



KENYA BIRD OF PREY TRUST



Information for prospective Volunteers and Interns

ABOUT THE KENYA BIRD OF PREY TRUST

The Kenya Bird of Prey Trust (KBoPT) is a registered charitable organisation whose mission is to rescue and rehabilitate injured raptors from the wild and release them back into safe and secure areas, once we ensure that they are fit and strong enough to survive. The Trust also devotes a considerable amount of time and energy raising awareness by educating Kenyans on the benefits of raptor conservation, working with local communities to protect species and habitats, and conducting relevant research on raptors throughout the country. The Trust has a main centre and a partner organisation:

The Naivasha Raptor Centre (NRC), located within the Kilimandego Sanctuary on the shores of Lake Naivasha, serves as the main operations base, where injured birds brought in for treatment and rehabilitation, taking their first steps toward recovery and eventual release. NRC is open to visitors (private and school groups), offering an opportunity to learn about raptor conservation firsthand. It is also where all of our volunteers are initially housed and undergo training.



View of the sanctuary towards the lake

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE AT THE NAIVASHA RAPTOR CENTRE

Volunteers are typically housed at the NRC for the duration of their stay, which lasts between 2 and 12 weeks. No prior experience is required—just an interest in raptors and a love for travel. This is a unique opportunity to immerse yourself in Kenya's wildlife conservation efforts while experiencing the country's stunning natural beauty. Volunteer placements are open to everyone aged 18 and over. During your stay, you'll have the opportunity to work at the NRC and explore the diverse landscapes of the Rift Valley and beyond.

INTERNSHIP AT THE NAIVASHA RAPTOR CENTRE

Longer stays or internships (lasting beyond 12 weeks) are ideal for individuals who are considering a career in conservation and already have a background in science, research, veterinary care, or rehabilitation.

These extended placements, typically ranging from 2 to 6 months, offer increased responsibility. Interns will learn research and wildlife husbandry techniques from our experienced staff and vets, join or design research projects, and actively participate in hands-on activities such as raptor rescue, trapping, banding, and the preparation of research reports and publications. Completing a longer-term position with the KBoPT will not only enhance your CV but also provide you with valuable skills to pursue a career in conservation and wildlife management.

CAPACITY LIMITATIONS

Due to the intensive nature of volunteering and interning at KBoPT, we limit the number of placements to a maximum of 6 at any given time.



THE ROLE OF A VOLUNTEER

Volunteers at NRC have a unique opportunity to experience wild Kenya like never before. You'll gain firsthand insight into the inner workings of a conservation organisation, with one of the core activities being the rescue, rehabilitation and eventual release of injured wild raptors. In addition to assisting with the daily tasks necessary for these efforts, volunteers will also have the chance to participate in ongoing research projects in the Central Rift Valley.

Volunteers are involved with all aspects of the trust's work at NRC and receive training in essential field techniques, including rescue, rehabilitation and research methods. The majority of your time will be spent at the Naivasha centre, where you'll care for recuperating birds, help maintain and improve our facilities, interact with guests and school groups, and learn basic falconry techniques as part of the rehabilitation process.



THE ROLE OF AN INTERN

Interns have the opportunity to participate in all of the activities and tasks available to volunteers, but with more intensive training focused on advancing a career in conservation. Interns work closely with permanent staff members and have the chance to design and implement their own research projects, as well as compile their own reports and research publications. This deeper involvement provides invaluable skills and experience for those pursuing a career in wildlife conservation.



RESPONSIBILITIES OF VOLUNTEERS AND INTERNS

Both volunteers and interns will be involved with the following:

- Basic training in rehabilitation-oriented falconry techniques
- Daily maintenance of birds, their enclosures, and trust facilities
- Education programmes at the trust and within local communities
- Local research projects in the Central Rift Valley
- Trapping and banding of raptors under supervision of permanent staff
- Boat excursions on Lake Naivasha for African Fish Eagle, with optional photography courses
- Collaborating with local communities and authorities to achieve conservation objectives
- Releasing birds back into the wild using soft-release (hacking) methods at the Soysambu Raptor Centre
- Observing surgeries on injured birds in our on-site clinic
- Assisting with data input and processing
- Visits to Hell's Gate National Park to learn about its challenges and to survey critically endangered Ruppell's Vultures and their breeding rates

All volunteers and interns will also have the opportunity to travel locally to places such as Nakuru National Park, Lakes Bogoria and Baringo. In addition, they can enjoy their leisure time in and around Naivasha, exploring local lodges and restaurants.



Renowned raptor expert Simon Thomsett treating an injured Black Sparrowhawk.

WHAT YOU WILL GAIN

Both volunteers and interns will benefit greatly from joining one of the most unique conservation forces in the region:

- A fantastic experience of how a conservation project in Africa works
- Training in falconry – amongst the oldest of field sports and a vital rehabilitation tool
- First hand experience of the challenges faced in conservation in modern Africa
- Experience of working with wild and captive birds, as part of a research project or continuous care and rehabilitation
- An opportunity to develop important vocational skills in raptor conservation, rehabilitation and education
- The ability to meet and work with world-renowned local and international scientists, wildlife professionals and veterinarians.
- An unforgettable and life-changing experience in Africa's great rift valley



Monitoring Rüppell's Vultures at Hell's Gate National Park

THE SOYSAMBU RAPTOR CENTRE

Optionally, part of your stay can be at our partner organisation the Soysambu Raptor Centre. The Soysambu Raptor Centre (SRC) serves as a raptor release and research base on Soysambu Conservancy, a 55,000 acre game ranch around Lake Elementaita, just 50km north of Lake Naivasha. Here, students have the opportunity to join existing research projects, design and implement their own (during longer stays), and assist in the hunting and fitness training of birds preparing for eventual release. A key focus of the SRC is performing emergency surgery on injured raptors, and you will be able to observe and assist with surgeries on birds, as well as contribute to the recovery and care of these birds.



Participating in research projects involves hands-on fieldwork, including activities such as trapping and banding raptors, conducting road transects, and studying population dynamics and breeding patterns. Volunteers will also have the opportunity to engage in projects focused on other wildlife within the Soysambu Conservancy. When not in the field, volunteers will assist with data input and processing, as well as photo identification of birds and animals recorded in the field. A significant part of the day will be spent on observing the hunting flights of birds gearing up for release by the resident falconer.



Raptor technician at Soysambu Raptor Centre training a rehab juvenile Fish Eagle

CHOOSING THE RIGHT PROGRAMME FOR YOU

The following table will help you determine which programme best suits your interests and goals:

	VOLUNTEER (short stay)	INTERN (long stay)
DURATION	1-3 months. At least 1 month is recommended to get the most out of your placement, though the minimum stay is 2 weeks.	1-6 months. At least 3 months is recommended to benefit from the training. The minimum stay is 1 month.
REQUIRED EXPERIENCE	No. Anyone can enjoy a volunteer placement at the KBoPT.	Preferably a background in science, biology, ecology and conservation.
SUITABLE FOR	Anyone looking to experience wild Kenya, and see how a conservation project operates.	Students with a scientific background who want to gain experience at a wildlife rehabilitation centre.
SKILLS GAINED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn about and experience life in the field - Training in basic falconry - Training in data collection and management - Observing techniques such as raptor trapping, raptor surgeries - Learning about conservation in Africa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joining an active research project - Training in basic falconry - Participating in raptor trapping and banding - Observing raptor surgeries - Data collection and management; writing research reports and publications - Learning about conservation in Africa
POSSIBLE TRAVEL	Yes, in and around the rift valley. Optional trips to the Maasai Mara.	Yes, wherever we have active research projects: the Rift Valley, Maasai Mara ecosystem, southern Kenya.
AGE LIMIT	18 and above.	21 and above.

For our Internships we are looking for candidates with a background in science who can make a real contribution to KBoPT. We may specify a particular area of research or particular project for successful candidates, to ensure both the intern and the Trust gain the maximum from the program. Additional references may be requested. We regret that not all applications will be accepted, but feedback will be given where possible if requested. If you feel you do not have the skills to join as an intern, please consider joining us as a volunteer instead.

DAILY, WEEKLY AND MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

While there is no fixed schedule at the Trust, there are a few essential tasks that are carried out daily. Activities and plans may include the following:

	DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY
MORNING (9:00 - 1:00)	Mews and equipment cleaning, maintenance. Manning new birds.	Educational talks at local schools, educational tours of trust. For stays at SRC - research projects)	African Fish Eagle population survey and trapping on lake, nesting surveys. Vulture surveys in Hell's Gate NP. Trapping and banding on Kedong Ranch. Research projects.
LUNCH (1:00 – 2:00)	LUNCH	Observing surgeries, manning birds, wild bird surveys. DIY afternoons involving woodworking (owl boxes), hood and trap making	
AFTERNOON (2:00-5:00 PM)	Manning birds, use of library and other trust facilities, giving tours to visitors, sanctuary upkeep		
4:00 – 5:00 (only at SRC)	Flying and training birds for release	Flying and training birds for release	Flying and training birds for release
5:00 ONWARDS	Free time, sundowners at local lodges, dinner, other leisure activities.		

Daily itineraries are planned each morning based on the ongoing activities at the NRC and SRC. Weekends are typically free, allowing you the flexibility to relax on-site, explore Naivasha, or travel around the Rift Valley. Popular destinations such as Lake Nakuru, the Aberdares, Mt. Suswa, Lake Baringo, and Lake Bogoria are all just a few hours' drive from the Trust centre.



FACILITIES

Facilities at the Naivasha Raptor Centre

All volunteers and interns will initially be based at the Naivasha Raptor Centre. The NRC is situated right on the shores of Lake Naivasha on Kilimandegge Sanctuary, a private 88 acre wildlife sanctuary. The sanctuary is home to over 350 species of birds and serves as vitally important grazing areas for animals such as hippos, zebra, and waterbuck. The centre has an on-site veterinary clinic and houses both our rehab and permanent birds.

Volunteers will stay in a dedicated complex on the sanctuary, designed and built to be completely carbon-neutral and off-grid, ensuring freedom from regular Kenyan power cuts! Electricity is provided by solar power, as is hot water. Water is sourced from an on-site borehole. The accommodations are made from fabricated shipping containers, offering extra security. Meals will be prepared by a chef in a communal kitchen and there is a spacious semi-outdoor courtyard with a BBQ and open firepit. Volunteers will also benefit from a weekly laundry service and a twice-weekly cleaning service.



View of the sanctuary from the accommodation

Accommodation facilities at the Centre includes:

- Shared bedrooms (two persons per room)
- External shower/bathroom block
- 24 hour solar electricity and solar-heated running water
- Large communal semi-outdoor lounge with BBQ and firepit
- Fully equipped communal kitchen with gas stove and fridge
- Spectacular views of the sanctuary
- 24-hour unlimited WiFi and strong phone signal
- One very friendly dog

Facilities at the Soysambu Raptor Centre

Volunteers and interns that opt to spend part of their time at our partner organisation, the Soysambu Raptor Centre, will stay at the SRC's eco-friendly camp and research base, located in the heart of the 55,000 acre Soysambu Conservancy, which includes Lake Elementaita, one the rift valley's famous caustic lakes. SRC is home to a rich variety of wildlife, including leopards, lions and the endangered Rothschild's giraffe, along with a staggering density and diversity of wild raptors. At SRC, volunteers will have the opportunity to participate in hunting displays, trapping and banding of migrant raptors, conduct independent research projects, and enjoy thrilling night game drives.



The SRC camp's facilities include:

- Shared accommodation with en-suite bathrooms (single rooms are available, but limited)
- Hot running water
- Solar electricity
- Kitchen with fridge and cooker
- Communal lounge with fireplace and library
- Star beds during the dry season



PHONE AND INTERNET

Kenyan SIM cards can be easily purchased upon your arrival. To use one, you will need to bring your own unlocked phone. These SIM cards can be easily loaded with prepaid airtime bought in town, just a short distance from the centre.

Unlimited WiFi is available at the NRC accommodation at all times.

Unfortunately, phone and internet signal is limited at the Soysambu Raptor Centre, owing to the remoteness of the location.

HEALTH

Fortunately, both Naivasha and Soysambu are considered very low-risk areas for malaria. However, as you will be handling live raptors and birds, we recommend seeking medical advice regarding the necessary vaccinations and medications to take before your arrival. Both centres are fully equipped with medical and first aid supplies, and there are several doctors within easy reach for any emergencies. More information can be found [here](#).

INSURANCE

At both centres, you will be living and working in wild areas, surrounded by wildlife such as snakes, hippos, buffaloes, hyenas and lions. This should be kept in mind at all times for your safety. **As such, proof of health and travel insurance is mandatory before being accepted as a volunteer or intern.**



NRC Manager Shiv Kapila measuring the talons of a young Martial Eagle

RATES

Volunteer and intern rates are the same, but interns are encouraged to stay for a longer duration. The cost is US\$2200 per person per month (US\$550 per person per week) for international citizens and US\$1400 per person per month (US\$350 per person per week) for Kenyan citizens, which includes accommodation, basic groceries (if self catering is preferred), wifi, cleaning and laundry service.

Rates for undergraduate and graduate students conducting research and data collection for their own projects are US\$350 per person per week.

What's included:

- Donation to KBoPT: this portion of your fee directly supports the project, funding essential items such as maintenance, bird enclosures and equipment for their repair. It also contributes to purchasing supplies and services for research projects, including fuel, food, and other necessary resources.
- Accommodation at the NRC and/or SRC
- Transportation between field sites and centres
- Basic groceries
- Water, tea, and squash
- Weekly laundry service and twice-weekly cleaning
- Initial orientation and training
- All project-related equipment
- Unlimited internet access

What's not included:

- Flights to and from home to Nairobi
- Kenyan Visa (if required) including visa extensions
- Airport transfers between Nairobi and Naivasha and/or Soysambu
- Accommodation in Nairobi at the start and end of your stay, if required
- Personal expenses such as phone/airtime, off-site internet/WiFi, souvenirs, shopping, and personal hygiene requirements
- Optional excursions
- Entry fees to National Parks and Reserves
- Vaccinations
- Travel and medical insurance
- Tips and gratuities

Deposit:

A non-refundable deposit of 50% of the total amount is required within one week of the application being approved and dates confirmed. If payment is not received by this time, the placement will be automatically cancelled. This deposit secures your dates and accommodation, and is not refundable under any circumstances. A volunteer's placement cannot be confirmed until the deposit is paid in full.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply, simply fill out the [application form](#) on the Kenya Bird of Prey Trust website, one of our team members will contact you with further details and next steps.

For interns, we request the following information:

- Cover letter: Highlight your skills, motivations, and what you hope to gain from the experience. If possible, include an outline of any independent research projects you would like to pursue.
- A current and detailed CV/Resume.

Researchers/students conducting their own projects/data collection should write to shiv.kapila@kenyabirdofpreytrust.org.

For more information about the Kenya Bird of Prey Trust, please visit our website at kenyabirdofpreytrust.org



REFUND POLICY

We understand that sometimes plans change, and cancellations may be necessary. However, it's important to note that when a booking is made and the deposit fee is paid, it secures a confirmed spot, which reduces our capacity and may limit opportunities for other potential applicants.

While the deposit fee is non-refundable, we offer refunds on the remaining volunteer fees based on the amount of notice provided. Refunds will be issued as follows:

- 75% refund of the remaining fee if notice is received at least 30 days before the arrival date.
- 50% refund of the remaining fee if notice is received at least 15 days before the arrival date.

Please note that all transaction costs, including exchange rate fees and other processing charges, will be deducted from the refund. Refunds will only be processed upon receiving written notice of cancellation.

