

# Coastal Birds Encounter Programme



Volunteering  
Factsheet



## About

This conservation project was established in 1968. It is a non-profit organisation whose primary objective is to reverse the decline of seabird populations. This is done through the rescue, rehabilitation and release of ill, injured, abandoned and oiled seabirds – especially endangered seabirds, such as the African Penguin. For over 50 years, the project has treated more than 95 000 seabirds. Independent research confirms that these oil spill response actions alone have increased the African Penguin population by 19%. In a non-spill year, up to 2 500 seabirds are treated, of which approximately 1 500 are African Penguins.

The project is situated on the banks of a natural wetland reserve in a residential neighbourhood that is approximately 20km from Cape Town.





## What will you do?

Duties are divided amongst all volunteers and everybody assists in each different area during the week. Daily duties are assigned based on the volunteer's experience.

Here is an outline of the volunteer training schedule:

### Week 1/2 - Basic skills

- Food Preparation
- Laundry
- Equipment cleaning
- Aviary (Flying birds) - Cleaning, routine and food preparation
- Home pen - Cleaning, routine and food preparation

### Week 2/3 - Intermediate skills

- Flying bird handling
- Flying bird tubing once signed off on handling
- African Penguin handling

### Week 5 onwards - Advanced skills

- African Penguin feeding
- African Penguin tubing
- Supervision of Food Preparation
- Supervision of Aviary/REHAB

Once you have trained a new skill, it is essential to practice before being signed off.

An official trainer will approve a volunteer's progress once they believe that competence has been demonstrated, and are properly prepared to advance to the next skill.

Please keep in mind that if it is felt that a volunteer is not ready to progress, training will continue on the skill until it is mastered.

## What to wear?

- Walking shoes/boots or trainers for working outside
- Crocs for working inside the Rehabilitation Centre. These are provided should a volunteer not have a pair.
- Gumboots must be worn for days when working with the high pressure hose in the cleaning station.
- Working clothes that will get dirty
- A free volunteer t-shirt is provided
- Personal protective gear depending on the task (provided at the project)
- Please note that strap tops, tank tops and short shorts are not permitted, as these clothing types are not suitable for conducting volunteering work

## Accommodation and meals

- You can book accommodation with EC Cape Town or arrange your own accommodation close to the project.

## What you need to know

- This is a community-based project working mainly with sea birds in Cape Town.

## Minimum age

- 18

## Pre-requisites

- English Level: B1 – Intermediate to B2 – Upper Intermediate

## Skills/personality traits required

Be aware that this is not for the faint-hearted. The birds are wild and will bite at any opportunity. Learning how to work with birds is a bit like riding a bike: the more you practice, the better you become. Potential volunteers should, therefore, know that commitment is key to learning how to handle and feed birds.

### Volunteers also need to be

- Physically fit and able to stand for a full shift
- Comfortable with getting dirty
- Willing to work in all weather conditions, frequently outside
- Able to work in a team, as well as independently
- Able to follow Standard Operating Procedures
- Reliable and accountable
- Compassionate and caring, with a love for seabirds

## Application

- Complete the application form.

## Arrival

- Arrival at Cape Town International Airport
- Arrival on any day

## Which transfers are included?

- An arrival airport transfer is included when accommodation is booked with EC Cape Town.



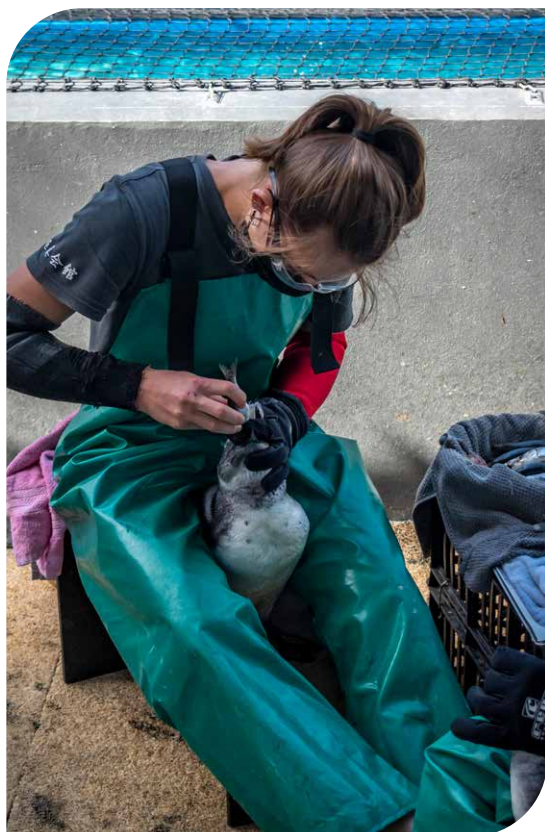


## What to bring?

- Comfortable clothes that can get dirty
- A sleeved shirt (like a t-shirt) is required while working
- We advise that you wear quick-drying, long trousers,  $\frac{3}{4}$  trousers or leggings under your oilskins, especially if you are going to be here over the summer
- Protective clothing like oilskins, boots and gloves will be provided, unless you prefer to work with your own gear
- Some volunteers prefer to wear Crocs rather than boots while working in some areas around the centre. You are welcome to bring your own Crocs if you prefer, as long as they are a dark colour like black, navy or dark grey
- Pairs of socks (for when wearing boots)
- Gumboots (recommended)
- For the winter months, you are advised to bring some warm clothes as the early mornings and late evenings can be very cold
- Sunscreen is an absolute must at any time of the year, along with a hat when working outside
- Make sure to pack a long sleeve sweater/ fleece and waterproof jacket regardless of the season
- Bring a lunch box
- If you are bringing your mobile phone and would like to take advantage of cheaper local call rates in South Africa, you can purchase a South African SIM card and airtime vouchers. Please remember to unlock your phone before you leave home and do not forget your SIM unblocking PIN code

## Vaccinations

- Have an up-to-date tetanus vaccination.
- Consult your local doctor/travel clinic.



## Where is the project based?

- **Country:** South Africa
- **Region:** Cape Town

## Working days and hours?

- **Minimum duration:** 6 weeks
- **Maximum duration:** None
- A normal working day is from 08:00 to 17:30\*
- This project is open all year round

\* Some days may require volunteers to assist until 18:30, so your willingness to go the extra mile during the busy times will be crucial.

## Costs?

- Placement fee: **€400** (non-refundable)
- Price per week: **€70** - 6 week programme
- Extra week: **€65**

## Probation?

- All volunteers are subject to a two-week probation period.

## Sick days?

- The project must be notified by 08:00 if you are going to be absent due to illness.

## What is included?

- Project placement and all correspondence with the project
- Arrival orientation
- Support services from both the project and EC Cape Town
- 24/7 assistance on EC Cape Town's emergency phone for the duration of your stay



## What is excluded?

- Accommodation and meals
- Visa application fees
- Travel insurance (available at €22 per week if booked with EC)
- Flights
- Spending money
- Local transport
- Arrival and departure transfers when booking accommodation privately

## Terms and conditions

- Standard EC Terms and Conditions apply.

