

South Africa
2010

YEBO

www.yeboyes.org

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Overview

We aim to work with children who have emotional and social disadvantages through primate-based communication activities. The aim of project is to provide an educational and therapeutic benefit to children who have had illness and trauma in their lives, whilst supporting the awareness and education of primate conservation.

The aim is to support children to express their feelings through the primate-based activities by allowing them to relate human behaviour, feelings and life experiences to that of primates (our closest relatives) Although we wish to work with other animals to support children emotionally and educationally, we have chosen chimpanzees to front the projects. This was with the knowledge that they are our closest living relative, and that they display many feelings, expressions, behaviour and intelligence that are so close to humans. The effects that rescued chimpanzees may have when coming to a sanctuary emotionally and physically could be related at maybe a lower level in children who may have experienced some form of abuse and illness/ trauma in their lives. Especially focusing on the emotional side of the behaviour. When working with the children volunteers will be getting involved hands on in different types of communication activities.

Animal assisted therapy is the name that has been given to activities associated with contact and observation of being around animals to provide a therapeutic experience. It aims to give children confidence, build self esteem and allow children to build social and more interactive relationships with their peers and carers. Some research has been done on the therapeutic benefits between animal and child human-interaction. But little data has been collected on this. We are not qualified in animal assisted therapy, but as this is to be considered a large aim to Yebo's work, we aim to begin to collect research and more knowledge on this subject. Activities may be incorporated into the project through helping to feed animals or observe chimpanzees and have contact with animals that are appropriate for this kind of work. This would be governed by the individual sanctuaries and keepers to ensure safety to children and volunteers. All volunteers must comply with safety guidelines set at the sanctuary and should by no means enter an enclosure/home of any animal. A lot of research on animal assisted therapy suggests that this is quite a controversial subject as the animals interests are not a concern, and the attentions and benefits are given to the children that the animals are working with. As one of Yebo's main aims is to raise awareness and support primate and animal conservation through this work then this is something that we wish to achieve differently, with the animals needs being put first alongside that of the children.

Letaba school

Pietersburg

Tzaneen

Phalaborwa

Chimp Eden

Nelspruit

Pretoria

Witbank

Middelburg

Johannesburg

Boksburg

Betnal

Ermelo

Mbabane

Potchefstroom

Parys

Standerton

Orkney

Kroonstad

Newcastle

Vryheid

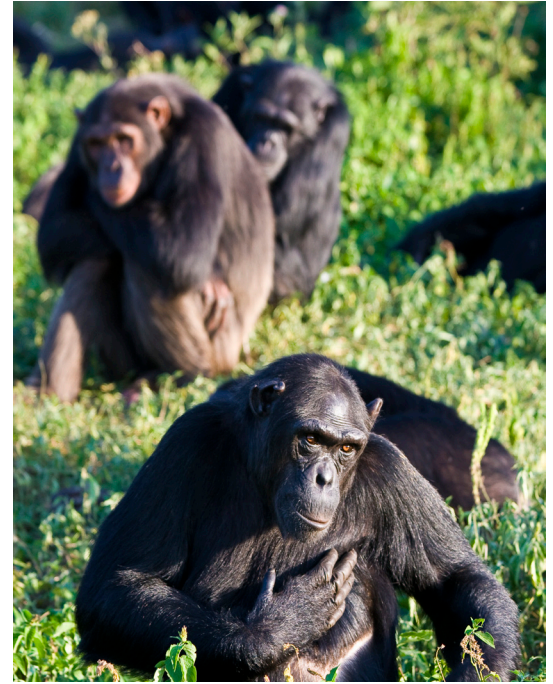


Project focus

Set on a 1000 hectare game reserve, JGI Chimpanzee Eden is a home to chimpanzees that have been misplaced from their natural habitat. The world renowned Jane Goodall Institute has made this tranquil venue their South African sanctuary and has committed itself to the rescue and care take of chimpanzees in need of refuge.

Being the 1st and only chimpanzee sanctuary in South Africa, this venue will be able to bring the world of chimpanzees closer to humanity through education, tourism and modern technology. Entering the reserve, a mere 15 km from the bustling city of Nelspruit, visitors can expect to be captivated by the beautiful bush surroundings with most of the natural game species roaming the reserve.

Yebo volunteers will be visiting chimpanzee eden to learn about the behaviour and similarities between humans and chimpanzees.



Based about 2 hours drive from Tzaneen, Daktari animal orphanage aims to educate and inspire children to care for their environment through the medium of a wildlife orphanage.

It is an organisation of people who care, not only for animals and nature, but also for those less fortunate than themselves.

Daktari is a wildlife orphanage which uses orphaned wild animals as an education medium. Volunteers and staff supplement the school curriculum by giving a hands-on education, in existing school subjects, and at the same time provide an environmental experience.

Yebo volunteers will be aiming to support the children from Letaba school by organising and taking children to visit the animals, allowing them to have hands-on contact with African wildlife

Project focus

Letaba special needs school is home to over 200 children, all with either a physical disability and/or behavioural disabilities. Many of the children have great knowledge about their disability and are very able to make their own decisions and complete what is considered to be a 'normal' standard of education.

The teachers say that some of these children and young people do not 'need' to be here and society are not willing to accept them into their communities.

Many of the children do have severe disabilities and behavioural and communication problems. Spending any amount of time at the school will tell you that they are beyond being under-funded with the support that is given to the children, that, in more westernised countries would in no way be an acceptable standard. Walking into the school you will find children everywhere, some in wheelchairs, others on the floor, some on crutches and others whizzing along in their wheelchairs with 3 other children hanging on anywhere they can find!

The children here are very supportive of each other and when one is hurt or upset, the others will flock to comfort and care for them.

Yebo volunteers are looking to support the children with hands on primate-based communication and creative activities, involving activities such as art, music and drama as well as hands on/ observing contact with primates and animals.



The teachers at Letaba work hard to support the children in their care. It became apparent when working with them in 2009 that the support they were asking for was for more knowledge on subjects such as abuse, bereavement and communication to children with disabilities. The teachers speak about how many of the children have spoken briefly about how they have witnessed murders of family members but then will carry on as if nothing has happened. The teachers also know about abuse and neglect that has happened at home that, again, they would like support in. They spoke about how they 'do not know' how to communicate with the children to enable them to give them the right support.

Information

Food

All food provided on the project will be vegetarian or meat. We will be purchasing our own food from the local town Tzaneen and will be cooking on site. If you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies then please contact a member of the Yebo team so we can discuss your needs.

Food is also available to buy near by at the volunteers own cost if they wish to do so.

Accommodation

The accommodation will be a shared dormitory, with just 5 volunteers. There are toilets and showers inside the rooms and a fridge and gas cooker.

The accomodation does have electricity and the South African wall sockets will need an adaptor for all appliances.

Phone and internet

Mobile phones/sim cards can be purchased locally at low cost, all the staff on site will have mobile phones with them 24 hours a day should family members/friends need to contact a volunteer urgently. Internet access is available at a local hotel. Please note that bringing a laptop computer is at the volunteers own risk. It is advised to carry your valuables in a backpack in the day time.

Insurance

Every volunteer **MUST** arrange personal insurance for the duration of the trip. Make sure you check with your chosen insurer what you are covered for on your policy and look for any loop holes. We recommend Campbell & Irvine for comprehensive cover, but you are free to choose whomever you wish.

Campbell and Irvine Ltd
Tel: 020 7937 6981
Fax: 020 7938 2250

Visa

British nationals need to have a visa to enter South Africa This can be obtained from the South African High Commission in London, or at the International airport in Johannesburg. You will automatically be given a 3 month tourist visa on entry into the country at the airport and you must have proof of your return flight. If you are not a British citizen you must contact your nearest South African embassy to obtain the relevant visa requirements as you may be turned away on arrival to South Africa.

Safety

Volunteers are required to pay attention to safety instructions during this time and not wander around alone, especially at night and in towns. Volunteers will be briefed about safety regulations during the project.

Volunteers are also required to adhere to safety regulations when at sanctuaries and children's homes. Working with primates and children can be both fascinating and rewarding at the same time, but you should remember that many of the primates you will encounter are wild animals and may have had a traumatic experience. Any contact with them should be supervised by qualified sanctuary staff for your own safety. Volunteers will be briefed about this at the start of the trip, but you need to be aware that you must not get too close (if it's not deemed safe to) or aggravate primates in any way. Primates – no matter how small – can be extremely aggressive if threatened. The children that we are working with may have illness such as HIV. Volunteers must practise normal precautions when working with children. It is advised that volunteers bring alcohol gel and baby wipes when working with children. Giving support to children who have suffered traumas or illness can be rewarding and an amazing experience, but volunteers must remember that the children we are working with may be extremely vulnerable, and volunteers must be sensitive and respectful of this when working with them. Again all volunteers will be briefed on safety precautions.



Information

Volunteers will not be picked up from the airport. You will need to take the shuttle bus to the Pretoria bus station and catch the Translux bus to Tzaneen. Volunteers are advised to book their Translux bus ticket beforehand to avoid disappointment. You can visit their website <http://www.translux.co.za/> or contact another booking agent if you have problems. <http://www.southafrica.to/transport/Busses/Translux-bus/Translux-bus-bookings.php5>. The bus journey takes roughly 5 hours. Volunteers will be picked up from Tzaneen bus station free of charge which is roughly 30 minutes drive from our accommodation.

If you would rather fly internally then you may fly to either 1 of 3 airports Phalaborwa, Nelspruit or hoedspruit. We can then arrange for you to be picked up from the airport at your own costs (usually around £50).

Johannesberg airport contact information;

Information desk:
+27 11 921 6262

Flight information:
Tel: 086 72 77 888

Administrative switchboard:
Tel: +27 (0)11 921 6911
Fax: +27 (0)11 921 6478
e-Mail: webmaster@acsa.co.za

Airport address:
Private Bag X1
O.R. Tambo International
Airport
1627

Things to bring

- T-shirts and comfortable trousers (jeans etc)
- Long trousers and long sleeved tops for use at night & breathable socks
- Shorts & swimming suit
- Lightweight rain jacket and trousers
- Waterproof shoes/boots e.g. gortex shoes or equivalent
- Backpack
- Camera
- Lightweight sleeping bag
- Binoculars & Sun hat
- Wildlife-watching guide
- Mobile Phone (It is possible to purchase local sim cards)
- Flip flops
- Moneybelt
- Water bottle
- String laundry bag
- Mosquito repellent
- Mosquito net
- Anti-bacteria towel (name yours!)
- Passport copies & insurance document copies
- Toothbrush and washbag
- A good book
- Spare batteries & spare wallet

Keep a photocopy of your flight details incase they are required

Please bring copies of your insurance documents and a copy of your passport with you.

General conduct

The area we will be staying in is fairly divided between two cultures. It is not uncommon for you to hear Africans people talk about 'the blacks' and for local people to refer to Africans as 'the whites' Although this is felt as offensive and morally wrong in the UK, it is disrespectful to challenge any Africans people for this, and could cause problems for you.

The African culture could be seen by people from the UK as harsh and derogatory, but however difficult it is to listen to, it is something you will have to accept as normal conduct. As is talking about wildlife in front of them. Many farmers in the local area will shoot local wildlife, (such as monkeys) that come in contact with their crops. Again, you will find it is not unusual for them to laugh when you tell them you are working towards primate conservation, which again is something you will have to ignore!

The other local culture is Zulu and Shangaan, who live alongside the African culture. The local people are warm, welcoming and are very friendly. Do not be surprised if you are offered dinner at their homes. They often ask for money, although if you do want to give something, it is advised to buy them a gift rather than give money.

Personal costs

Although basic meals and accommodation fees are included in the price, you will need to have spending money for daily costs such as drinks other than water, souvenirs (eco-friendly), other tourist attractions etc. Some volunteers may wish to go out for dinner.

Money

The currency in South Africa is Rand. We recommend that you bring a visa debit or credit card. Cash machines are available near by and we do not recommend that you carry a large amount of cash on you. You will have access to the cash machines daily and most places will allow you to pay by card. You may wish to tell your bank that you will be travelling as they will often block your cards if international transactions are made unexpectedly.



Information

All information in this section is generic in nature. The Yebo team cannot offer medical advice.

However YOU MUST check with your GP or Travel Nurse for advice about the vaccinations/health precautions you should take and inform them of the countries you wish to visit. If you have any existing medical conditions or dietary requirements, please contact a member of the Yebo team if you are concerned about managing your condition whilst away. We strongly recommend that your travel insurance includes comprehensive medical cover. Medical facilities, including ambulance services, outside major cities are very limited, and your insurance should cover you for the possibility of medical repatriation. You should also check any exclusions, and that your policy covers you for all the activities you want to undertake. All Yebo staff are first-aid trained.

We recommend, as a precaution, that every individual carries their own medical first-aid kit. You should consider packing the following items:

- Antibacterial ointment
- Antifungal cream e.g. canesten
- Antidiarrhoeal drugs
- Antihistamins
- Antimalarial pills
- Oral rehydration salts
- Paracetamol/aspirin/ibuprofen
- Scissors
- Safety pins
- Tweezers
- Pocket knife
- Sterile needles/syringes
- Alcohol gel and wipes
- Antibacterial wipes/baby wipes

General vaccinations

Please check your immunisation status with your GP or travel nurse. Keeping up-to-date with Tetanus, polio, diphtheria, Hepatitis A is wise – but ask for professional advice about what vaccinations are suitable for South Africa.

Rabies

It is generally recommended to be vaccinated against rabies if you are likely to come into any contact with mammals. Rabies vaccinations buy you time if you are bitten by a rabid animal.

Malaria

The risk of Malaria in many parts of South Africa is considerable and you are advised to take precautions throughout the project. For more information please visit <http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/destinations/uganda.htm> - and see your GP for further advice on what anti-malaria medications are suitable for you. Tzaneen is not considered a high risk area

HIV

You should exercise normal precautions to avoid exposure to HIV/AIDS, which is prevalent across Africa.

Bilharzia

Bilharzia is transmitted through certain snails in fresh water, when bathing. As a precaution, we ask that you don't go swimming/paddling in water without consulting a member of staff to see whether the water is a potential risk of the disease. Bilharzia is common in most water sources in Africa, even in some places advertised as "Bilharzia free".

Protection from the sun

It is advisable to bring sun screen with you - the African sun is a lot stronger than in the UK so please be mindful of this when packing. Bring a suitable factor of cream for your skin type and other precautions such as long tops to cover up with/sun hats etc.

Contacting us

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