

Leopard Ecology & Conservation is looking for a dedicated



Research Assistant – Carnivore Population Monitoring

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 Head of Research (HoR)

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 LEC principal investigators and leading the field staff in research activities focusing on carnivore population monitoring in our study

area. One of LEC research objectives is to obtain reliable estimates of leopard and lion populations in Khutse G.R. and in its surrounding areas. To obtain those estimates, LEC implements systematic spoor and prey counts along roads and is establishing a camera-trap grid survey. The role will involve assisting with these surveys, as well as 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 animal tracking skills 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 for the spoor and prey survey. Assist in the smooth running of the camera-trap survey. Collect data on leopard and lion 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. Report on the carnivore population monitoring projects. Produce data summaries as requested. 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, animal sightings, kill site monitoring, habitat monitoring studies. 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. Camera-trapping, 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, basic mechanic skills 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.
- Candidates must be citizen of Botswana.

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-Population Monitoring" before 20th June 2021.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.