

Volunteer Info Pack – Elephant Conservation **Mature Volunteer** Programme Itinerary

Your conservation journey begins here!



Please Note: Conservation Research is a dynamic process where although the research goals are planned in advance, the monthly and daily activities to achieve these goals depend on the local situation and can change dramatically. All information herein should be treated in this manner.

Welcome to Sri Lanka

The Elephant Conservation **Mature Volunteer** Wildlife Adventure Programme is for volunteers who are 50+ to get involved in wildlife research, conservation, and community outreach programmes. The programme has been developed to provide a depth of perspective not found on conventional travel programmes, with privileged access to places and local experts to provide a meaningful and life changing experience.

The programme is suitable for older travellers of all ages and skill levels and for individuals who love the outdoors and nature, to obtain hands on experience in wildlife research and conservation. The mix of wildlife and cultural experiences will instil a genuine sense of gratitude and appreciation for life, for the opportunities we have, and for the things we take for granted.

Why Choose This Programme*

- Help to **create tolerance in farmers** for wild animals, especially elephants.
- **Support conservation efforts** of several endangered species (elephants, sloth bears, leopards, pangolins, and golden palm civet cats).
- **Contribute to community** economic development.
- **Create appreciation in local communities** to value their forests and wildlife.
- Help **understand elephant behaviour** to develop conservation actions.
- **Gather information** on the ecology of sloth bears and leopards.
- Assist to **establish Sri Lanka's first Wildlife Conservancy**.
- **Learn from villagers** the challenges they face from elephants and other wildlife.

- Assist the programme to **design and implement solutions**.
- **Learn about local culture**, cuisine, sports and games.
- **Learn new skills**, how to use a compass, a GPS unit, a range finder, field guides, map orientation, weaving, cooking, sports, games, and make new friends.

**Individuals volunteering only for one week will not be able to do all of the activities listed above, this is a sample of what is possible.*

Volunteer Itinerary



DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY PLAN	OBJECTIVE
Day 1 – Monday	12 Noon	Arrival at Wasgamuwa.	The first day's activities are depended on the time of arrival.
	12.30 pm - 01.30 pm	Check in, refresh, relax, lunch, and acclimate.	At leisure.
	2.00 pm - 3.00 pm	Ice Breaker and Orientation.	Introduction to programme, staff and programme activities.
	03.30 pm - 06.30 pm	Go Tank Monitoring. Learn how to take photos and data to identify elephants by recording their physical features and other markings on their bodies. Collect elephant behavioural data to develop an elephant ethogram.	To gather data on elephants and observe other wildlife.
	03.30 pm - 06.30 pm	If elephants are not at the Tank, go to the Tree Huts to observe human-elephant conflict and interactions in an ancient elephant corridor.	To understand the issues of human-elephant conflicts.
		During Tank Monitoring and Tree Hut observations activities such as birding and nesting behaviour of birds, butterfly identification and observing other wildlife will be conducted.	Observe and learn about wildlife and their habits.
	07.00 pm - 7.30 pm	Return to camp, clean and put away field equipment, refresh, have a dip in the pool, and relax.	At leisure.
	07.30 pm - 08.30 pm	Dinner.	

	09.00 pm - 09.30 pm	Data inputting, SLWCS- Documentary Film/Discussion/Social Time.	Inputting of data helps to understand how research helps conservation efforts.
	10.00 pm	Lights off.	
Day 2 – Tuesday	06.00 am - 07.30 am	Birding and observing nature around camp site after bed tea/coffee.	Optional activity. To get familiar with field site. Understand diversity of birds, experience the amazing sunrises.
	07.30 am - 08.00 am	Refresh.	At leisure.
	08.00 am - 09.00 am	Breakfast/discussions on the day's activities.	
	09.00 am - 12.00 pm	Leave to conduct elephant foraging transects, dung transects and trail mapping. During this time observe other wildlife, birds, look for leopard and sloth bear signs, and observe various habitats.	To learn about conservation research by observing and collecting data on wildlife.
	12.00 pm - 03.00 pm	Return to camp, clean and put away field equipment, refresh, have dip in the pool, lunch and relax.	At leisure.
	03.00 pm - 06.30 pm	Go Tank Monitoring. Go in canoes to observe elephants. Learn how to take photos and data to identify elephants by recording their physical features and other markings on their bodies. Collect elephant behavioural data to develop an elephant ethogram.	To gather data on elephants and observe other wildlife.
		If elephants are not at the Tank, go to the Tree Huts to observe human-elephant conflict and interactions in an ancient elephant corridor.	To understand the issues of human-elephant conflicts.
		During Tank Monitoring and Tree Hut observations activities such as birding, observe bird nesting behaviour, butterfly identification and observing other wildlife will be conducted.	Observe and learn about wildlife and their habits.
	07.00 pm	Return to camp, clean and put away field equipment, dip in the pool, refresh and relax.	At leisure.
	07.30 pm - 08.30 pm	Dinner.	
	08.30 pm – 09.30 pm	Data inputting, SLWCS- Documentary Film/Discussion/Social Time.	Inputting of data helps to understand how research helps conservation efforts.
	10.00 pm	Lights off.	

Day 3 - Wednesday	06.00 am - 07.30 am	Leave to the Sunrise Rock to view the sunrise and hike along the lakeshore - observe local wildlife and birds.	Optional activity. Enjoy the scenery. Appreciate nature and learn about local ecology and conservation issues.
	07.30 am - 08.00 am	Refresh.	At leisure.
	08.00 am - 09.00am	Breakfast/discussions on the day's activities.	Briefing.
	09.00 am - 12.00 pm	Go to a village to observe citrus groves that have been set up to act as elephant deterrents while providing the villagers with a supplementary income. Help farmers plant orange trees, weeding, watering, and harvesting during the fruiting season. Gather data on orange trees including assessing the growth, vigor and status of citrus groves. Learn from villagers their experiences living with elephants, property and crop damages and injuries to people.	To experience a holistic approach to human-elephant conflict mitigation and to understand the importance of community participation for conservation success.
	12.00 pm – 01.00 pm	Hosted for lunch by the villagers.	Experience local cuisine.
	01.30 pm - 03.00pm	Return to camp, clean and put away field equipment, dip in the pool, refresh, and relax.	At leisure.
	03.00pm - 06.30pm	Leave on a Safari to the Wasgamuwa National Park. Observe elephants and other wildlife in the park. Collect data for the Elephant ID Catalogue and Elephant Ethogram.	Experience various habitats. Gather data on elephants.
	07.00 pm	Return to camp, clean and put away field equipment, dip in the pool, refresh and relax.	At leisure.
	07.30 pm - 08.30 pm	Dinner.	
	08.30 pm - 09.30 pm	Data inputting, watch a SLWCS- Documentary Film/Discussion/Social Time.	Learn through discussion and sharing of experiences.
	10.00 pm	Lights off	
Day 4 – Thursday	6 am	Birding and observing nature around camp site after bed tea/coffee.	Optional activity. To get familiar with field site. Understand diversity of birds.
	07.30 am - 08.00 am	Refresh.	At leisure.
	08.00 am - 09.00am	Breakfast/discussions on the day's activities.	Briefing.
	09.00 am - 12.00 pm	Work on the Butterfly Sanctuary. Weeding, planting	To understand the importance of maintaining habitats and to

		and watering host plants, identifying butterflies, and helping to create micro-habitats for specific species.	appreciate the diversity and ecological role of butterflies.
	12.00 pm - 03.00 pm	Return to camp, clean and put away field equipment, dip in the pool, refresh, lunch and relax.	At leisure.
	03.00 pm - 06.30 pm	Based on information received from Field Scouts that elephants are at the Tank, go in canoes to observe elephants from the water and to identify water birds and the type of habitats they frequent.	Gather data on elephants.
		Alternative activity would be to go to the Tree Huts or go tracking for elephants.	Learn how to track elephants.
	06.30 pm – 7.30 pm	Return to camp, clean and put away field equipment, refresh, dip in the pool, and relax.	At leisure.
	07.30 pm - 08.30 pm	Dinner.	
	08.30 pm - 9.30 pm	Data inputting, watch SLWCS-Documentary Film/Discussion/Social Time.	Learn through discussion and sharing of experiences.
	10.00 pm	Lights off.	
Day 5 – Friday	06.00 am - 07.30 am	Birding and observing nature around camp site after bed tea/coffee.	Optional activity. Identify birds. Maintain a check list.
	07.30 am - 08.00 am	Refresh.	
	08.00 am - 09.00am	Breakfast in the village.	Learn to cook your own Sri Lanka breakfast.
	08.00 am - 12.00 am	Visit a local village and meet villagers for culinary and cultural activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make your own Sri Lanka breakfast. Cooking lessons, learn how to make Sri Lankan roti and lalaria. • A local artisan will teach how to weave reed mats. • Visit the local Buddhist Temple to learn about Buddhism. 	Sri Lankan culinary & cultural experience.
	12.00 am – 03.00 pm	Return to camp, clean and put away field equipment, refresh, dip in the pool, refresh, and relax.	At leisure.
	03.00 pm – 06.30 pm	Village hike: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go on a hike to observe the diversity of local village life. Visit villagers’ homes and experience their lifestyles and listen to their stories of living with wildlife, 	Cultural experiences.

		especially elephants. Have tea in a village home.	
	06.30 pm – 07.30 pm	Return to camp, clean and put away field equipment, dip in the pool, refresh and relax.	At leisure.
	07.30 pm – 08.30 pm	Dinner.	
	08.30 pm – 10.00 pm	Data inputting, watch a SLWCS- Documentary Film/Discussion/Social Time.	Learn through discussion and sharing of experiences.
Day 6 – Saturday	06.00 am – 07.00 am	Birding and observing nature around camp site after bed tea/coffee.	Optional activity. Identify birds. Maintain a check list.
	07.00 am – 08.00 am	Refresh, breakfast & discussions on the day’s activities.	
	08.00 am – 01.00 pm	Expedition to the Knuckles Mountain to conduct biodiversity surveys, bath in a mountain stream, visit remote villages, and enjoy a locally prepared meal.	To experience the diversity associated with geography, climate and terrain. Sri Lankan cultural & culinary experience.
	12.00 pm – 01.00 pm	Lunch at a local village.	Enjoy traditional Sri Lankan cuisine.
	02.00 pm - 03.00 pm	Return to camp, clean and put away field equipment, dip in the pool, refresh, and relax.	At leisure.
	03.00 pm - 06.30 pm	The volunteer or volunteers participates in solving an adventurous wildlife mystery: the goal is to find an endangered animal that has been trapped before the poachers find it. During this game learn how to use a compass, a GPS unit, a range finder, map orientation and how to identify landmarks, collect various clues from field guides, plants, animals, and features of the land.	The game helps to teach how destructive poachers are, and how game rangers save animals from poachers.
	07.00 pm	Return to camp, refresh, dip in the pool, relax.	At leisure.
	07.30 pm - 08.30 pm	Dinner.	
	08.30 pm - 9.30 pm	Discussion/Social Time.	
		10.00 pm	Lights off.
Day 7 – Sunday	Morning	Debrief, Breakfast, and Departure.	End of Programme.



How to Book Your Volunteer Trip

The total cost per person is £1125 GB pounds, which includes the following:

1. Direct transfer from Airport to Project Site, or from hotel if arriving on Sunday night.
2. Orientation.
3. Accommodation in a private A/C room with ensuite bathroom in hotel - <https://www.lavendishleisure.com/hotels/lavendish-wild-safari>
4. All meals and refreshments.
5. Transport in the field.
6. Field activities.
7. Tree Hut Night and Dinner (optional activity depending on the volunteer's abilities).
8. Field training.
9. Field supervision, and guidance.
10. Visit to the Wasgamuwa National Park.
11. Visit to Knuckles Mountains.
12. Visit to villages, meals and refreshments.
13. Community programmes: folk-themed storytelling, culinary lessons, games, and sports.
14. Transfer from Project Site to Airport or hotel for onwards travel.

<https://www.workingabroad.com/projects/elephant-conservation-volunteer-sri-lanka/>

^^ You can **Book your Sri Lanka volunteer experience here.** (If clicking doesn't work, just copy-paste the link into your browser.)

Contact Email: If you have any questions before booking, drop us a line at victoria.mcneil@workingabroad.com. We typically respond within 24 hours on weekdays. We can clarify any details about the project, costs, or travel – no question is too small.

Phone (UK office): You can call us at **+44 (0)1273 479 047** if you'd like to speak to a coordinator directly. We're in the office Monday–Friday during normal business hours (UK time).

We're excited to help you arrange this meaningful adventure. Booking with WorkingAbroad is flexible and secure – and remember, as a not-for-profit, our project fees go toward supporting the programme and local conservation efforts.

Once booked, we'll count down the days with you until you arrive in Sri Lanka. Get ready for an experience that not only contributes to crucial conservation work but also leaves you with lifelong memories and new friends.

Thank you for reading the Sri Lanka Volunteer Info Pack. We hope it has answered your questions and ignited your excitement. By choosing to volunteer with us, you are making a positive impact for elephants, the environment, and the community in Sri Lanka. We truly appreciate your support and enthusiasm.

We look forward to welcoming you to Sri Lanka soon!

WorkingAbroad Projects – Established 2002

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“Conservation is not a spectator sport – thank you for getting involved!”

