



# Volunteering at N/a'an ku sê Foundation

Marlice van Vuuren, one of Namibia's most well-known conservationists, and her husband Dr Rudie van Vuuren, with the support of long-term friends Chris Heunis and Jan Verburg, started N/a'an ku sê Foundation in 2006 with two aims – to protect and conserve vulnerable African wildlife and to improve the lives of the marginalised San Bushman community.

Several projects are now taking place including our Wildlife Sanctuary and Carnivore Conservation Research Project for African wildlife, as well as the Clever Cubs School and Lifeline Medical Clinic for the San community. N/a'an ku sê Foundation is renown among conservationists worldwide, has received global awards and has even received the support of celebrities such as Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie.



**As a charity, we do not receive any government funding and are solely reliant on generous donations and the time of volunteers to continue our vital work.**

## Importance of our Volunteers

Our Wildlife Sanctuary, Carnivore Conservation Research project, Clever Cubs School and Lifeline Clinic could not function without the hard work, dedication, support and time of our volunteers. In 2012, over 400 volunteers gave thousands of days of their time to support N/a'an ku sê. They were aged from 18 to 72 and came from all over Europe, Australia, South America, South Africa, Singapore, Israel and Canada to name just a few.

With no experience or qualifications necessary, our projects offer people the opportunity to make a lasting and tangible difference to the lives of the vulnerable San community and Namibia's wildlife. Volunteers can stay any length of time from 2 weeks to 3 months.



All funds from our volunteering programme are ploughed back into our projects, enabling the N/a'an ku sê Foundation to grow and become even more successful in achieving our vision of an Africa where humans and wildlife can live and thrive together, and conserving the land, cultures and wildlife of Namibia.

In return our volunteers are provided with a once in a lifetime experience of living and working in the real Africa, meeting a variety of people from different backgrounds as well as gaining a unique opportunity to take a hands on role in conservation.

**We never forget our volunteers and our volunteers never forget  
their time at N/a'an ku sê.**

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We offer two Volunteering Programs:

## 1. WILDLIFE CONSERVATION VOLUNTEER

We provide volunteers with the rare and exciting opportunity to work closely with and actively participate in the conservation of African wildlife. The sanctuary currently provides a safe refuge for orphaned and injured wildlife including a number of lions, leopards, cheetahs, wild dogs, caracals and baboons as well as a host of farmyard animals.

Our Wildlife Conservation Volunteers provide an important resource in caring for and feeding the animals on a daily basis, as well as helping to maintain and develop the sanctuary. During your time at our sanctuary you will feed the animals, take them on walks, go on game counts, and help with any other projects that may come up at the sanctuary.

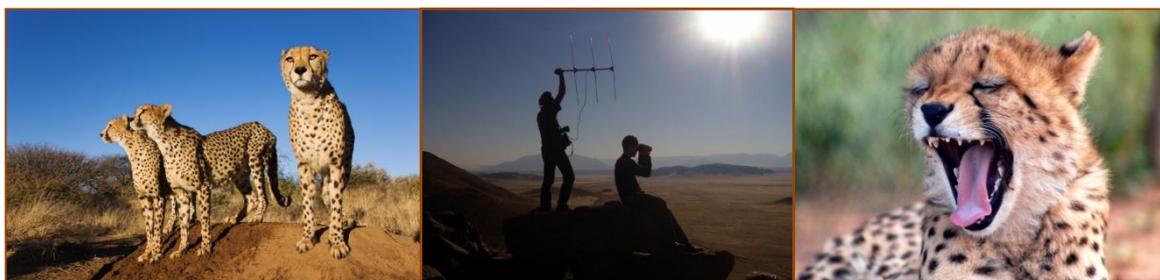


N/a'an ku sê plays a vital role in rescuing and releasing threatened carnivores in Namibia to help reduce human-wildlife conflict. We own and work with several research and release sites across Namibia; Neuras, the NCCC at Solitaire, NamibRand, as well as our wildlife sanctuary just outside of Windhoek. We rescue and relocate animals that come to us through human-wildlife conflicts and mitigate reducing the numbers of which are needlessly shot or killed. We fit each large carnivore with a radio tracking collar and are able to track the movements of every animal we release in order to study its behaviour.



As a Wildlife Conservation Volunteer, you will not only take care of the animals on the farm, but you may have the unique opportunity to take a trip to one of N/a'an ku sê's research and release sites, Neuras and enjoy the spectacular scenery of Namibia's South. You will get involved first hand with all aspects of our research programme including data collection and processing, and carnivore tracking out in the field. This is a very beautiful area of Namibia and you will experience magnificent vistas and a diverse array of unique landscapes as you track the cats across their local habitats which may include red sand dunes, open glass plains, riverines and mountain ranges.

A trip to Neuras can be booked in advance or you may book upon arrival (please note that places are limited and pre-booking is advised).





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N/a'an ku sê plays a vital role in rescuing and releasing threatened cats in Namibia to help reduce human-wildlife conflict. Since 2008 we have rescued and safely re-released over 70 cheetah, leopard and brown hyena. We re-locate carnivores to safe conservation areas in the south of Namibia and fit each cat with a tracking collar so that we can monitor their welfare. You will be based at Neuras, and will visit the NCCC for a day of your trip, you may also visit NamibRand depending on the needs of the research and the carnivores at the time.

### Neuras Wine and Wildlife Estate



Neuras extends southwards from the top of the majestic Naukluft Mountains. Ancient canyons, fascinating geological formations, and five natural fountains make this our primary research site, an unbelievable oasis on the edge of the Namib Desert. Activities here include game counts, checking camera traps, mapping the terrain and tracking leopards and cheetahs in the surrounding areas.

Neuras is also one of the only three wineries in Namibia, annually producing 3,000 bottles of the world's driest wine. Not only will volunteers be helping with N/a'an ku sê's research and tracking activities but may also have the opportunity to assist with the production of Neuras wine.

### Namib Carnivore Conservation Centre ~ Solitaire

As part of your trip to Neuras you will spend a day at the NCCC . Situated at the edge of the Namib Desert, Solitaire is a small settlement near the Namib Naukluft National Park. The surrounding area is sparsely populated and is a common stop-over for tourists. The area consists of open grass plains, speckled with camel thorn trees and other mature trees, rough mountain ranges with stunning mountain features and dry riverbeds.



Here, the N/a'an ku sê Research team re-introduce previously captive-held cheetah into a 500 ha soft-release camp and monitor their adaptation to the environment. Besides tracking and feeding these cheetahs on a daily basis, you may also have the opportunity to visit the world famous Sossusvlei dunes, an opportunity not to be missed!

### NamibRand Nature Reserve

Located at the edge of the Namib Desert, NamibRand Nature Reserve is a visual and biological gemstone. The 224,000ha reserve is home to an incredible diversity of desert and semi-desert dwelling wildlife and plants and borders both the Namib Naukluft National Park and Kulala Wilderness Reserve. Habitats on the reserve include red sand dunes, rough mountain chains and inselbergs (koppies), open grasslands and riverines. Here the tracking activities involve a lot of hiking which will give you the opportunity to take in this unique environment.



**If you are interested in ONLY doing the research part of our Wildlife Conservation volunteering program, please contact us directly at [volunteer@naankuse.com](mailto:volunteer@naankuse.com).**

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## 2. MEDICAL VOLUNTEER

Our clinic provides free healthcare to over 3,500 people each year, the majority of whom are San. We examine and treat patients at the clinic and transport those who need hospital treatment to the hospital, over 120km away. Our patients live in Epukiro (or Pos 3 as it's commonly known) and come from the surrounding villages and settlements who travel around 50-100km to attend our free clinic.



The San are considered to be the oldest culture in the world and are traditionally hunter gatherers. Nowadays the San live in extreme poverty and many suffer from malnutrition, disease, discrimination and abuse. N/a'an ku sê is committed to improving the lives of the San community through education, healthcare and better living conditions. Providing free and accessible primary healthcare to this community really is a lifeline to many.

At our primary healthcare clinic we consult with each patient, examine and assess their ailments, establish a diagnosis and treat accordingly by prescribing medication, recommending follow up monitoring or making a hospital referral and transporting them to hospital. 40% of all our patients are children.



Our Doctor carries out monthly outreach work including Pos 10 Goeie Hoop Primary School (Good Hope). We also run a Community Health Worker project which consists in encouraging people to take responsibility for their own lives and teaching remote communities how to improve their own health by looking out for basic symptoms and treating them accordingly. Here we are able to treat other people without accessible medical care thereby expanding our health provision to those who need it most.

Whether you have no medical experience or you have worked in the field for 40 years - the activities of our Medical Volunteer program vary and will be tailored to each person depending on prior experience. Volunteers will participate in and assist our Doctor and Nurse with the running of the Lifeline Clinic and help provide primary healthcare to the local community.

You will provide hands on support at the clinic, participating in observations, running reception and helping in the dispensary. You will deal closely with patients from the local San community, learn more about their way of life and give care to patients living in extreme poverty at the clinic's remote location. If you are very experienced you could perhaps take on a project of your own.

Depending on the day you arrive, you may also have the opportunity to work with the animals of Africa and care for them if you chose to combine your time with our wildlife volunteering program.





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## CLEVER CUBS SCHOOL

As a Wildlife Conservation Volunteer, or if you are a Medical Volunteer based on the Wildlife Sanctuary for a few days before you transfer to our project in Epukiro, it is also possible to spend some time at our Clever Cubs School.

This Pre-School provides vital free education to the San Bushman children whose parents work on the farm and who would otherwise not have access to education. The number of children attending changes frequently with around 25, aged between 1 and 7 currently attending.



The school opened in November 2009 providing a full curriculum including English, Maths, Art & Crafts, Sports and Environmental Studies to our children and toddlers. As well as learning how to read and write, the children enjoy dancing, singing and playing. We also provide them with a main meal at lunchtime, which for many of them, is the only substantial meal they receive each day. We are also working to enroll as many of the older children as possible into a mainstream school in Windhoek.

The children are extremely friendly and love meeting new people. Their enthusiasm is infectious and the enjoyment from seeing their smiling faces every day is very rewarding. If you have planning skills, initiative and creativity – please bring them with you!

If you would like the opportunity to help at the Clever Cubs School please let us know in advance where possible.

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## Map of Projects



## Accommodation and Facilities

### Accommodation and Food for the Wildlife Conservation Volunteer Program

We have two options of accommodation at the Wildlife Sanctuary; volunteer rooms with up to three people (same gender) sharing each room, or large tents with a living and bedroom area to be shared by up to two people (same gender or a couple). The rooms are basic but our single beds are comfortable with bedding provided (duvets and pillows). Showers and toilet facilities are communal and hot water is supplied by solar energy therefore sometimes restricted. Power sockets for electrical items are available in communal areas.

Three meals are provided on a help yourself basis - Breakfast includes toast and cereal; Lunch includes pasta, wraps, burgers or stirfry; and Evening Dinners include meat, fish and vegetables with rice, potatoes and pasta. On weekends we often have a braai (barbecue). Please advise us of any special dietary requirements prior to arrival at the project.

The facilities at our release sites are very similar to the ones provided at the sanctuary, with accommodation being either in guesthouse rooms or in large tents. You will receive three meals a



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day, which will either be provided or you may be asked to assist the staff in the preparation together with other volunteers and the Research Co-ordinator.

## Accommodation and Food for the Medical Volunteer Program

Whilst volunteering at the Lifeline Clinic in Epukiro you will stay in the volunteer house along with the resident Doctor and Nurse. The modern bungalow has a kitchen, two bathrooms, living room and bedrooms with single beds and bedding provided. Depending on volunteer numbers, you may be in a room to yourself or with one other person of the same gender. You will receive three meals each day which are prepared between everyone living at the house - volunteers and doctors. The clinic can only accommodate a maximum number of four volunteers at any given time so the living situation is more like a house share or family environment.

## Fun activities and free time

During your time at the Wildlife Sanctuary, you may enjoy activities such as a nature walk across the farm, swimming in our pool or waterfall (weather dependant), playing football or paintball, followed by a sunset downer and braai (barbeque). You will also have the opportunity to go into Windhoek on Sundays or go for lunch or even an overnight stay at our luxury lodge. Stargazing, movie nights, nature walks and sleep outs are other common activities. At Neuras you may enjoy nature walks, swimming in the nearby water pools, sundowners and a braai. At the Lifeline Clinic you may spend some of your free time visiting the local San Bushman village, playing football with the local children or visiting nearby villages to learn more about the San community.



## Book your trip now!

*"My experience at N/a'an ku sê was one of a life time. Both the Lifeline Clinic and the wildlife experience is something I will talk about forever. I think it is important for volunteers to share with the rest of the world, to raise awareness of our beautiful planet and the beautiful people who devote their lives to humanity and ecology."*

**Kathryn Reid, Canada - volunteer**

*"For me N/a'an ku sê is my second home, I've been there three times now and every time it just gets better. The baboons are the main reason I love it so much, the interaction you get with them is incredible!"*

*The experiences I've had have been unforgettable, watching Caitlin the leopard run free will stay with me forever. It has been an absolute privilege to spend so much time working somewhere that cares so greatly about the lives of these amazing animals and working with some brilliant people."*

**Caroline Walkley, England – volunteer**



## Volunteering at N/a'an ku sê Foundation

N/a'an ku sê is one of those places where some people just find themselves. They find their family, their friends, their home and their future here. Many staff members were once volunteers who couldn't quite bring themselves to leave. Many volunteers come back time after time to be together with the animals and people they fell in love with.

Visit our Facebook page and talk to past and future volunteers – [www.facebook.com/naankuse](http://www.facebook.com/naankuse)

Watch videos of our work on our You Tube page – [www.youtube.com/naankuse1](http://www.youtube.com/naankuse1)

Book your trip of a lifetime or find out more information - email [volunteer@naankuse.com](mailto:volunteer@naankuse.com)

We look forward to welcoming you and working with you to make a difference to African conservation and people. Thank you!

