



Conservation Research Assistant

An exciting in-country opportunity to be part of the conservation research team in the southeast of Madagascar

Role Description

Ideal for a motivated, recently qualified individual interested in working within an established research team based in the stunning coastal village of Sainte Luce, 40km north of Fort Dauphin, conducting research within the area's fragmented littoral forest habitats and adjoining coastal habitats. This position affords the opportunity to conduct vital *in-situ* conservation and to contribute data to scientific publications. Research Assistants are responsible for leading international teams of short-term volunteers, collecting and analysing data accurately, and contributing towards the holistic conservation approach encouraged at SEED Madagascar. This job role involves maintaining a balance between collecting valuable scientific data and ensuring our enthusiastic volunteers are happy and contribute effectively to the programme. After initial training, the applicant will also work within the research team to assist in developing and expanding research projects and the writing of scientific papers.

Location: Sainte Luce, Anosy Region, Madagascar

Timeframe: 12 months extendable

Probationary period: 3 months

Contract: Voluntary, unsalaried, food and transport provided on camp

Reporting to: Conservation Research Coordinator

Duties and responsibilities

1. Organise and lead data collection in the field
2. Monitor data collection ensuring the quality of the data
3. Assist in setting research objectives and ensuring these are consistently met
4. Organise the logistics of research projects, including equipment and resource management
5. Supervise volunteers during their time in the field and in town, including pastoral care and problem solving
6. Ensure risk assessments, volunteer guidelines, field orientations, and research protocols are followed at all times
7. Train volunteers in field research techniques and provide feedback
8. Ensure good communication and team relations between volunteers, SEED staff and local guides
9. Assist in the development of research projects, analysis of data, and write up of research papers
10. Provide photographs for the website and social media platforms to ensure coverage

of the research

11. Any other tasks the Director of Programmes and Operations or Conservation Research Coordinator deem necessary within the broad remit of this role

Person Specification:

1. Demonstrate sound knowledge and keen interest in conservation issues
2. A qualification to at least undergraduate level in a conservation discipline
3. Specialist knowledge of either primatology, herpetology, botany or environmental education is desirable
4. Ability to or willingness to learn to safely handle and identify reptiles and amphibians
5. Previous experience of collecting data
6. Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to SEED's ethos and approach and be a good ambassador for SEED at all times
7. Have passion, curiosity and motivation for the job and the ability to enthuse others
8. Have the ability and desire to work with teams from different economic and cultural backgrounds and across multiple language barriers
9. Have the ability and desire to build capacity and share skills across cultures
10. Demonstrate proven ability to recognise and appropriately deal with challenging situations
11. Demonstrate an awareness of and comfort with increased social and professional responsibility, working at all times with cultural sensitivity and respect
12. Demonstrate the ability, social skills and confidence to give clear guidance and support to other members of the team in respect of the philosophy and procedures of SEED in order to protect both their safety and the reputation of the NGO
13. Have excellent problem-solving skills
14. Working knowledge of GPS and/or GIS is an advantage
15. First aid certificate
16. Good degree of fitness for working in difficult terrain under tropical conditions
17. Ability to spend long periods of time in basic camping conditions

Pay and conditions:

Food and local transport will be provided whilst in the field. All other costs will need to be covered by the candidate, including accommodation when not in the field.

Application process:

Interested applicants should send a CV and covering letter outlining how their skills and experience match the requirements in the role description criteria and detailing why they wish to be considered for this post to Lisa Bass by email on Lisa@seedmadagascar.org. Applications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis until the position is filled. Long-listed applicants will have an initial informal chat with Madagascar based staff and short listed applicants will then be offered a face-to-face interview with the London team in person. More information on the work of SEED can be found at www.madagascar.co.uk. The position will remain open until appropriate candidates are found.

Context of the post within the SEED Conservation Programme:

The SEED Conservation Research Programme (SCRIP) accepts international volunteers to help conduct research on the unique flora and fauna of Madagascar's last remaining fragments of

littoral forest. Our research programme focuses on the endemic/endangered communities of Sainte Luce, with a particular focus on lemur research, herpetological study and the monitoring of bats, dragonflies, and freshwater fish. Current projects include the long term monitoring of lemur and herpetological fragments, amassing ecological evidence whenever information is lacking, and compiling population densities and spatial/temporal distribution maps.

Habitat sampling and assessment is also a regular activity, alongside the collation of species inventories for each of the nearby forest fragments, with a particular emphasis on the reptile and amphibian, bird and small mammal communities. The SCRP team works very closely with the local community to implement lasting community conservation initiatives, such as environmental education in village schools and through the training of local eco-tourism guides.