** Sanctuary Volunteer
  - 13** Research Volunteer
  - 15** Vet Externship
- 17** Wildlife Veterinary Medicine Course
  - 19** Student Research
- 20** Placement locations
- 22** Prices
- 23** Frequently asked questions
- 24** Ready to apply?







# HELLO!

Lilongwe Wildlife Trust (LWT) started life in 2009 when we opened the doors to what is still the only wildlife sanctuary in Malawi. Most of our first animal residents were rescued from a run-down zoo in the bustling capital city of Lilongwe. Since then we've grown into the country's leading conservation charity with an international reputation for high impact and world-class standards.

We offer a series of placements in everything from sanctuary work to wildlife research and veterinary medicine but our approach is flexible. This means that, where possible, we're happy to tailor what we offer to your skills and passions. So don't worry if you don't see exactly what you want - just put as much information in your application form as possible and we'll get in touch to explore how we can create something special for you!

Please let us know if you have any questions. We hope that you choose to join us in Malawi – the Warm Heart of Africa!

**[placements@lilongwewildlife.org](mailto:placements@lilongwewildlife.org)**



# WHY JOIN LILONGWE WILDLIFE TRUST?

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Malawi has an incredible diversity of wild animals and habitats but is facing huge threats, from deforestation and pollution to poaching and climate change. LWT works at the forefront of many of these challenges, so if you volunteer with us you'll be part of a much bigger picture. Whether you're working with our rescued animals, contributing to a research project or supporting our education team, volunteering with LWT is a chance to make a real difference to conservation in a critical context.

## LEARN FROM THE BEST



We are the only NGO sanctioned by the Government of Malawi to conduct wildlife rescues nationwide and Lilongwe Wildlife Centre is the only sanctuary in the world to hold accreditations from the Pan African Sanctuary Alliance, the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries and the Born Free Foundation PAW scheme. Working with us will give you the chance to learn from a team of local and international experts dedicated to the very best of practice.

## BE PART OF A CONSERVATION REVOLUTION



Malawi is in the grip of a conservation revolution. In recent years, the Government has clamped down on wildlife criminals by passing tough laws and disrupting organised crime syndicates. Greater investment in protected areas has led to a boom in wildlife populations and the return to some areas of the 'Big Five'. This means that Malawi is fast earning a name for itself as an emerging leader in African conservation. Volunteering with us is a chance to be part of this fascinating story.

## EXPERIENCE 'THE WARM HEART OF AFRICA'



From the vast expanse of Lake Malawi - with its white-sand beaches and colourful cichlid fish - to the rolling grasslands of Nyika Plateau and the stunning peaks of Mount Mulanje, Malawi is one of Africa's best-kept travel secrets. Although it may not be as well known as some of its Southern African neighbours, Malawi offers the chance to experience nature in unspoilt areas of true wilderness. It is also renowned as one of the safest countries to travel in Africa.





## OUR 'HANDS- OFF' ETHOS

We do everything possible to give the animals that come into our care a fighting chance of being returned to the wild - where they belong. This means that we operate a hands-off policy with regards to our rehabilitation work, which means no direct contact with animals unless it's required for veterinary or rehabilitation purposes.

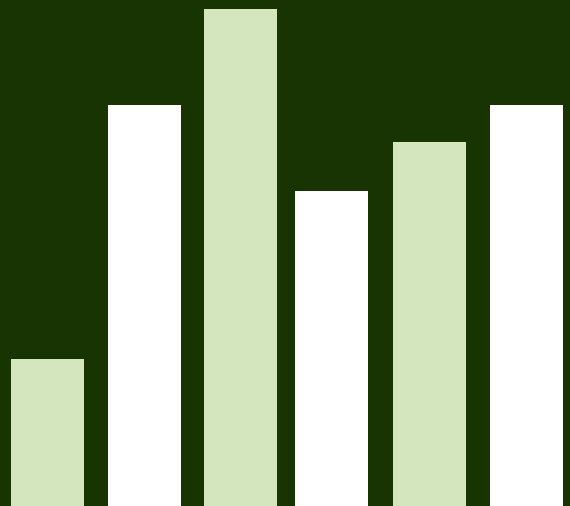
If you volunteer with us, you'll be asked to get involved in real conservation tasks - in other words, work that actually makes a difference to the animals we protect. This might not always be glamorous (be prepared to get dirty!) but it's work that needs to be done. This could involve anything from preparing food and enrichment activities to observing animal behaviours and gathering data. All of our projects tend to be small, which means that your involvement will have more of a direct impact.





## WHERE DOES YOUR MONEY GO?

It's no exaggeration to say that volunteering with us will help to save and change lives. Although many of our overheads are funded through grants from international governments and foundations, almost all of our animal welfare and biodiversity monitoring work is made possible thanks to the donations that are included in our placement fees. That means that your support is helping to fund our various conservation projects, including the sanctuary that keeps our animal residents alive and safe.







**PLACEMENTS**









# SANCTUARY VOLUNTEER

Lilongwe Wildlife Centre (LWC) is Malawi's only wildlife sanctuary - widely reputed as one of the best facilities in Africa for its high standards of animal welfare. The Centre is the only sanctuary in the world to have obtained accreditations from the Pan African Sanctuary Alliance, the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries and the Born Free Foundation PAW scheme.

Every single animal that comes into our care - whether as a result of abuse, illegal activity or human-wildlife conflict - receives a carefully tailored programme of support from our team of experts. Where possible, we aim to rehabilitate and return animals to the wild. Those that cannot be released are cared for in the safety of the sanctuary. Volunteering at the Centre will give you a powerful insight into the life-changing and life-saving work of wildlife rehabilitation.



**DURATION** 2-12 weeks



**LOCATION** Lilongwe Wildlife Centre



**QUALIFICATION REQUIRED** None

## THE WORK

### Wildlife rescue & rehabilitation

Most volunteers choose to spend the majority of their time with the animal care team, where work covers the whole rehabilitation spectrum. Expect to get your hands dirty, work hard and sleep well!

Duties include animal husbandry (cleaning, sanitation, feeding and enrichment), orphan care, vet clinic support, observations, integrations and reintroductions. You'll also get the chance to learn more about specialist areas of work such as enrichment, observation and rehabilitation techniques.





# RESEARCH VOLUNTEER

Malawi's incredible wildlife is facing a number of threats, from deforestation and biodiversity loss to human-wildlife conflict and the illegal trade in products such as ivory and bushmeat.

LWT's research projects are designed to improve conservation knowledge and practice and include issues such as biodiversity monitoring and wildlife management. This means that volunteers not only have the opportunity to spend time out in the field learning new skills but also contribute to research that makes a real difference as our work helps inform, guide and evaluate ongoing conservation actions in Malawi.



**DURATION** 2-12 weeks



**LOCATION** Liwonde National Park & Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve



**QUALIFICATION REQUIRED** None

## THE WORK

Our research projects cover a range of issues and vary based on location. Joining a particular Research Station will give you a chance to partake in various research projects being undertaken there, whether it be radio tracking large carnivores, assisting on camera trap surveys or creating identification kits for elephants. Below are our four main research themes:

- ▶ **Biodiversity monitoring:** based in Liwonde National Park you'll collect data that will enable park management to take informed conservation action for species of special concern (e.g. lions, cheetahs and wild dogs).
- ▶ **Malawi Elephant Research:** this work focuses on identifying the movement corridors of Malawi's largest transboundary elephant population, located in the north of the country, with findings helping to inform cross-border cooperation, law enforcement and mitigation of human-elephant conflict.
- ▶ **Conserving Malawi's Vultures:** this initiative pairs research with on-the-ground conservation action to help fill knowledge gaps on the role Malawi plays in supporting regional vulture movements in Southern and East Africa.
- ▶ **Wildlife rehabilitation and release:** this programme documents the effectiveness of rehabilitation and release projects to inform ongoing wildlife rehabilitation work, behavioural assessments and releases both at LWT and beyond.





# VET EXTERNSHIP

This placement will give you a real insight into sanctuary-based vet work. The specific tasks will vary according to the types of animals we are caring for at any particular time, but you can expect to get involved in a mix of clinical work and wider welfare activities, including enrichment, integrations, observations and animal husbandry.



## DURATION

2-12 weeks



## LOCATION

Lilongwe Wildlife Centre



## QUALIFICATION REQUIRED

For vet students only. Qualified vets and vet nurses are also welcome. For vet students needing to conduct any clinical research please submit your project requirements for review together with your application form.

## THE WORK

This programme is ideal for those looking to gain broad, real-world experience of sanctuary-based vet work that also includes other aspects of animal rehabilitation (see the responsibilities of the **Sanctuary Volunteer** on page 11).

Clinical work varies but can include diagnostics, lab work and procedures. Externs will also be expected to get stuck into the day-to-day care of our animal residents.





# WILDLIFE VETERINARY MEDICINE COURSE

This intensive seven-day course is designed to give you a hands-on introduction to wildlife veterinary medicine. Vet students can count this course towards EMS (Extra Mural Studies) and can combine this with another placement.



## DURATION

Email [placements@lilongwewildlife.org](mailto:placements@lilongwewildlife.org) for forthcoming dates



## LOCATION

Lilongwe Wildlife Centre



## QUALIFICATION REQUIRED

Ideally studying for or holding a vet-related qualification

## COURSE CONTENT

Under the instruction of our veterinary team, you'll be taught through both lectures and wet labs.

You'll have a chance to learn about parasitology, haematology, primate infectious and non-infectious diseases, emergency management, rehabilitation, pharmacology, medication, suture patterns in wildlife, remote capture systems, and key conservation issues.

You'll assist with our annual health monitoring programme for primates, which includes physical exams, patient monitoring, and sample collection and analysis.

You'll also head out to the bush for a one-night field trip.





# STUDENT RESEARCH

Students who are looking to conduct research as part of their BSc or Masters degree, or who wish to conduct their industrial, PTY or professional training overseas can apply to undertake student research. LWT can assist with shaping a research topic, providing access to locations and logistical support, but the research itself needs to be self-directed and you will need to secure your own supervisor. We would encourage you to get in touch and have a chat with our team to explore research ideas as a first step.



**DURATION** 1-12 months



**LOCATION** Various sites



**QUALIFICATION REQUIRED** BSc, MSc, MRes or DVM students

## THE WORK

Your time with us will be directed by your research project. Below are a few examples of research projects students have done with us in the past:

- ▶ Assessment of the release of rehabilitated vervet monkeys (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus rufoviridus*) in Kasungu National Park.
- ▶ Stress and parasitism in translocated vervet monkeys (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*) in Malawi.
- ▶ Factors influencing presence of blue monkeys (*Cercopithecus mitis*) in naturally fragmented Afromontane forest patches of Nyika National Park.
- ▶ Pre-release enrichment strategies to stimulate natural behaviour in common duiker and common genets.
- ▶ Surveillance for African Swine Fever vectors in pig kholas around Kuti Wildlife Reserve.





# LOCATIONS





# LILONGWE WILDLIFE CENTRE

The sanctuary is located within a 180-acre reserve, which is home to wild animals such as antelopes, crocodiles, small carnivores and hyenas and over 100 species of bird. There are 4km of walking trails running through the forest and along the river, and an on-site café which sells a selection of artisanal coffees and food and is a perfect space for a quiet moment of reading or studying. The Centre is just 10 minutes to town with its restaurants, shops and markets if you feel like a change of scene. The team are happy to organise movie nights, talks and nights out.

## ACCOMMODATION

Our accommodation building can host up to 18 people at a time across six bedrooms. It also includes a lounge, kitchen, inside and outside dining spaces, two bathrooms, laundry space, an outdoor deck and garden. The building is located in the middle of our wildlife sanctuary, which means that you'll experience the magic of bush life after a hard day or work – spending evenings by the fire listening to the sounds of the forest.

## MEALS

Meals are cooked by our local chef every day except on Sunday. The menu is vegetarian with a mix of international and local dishes. Let us know if you have other special dietary requirements, and volunteers are welcome to buy in other luxuries or meat if they wish.

# LIWONDE NATIONAL PARK

Liwonde is situated in Malawi's Southern Region, a four-hour drive from Lilongwe. One of Malawi's premiere game viewing sites, Liwonde is home to some of the country's largest elephant and black rhino populations. Situated on the famous Shire River, habitats are varied, from vast floodplains to cathedral mopane woodlands. In recent years Liwonde has been the host of wildlife translocations and reintroductions. It is now the top park in Malawi for carnivore sightings, most notably cheetahs and lions.

## ACCOMMODATION

Our research camp is located on the edge of the Likwenu River, close to the main gate. Placement participants stay in shared rooms. There is a large kitchen and outdoor fire area. Ablutions include flush toilets and hot showers. Power at the research camp is intermittent and often powered by a backup power source, therefore we recommend limiting the number of devices that require charging. Whilst there is no WiFi available, there is network coverage at camp, and our staff will help you to get data for your cellular device so you can contact home.

## MEALS

Three vegetarian meals a day are provided. Cooking and cleaning duties are shared communally. Our team can cater for any dietary requirement that is mentioned prior to arrival.

# OTHER LOCATIONS

There are also opportunities to work at other sites across Malawi, depending on the time of year and needs of the project you are working on.

# PRICES

## SANCTUARY VOLUNTEER RESEARCH VOLUNTEER VET EXTERNSHIP

**2 weeks** £1,370 **3 weeks** £1,775 **4 weeks** £2,235 **5 weeks** £2,575  
**6 weeks** £2,885 **7 weeks** £3,180 **8 weeks** £3,450 **9 weeks** £3,705  
**10 weeks** £3,930 **11 weeks** £4,150 **12 weeks** £4,350

## STUDENT RESEARCH

*for BSc, MRes, MSc and DVM students;  
those working on non-LWT projects must self-fund costs that  
fall out of existing operations (fuel, equipment, etc).*

**1 month** £1,360 **2 months** £1,870 **3 months** £2,380 **4 months** £2,890  
**5 months** £3,400 **6 months** £3,910 **7 months** £4,420 **8 months** £4,930  
**9 months** £5,440 **10 months** £5,950 **11 months** £6,460 **12 months** £6,970

## WILDLIFE VETERINARY MEDICINE COURSE £1,000

### Prices include

- Accommodation
- All meals, unlimited tea and coffee
- Airport transfers (on a Tuesday) and all work-related transport
- Orientation and full support during your stay
- Local SIM card and t-shirt

### Prices exclude

- Flights
- Visas
- Vaccinations
- Excursions, souvenirs, nights out, personal expenses, snacks, etc.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## HOW DO I GET TO YOU?



It's best to fly into Lilongwe (Kamuzu International Airport) and we will pick you up from there. The Wildlife Centre is about a 30 minute drive and those working on our bush projects will most likely stay a night there before moving on. Book your flight online through websites like Flight Centre, or directly with an airline (e.g. Ethiopian Airways). If you are travelling overland get in touch and we can let you know the best way to get here. Arrivals and departures are on Tuesdays.



## WHAT ABOUT VISAS?

British, Australian, Canadian or American Nationals and most EU countries are required to obtain a USD \$50 visitor's permit for 30-day single entry, which is free to extend for up to 90 days. For other nationalities, please check online or with us.



## VACCINATIONS?

Go to [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/destinations/africa/malawi.aspx](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/destinations/africa/malawi.aspx) for the latest travel advice. We require a negative TB test and strongly recommend rabies vaccinations. Malaria prophylaxis (e.g. Doxycycline or Malarone) is compulsory for all volunteers and interns.



## TRAVEL INSURANCE

You must take out travel insurance that covers your placement activities, as well as emergency treatment (including for COVID-related illness), airlift evacuation and repatriation. You will need to send us proof of this insurance before your placement is confirmed.



## WORKING HOURS & FREE TIME

Working hours are dependent on the animals we are looking after at the time and on the level of care they need. Wildlife Centre volunteers will work from 8am till 5pm, but during orphan season feeds may be scheduled during less sociable hours, so occasionally there can be long days and night shifts. However if this is unsuitable for you the team can re-arrange your schedule. Those at our bush projects are likely to start their days earlier with a break in the middle of the day.

Staff and volunteers get one day off a week and a long weekend off every month, which is perfect for a safari or a trip to the lake.

***Please see the volunteer section of our website for more FAQs. If you have any other questions, please email [placements@lilongwewildlife.org](mailto:placements@lilongwewildlife.org)***

# READY TO APPLY?

1

Email **[placements@lilongwewildlife.org](mailto:placements@lilongwewildlife.org)** to express your interest in a placement and ask for an application form. When completing the form, please include as much information as possible about your specific interests, goals and motivations so that we can make sure you get the most out of the experience!

2

We will be in touch to let you know if we have availability and, if so, how to pay your deposit.

3

Once you've confirmed your placement by paying a holding deposit, we will send you a full pack with all the forms and information you'll need to get ready for your stay with us.





[www.lilongwewildlife.org/volunteer](http://www.lilongwewildlife.org/volunteer)