

Field Assistant with Project Biodiversity 2024

Project Biodiversity is looking for candidates to join our team as Field Assistants, from June until October, for the 2024 Loggerhead nesting season in Sal Island, Cabo Verde. We need passionate, driven individuals who wish to help us protect this incredible species in its native habitat.

Why we need you!

In 2007 it was estimated that the Loggerhead population in Cabo Verde would be extinct by 2015 if immediate actions weren't taken to halt the illegal hunt and trade of turtle meat and human induced threats to the population. For the last 16 years, both international volunteers, assistants and members of the local community have worked tirelessly to ensure protection of the female turtles – by patrolling the beaches nightly throughout the nesting season, educating members of the community about turtle conservation, and working with the government to improve regulations. While the number of turtles killed has drastically reduced, the illegal poaching and trafficking still persists.

In 2024, we aim to further empower the community to act to protect turtles, through direct beach protection, as well as grassroots education and engagement. As crucial part of our team, you will have the opportunity to directly contribute to the conservation of this endangered species, and ultimately help build a more sustainable Cabo Verde.

Loggerhead nesting season runs from June to October, with nests hatching from mid-August to late December. Throughout the season the team of Project Biodiversity is made up of local and international assistants and volunteers. Our work involves patrolling beaches (night and morning) to monitor nesting and deter hunting, collect data, manage hatcheries, run education and outreach activities, and organise beach cleans. Although there is a wide scope of activities within the project, protection of nesting turtles continues to be the main focus and whilst this can be stressful and tiring, it is ultimately highly rewarding.

This opportunity will not only provide you with good experience of turtle conservation techniques, but also allow you to make a real difference to the survival of marine turtles. Your participation will allow for the opportunity to be directly responsible for saving numerous nesting turtles and hatchlings, and to experience a high level of satisfaction from being able to rapidly affect the situation in Cabo Verde.

What does it take to be a Field Assistant?

The position of **Field Assistant** is open to candidates with a commitment to conservation and a particular interest in working with marine turtles. Ideally you will have previous fieldwork experience but not necessarily on a turtle project. You will gain valuable experience in the field conducting:

- Track identification

- Collection of biometric data
- Tagging and identifying previously tagged females
- Nest relocations and excavations

In this capacity, Field Assistant duties will include night patrols to deter hunters and collect data on track identification, tagging and measuring the turtles. There will also be morning duties to relocate nests to the hatchery or other locations on the beach. Towards the end of the nesting season, Assistants will also be involved in monitoring and excavating hatched nests and releasing hatchlings. Additional duties include maintenance of the camp and its facilities, assisting in the training of the volunteers, and assisting in the general day to day of the camp and team.

Priority will be given to those with relevant experience and who wish to develop a career in conservation work. Following your training period, we require you to lead patrols joined by short term volunteers.

This opportunity will give you solid work experience that will help you to continue your career in conservation, but living under these conditions can be challenging, extremely tiring and stressful: you will work during the night as well as during the day! A good level of fitness and physical and mental energy is required as patrols are long (possibly all night), conducted on foot and may be as long as 15km. Shift patterns vary but you will have one night of rest per week. Read the FAQs for more information.

Requirements

- Desire to work in conservation
- College or University qualification, preferably in a related or scientific field
- Previous volunteering or outdoor living experience
- Experience in similar working conditions
- High level of energy and flexibility
- At least 20 years old
- Understand written and spoken English
- Good attention to detail
- Good level of physical fitness
- Used to physically challenging conditions (long walks, late nights, hot weather, insects)
- Ability to work and live with people of different backgrounds and nationalities
- Able to work independently and show initiative

Other useful skills

- You speak more than one language – particularly Portuguese, Spanish or French
- You have skills or experience in mechanics, carpentry or painting/drawing

What is provided for?

Project Biodiversity is based in Santa Maria, a popular tourist destination known for its beaches and water-sports. Participants are based in a field camp out of town with self-catering accommodation in Santa Maria provided on rest days. Meals are provided for in camp but are not provided on the days off. Field Assistants will receive a stipend of €150 per month. See FAQs for camp conditions.

Field Assistants are not required to pay any fees but need to cover their flights and insurance personally. In the case of loss or damage of project equipment, related costs will be deduced from the monthly stipend offered.

Sign me up!

Please read the application procedure carefully, you can find the application form and process at <https://www.projectbiodiversity.org/how-to-apply>

The Field Assistant position is for the **entire nesting season**
from **June 8th** until **October 20th**.

Priority will be given to those who are available for the entirety of the nesting season, however applications will be considered for candidates joining later in the season or leaving earlier in the season. Please state your availability in the application form.

Minimum commitment is 3 months