

Leopard Ecology & Conservation is looking for a dedicated



Research Assistant – Lion social behaviour project

Leopard Ecology & Conservation (LEC) was initiated in 2000. The project seeks to promote the long-term survival of leopard and lion populations in Botswana by integrating research, conservation activities and community empowerment. LEC works in Khutse Game Reserve and in its surrounding areas, including the grazing communal land and the southern section of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve. Our research camp lies approximately 300 m outside Khutse Game Reserve Gate. Other than DWNP staff, our closest neighbours live in the village of Kaudwane, 5 km away.

For more information, please visit our website: <https://leopard.ch>

Job Brief

Role title: Research Assistant

Reporting to: Field Research Coordinator (FRC) and MPI Principal Investigators (PIs)

Duration of position: 12-month contract with option for renewal

Location: Based at LEC research camp by Khutse G.R.

Salary: Salary is commensurate with experience and education.

Benefit: Private Accommodation in tent at field site. Accommodation at LEC office in Gaborone when needed for work purposes. Satellite internet at camp. Refund of airtime for work purposes (max 100Pula/month). One communal meal per day from Monday to Friday.

We are looking for a competent and enthusiastic research assistant to join our research team in the field in Botswana. You will be assisting the principal investigators and leading the field staff in the research project focusing on lion social behaviour and cooperative

hunting. The project is a collaboration between LEC and the Max Planck Institute of Animal Behaviour, Konstanz, Germany (MPI). The role will involve data collection on social structure and group hunting behaviour of lion in the study area from direct observation and tracking-based approaches. You will also be involved in data collection and entry of long-term data on carnivore sightings at LEC.

To be a research assistant of our choice, you must be organised and detail-oriented and be comfortable working with culturally diverse teams. You will have proven experience in field data collection and data management. Experience in research in remote areas with large carnivores and the use of telemetry to locate collared animals would be advantageous. Good communication skills and teamwork attitude would be appreciated.

This is a full-time job and we expect the successful applicant to begin his or her work on the 15th July 2021 or by arrangement.

Responsibilities

Data collection. Lead team in the field for data collection on lion sightings and kill sites. Use of telemetry and collection of tracks.

Data Management. Daily check and archiving of data sheets and photos. Checking and uploading data collected via apps. Data entry in excel spreadsheets.

Data Reporting. Weekly and monthly reporting to PIs on the lion social behaviour and cooperative hunting project. Contribute to reporting of LEC research activities. Represent LEC at external meetings, conferences and workshops when requested.

Other. Assist in other LEC research activities such as collaring operations, camera-trapping, habitat monitoring studies, spoor surveys. Assist with camp logistics and surveillance. Assist visiting students/researchers.

Requirements

- Proven experience in research projects as field data collector. Experience in managing field staff is advantageous.
- Good knowledge of field data collection, data entry and reporting. Telemetry, tracking and app-based data collection (Cybertracker) experience is advantageous.

- Ability to manage small projects independently.
- Experience in staff training and supervision of dedicated teams is advantageous
- High motivation and capability of working under remote field conditions.
- Proficiency in driving vehicles with manual transmission and valid driving licence are required.
- Socially sensitive and able to work with cultural diversity and multi-disciplinary team
- Tech savvy, proficient in MS Office. Interest in learning software for reporting and research purposes (GIS, statistics)
- Excellent time-management and organisational skills
- Good English and Setswana verbal and written communication skills. Knowledge of any San language will be advantageous.
- BSc (or higher) degree in biology, conservation or related field, with a focus on wildlife. Interest in pursuing higher degree education is welcome.

Application

To apply please send a copy of your curriculum vitae, contact details of a minimum of two recent supervisors and a letter of motivation to Alessandro Araldi a.araldi@leopardecology.com with the subject "Application research assistant MPI" before 20th June 2021. Motswana candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.