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Elephant Expedition, Namibia

This exciting and adventurous expedition program gives you the opportunity to take part in real, valuable conservation work in the vast and remote desert wilderness of NW Namibia, home to a small population of secretive, desert adapted elephants. Here subsistence communities and farmers eke out an existence and need all the help they can get with the elephants who, in their search for water, regularly cause damage to community water points.

Expedition-style, travelling in a small group and accompanied by expert guides, this experience is all about true adventure and teamwork as we live together in the African bush, close to the animals whilst making a direct difference to the lives of local people.

Volunteer teams work towards the reduction of elephant/human conflict in remote areas, through a combination of remote community assistance (building protective walls around water sources) and adventurous and exciting elephant patrols (tracking herds, collecting data and monitoring behaviour).



Book now with a low \$400 deposit, balance due 3 months before trip. Payment plans available

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Trip Highlights:

- An amazing adventure experience, be part of pioneering conservation work
- Sleep under a blanket of African stars
- Explore the raw, wilderness of NW Namibia
- Track herds of wild desert elephants
- Assist remote subsistence communities

Snapshot

- **Start Dates** : Alternate Sundays year-round (except December).
- **Duration** : 2 weeks or more
- **Pricing 2023**: 2 weeks AUD \$2,295 / 4 wks \$3,795 / 6 wks \$4,995 / 8 wks \$5,995
- **Pricing 2024**: 2 weeks AUD \$2,495 / 4 wks \$3,995 / 6 wks \$5,345 / 8 wks \$6,395
- **Minimum Age** : 18
- **Fly In/Out** : Walvis Bay (WVB) or Windhoek (WDH)
- **What's included**: All meals, equipment, accommodation
- **What's not included**: Flights, travel insurance, airport transfers
- **Accommodation**: Adventure-style, swags under the stars. Hotel for 1st & last nights
- **Food**: Meals are prepared by the group on a roster basis.



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Itinerary

Day 1 (Sunday) Arrive to the gorgeous coastal town of Swakopmund and check in to your hotel accommodation by the ocean. Settle in, meet members of your expedition group and have a wander round town if you've time – in the evening we'll have a short briefing ahead of tomorrow's departure. If flying in to Walvis Bay (airport code WVB), we can arrange your transfer – it's only about ½ hour and won't cost you much.

Week 1 (Build Week) On Monday morning the group departs to Base Camp, around 4 hours drive from Swakopmund. After lunch we'll have a full safety briefing and explanation of the projects to be undertaken. Next morning we head to the build site, usually around an hour away, set up camp for the week and get to work.

As a team, we'll build walls around community water collection infrastructure such as pumps and windmills, pipes and water storage tanks – we do so in such a way that the elephants are still able to access the water but without damaging the infrastructure, the cause of much conflict with the people of the area. Elephants often pull up pipes or put their tusks through water tanks to get to the water which they are able to smell.

The building week is quite hard work and physically challenging, but the aim is to work together as a team and do just as much as you are capable of. This week is very satisfying and groups tend to bond and adapt to bush life very quickly, taking it in turns to cook over the fire and deliver the first cup of coffee to everyone in bed!

On Saturday morning the group returns to Base Camp and the rest of the weekend is for relaxing. The area around camp is beautiful and wonderful to explore. On the Sunday can join our staff on the food run to a local town called Uis, where there is a small supermarket, a lodge that provides internet connection, a swimming pool and a small restaurant.



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Week 2 (Patrol Week) Sunday evening there is a briefing on this week's elephant patrol objectives, which elephants we need to track with of course safety information on how to behave around wild elephants. The next morning we leave for patrol and spend the week tracking the various resident herds in the area to record movement patterns and general information such as births, deaths and other important events such as mating.

We follow elephants by vehicle and on foot, sometimes for hours under the desert sun, and sit patiently observing from some rocky outcrop whilst they laze away in the shade! The elephants' movements are recorded through their GPS positions which are then recorded on an online mapping tool. This information then shows which farms the elephants visit to drink water and therefore where we need to build protection in the future. Data on elephants is incredibly important as this is the only organisation providing accurate figures to the government.

We return to base camp on Thursday afternoon, then head back to Swakopmund on Friday.

For those completing 2 or more rotations, the program follows the same routine of 1 week building and 1 week Elephant Patrol. There is a different focus each week meaning you'll experience different elephants, landscapes and scenery in different areas of beautiful Damaraland.



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Last day – (Saturday) Today we say goodbyes and head off from Walvis Bay airport on any flight. Save a few dollars for the shuttle to the airport, payable locally.

Accommodation : If you're considering this expedition, chances are you'll not be expecting 5* accommodation !

Volunteers are provided with bed rolls, which includes a mattress but you'll need to bring your own sleeping bag and pillow. During the rainy and colder season we provide 2 person tents on build week and (space permitting) on patrol. Otherwise we sleep under the stars under a tarpaulin.

At base camp volunteers are accommodated in a tree! This is a very large platform within a huge Ana Tree and is wonderful! There are two elephant drinking dams in the camp and the elephants often wander through!

Base Camp has the luxury of proper toilets and hot water shower !! During build week there are no washing facilities and the toilet is a bush (long drop) toilet. During patrol our camps are very basic, we camp wild every night depending on the elephants' location and always find a stunning spot for the night.



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