

Leopard Ecology & Conservation is offering



MSc Thesis Opportunity / Internship

Project: “Improving estimates of daily travel distances for Kalahari large herbivores”

Leopard Ecology & Conservation (LEC) was initiated by Monika Schiess-Meier 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.

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

Position Brief

Role title: MSc Student/Intern

Reporting to: Field Research Coordinator (FRC) and Ms. Gielen

Duration of position: 3 months

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

Salary: Stipend of 1500 BWP/month

Benefit: Private Accommodation in tent at field site. Satellite internet at camp. One communal meal per day from Monday to Friday and food during camping trips. Helicopter evacuation cover. Transport to and from the site at the beginning and end of the period.

LEC in collaboration with Ms. Marie-Charlotte Gielen (Catholic University of Louvain – UCL Belgium & Cheetah Conservation Botswana), is looking for an enthusiastic student/intern for a study on large herbivores daily travel distances in Khutse G.R., Botswana.

The study aims to improve daily travel distances (or day range) estimates for Kalahari wildlife in order to refine population density estimates through the use of a random encounter model called the Formozov-Malyshev-Pereleshin (or FMP) formula, developed for the Kalahari by Dr. Derek Keeping. The focus will be on five large herbivore species lacking of empirical day range data, that is Eland (*Taurotragus oryx*), Red Hartebeest (*Alcephalus buselaphus*), Kudu (*Tragelaphus strepsiceros*), Springbok (*Antidorcas marsupialis*), and Ostrich (*Struthio camelus*). Empirical day range data will be obtained through long-follows of individuals (trailing), such as a value of their 24h travel distance is collected for each of them.

The student/intern will work in pair with a Master student from UCL. The field work will last approximately 3 months from mid-May 2023 at the latest.

Requirements

- Preferably enrolled in a University programme in Botswana.
- High motivation and capability of working under remote field conditions. Proficiency in driving vehicles with manual transmission and valid driving licence are advantageous.
- Socially sensitive and able to work with culturally-diverse 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

The deadline for application submission (Curriculum Vitae and covering letter) is the 15th February 2023, to be sent to Alessandro Araldi a.araldi@leopardecology.com and Marie-Charlotte Gielen marie-charlotte.gielen@uclouvain.be with the subject “Application Daily Ranges Khutse”. Do not hesitate to contact us for any further detail you may require. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.