

INTERNSHIP OVERVIEW

This program runs for eight weeks with one week of virtual programming before departure from home, then seven weeks in-country. The in-country portion of the internship starts at Brackenhurst, an eco-campus in Limuru, before spending the bulk of the placement in the Maasai Mara. The internship will introduce students to biodiversity conservation in Kenya. They will work alongside a local team on the analysis and maintenance of ecological monitoring baselines in a community conservation area. The interns will learn and become familiar with various data collection methodologies as they enhance existing baselines at the newly established Pardamat Conservation Area. They will analyze the data and plan for future baseline maintenance. Under the supervision and guidance of an EDU Africa facilitator, the academic mentor, and the conservation team at the Pardamat Conservation Area, interns will have the opportunity to learn and network with professionals working in the field of biodiversity conservation. In line with EDU Africa's Transformative Learning philosophy, this internship program focuses on the goal of professional development and the acquisition of intercultural and professional competency, teamwork, tolerance for ambiguity, problem-solving, and communication skills.

INTERNSHIP COSTS

USD6 545

Includes Maasai Village Experience and three Game Drives at the Maasai Mara National Reserve. Other weekend excursions are available at an additional cost.

Optional single supplement at Brackenhurst available

MAASAI MARA CONSERVATION INTERNSHIP 2023

5-9 JUNE (VIRTUAL)

18 JUNE-6 AUGUST (IN-COUNTRY)

LOCATIONS

Brackenhurst Learning Center is housed within the home of one of the largest collections of indigenous plant species in East Africa, with over 1 000 tree and shrub species, many of which are endangered or thought to be extinct within their original distribution zones. It's also an ideal base from which students can explore the surrounding Kenyan wetlands.

The **Maasai Mara** has 15 conservancies spanning over 300 000 acres. The conservancies provide connected critical wildlife habitats that complement national parks and the Maasai Mara reserve. They also secure major wildlife migratory corridors and were established to conserve the environment and its wildlife while protecting, empowering, and improving the livelihoods of the local Maasai communities.

The internship program will specifically take place within the Pardamat Conservation Area. Pardamat is 64 000 acres of conservation area registered by 850 landowners. It is a unique area that has adopted a dual-use model of conservation, an approach that advocates and provides for human-wildlife coexistence. Pardamat is a key conservation puzzle piece because it serves as a migration route and connects four other conservancies to the Maasai Mara National Reserve. Interns will be accommodated at the newly-developed educational and research hub in Pardamat - The Wildlife Tourism College of the Maasai Mara.

PRE-REQUISITES

A background in environmental science, conservation biology, agroecology, horticulture, development studies, wildlife studies, or related subjects is ideal (entering level 200 and above). Participants need to be culturally aware and open-minded to thrive in this program. All lectures and tutorials are conducted in English; hence a good command of the English language is essential.

INTERNSHIP FOCUS

Interns will learn about the development and analysis of ecological monitoring baselines in a conservancy. They will then apply their learning by working in a team to analyze ecological monitoring baselines for Pardamat Conservancy and develop an ecological baseline monitoring maintenance plan.

Ecological topics include:

- Wildlife (and livestock) count transects
- Camera trapping
- Vegetation assessment
- Raptor monitoring
- Predator monitoring

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this program, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the role of ecological monitoring baselines in the conservation of biodiversity
- Create a plan for developing ecological monitoring baselines in a conservancy
- Hone professional and subject-specific skills through the guidance of professionals in the field
- Demonstrate intercultural competency skills such as self-awareness, curiosity, and empathy through collaboration with local professionals and students
- Reflect on personal growth, challenges, and experiences
- Consider their responsibility in the global context as they recognize the interconnectedness of global environmental challenges and successes across borders

EVALUATION

- Final Presentations
- Reflective LinkedIn Post
- Reference Letter

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Walking long distances (i.e., 5km) over rough and muddy terrain during fieldwork
- Exposure to sun and wind during fieldwork
- Living in a setting that does not have a consistent internet connection
- Managing dietary needs with limited available options in some locations

APPLICATION DEADLINE: 15 APRIL 2023

ADMISSIONS@EDU-AFRICA.COM

WWW.EDU-AFRICA.COM

HOST ORGANIZATION

PARDAMAT CONSERVATION AREA

Pardamat Conservation Area is on an expansive 64 000 acres of land with a membership of approximately 850 legally registered landowners. The area, characterized by its long range of hills, adopted a dual-use conservation model that is unique in modern-day conservation but is borrowed from indigenous systems. The model allows for harmonious coexistence between wildlife and humans by discouraging putting up fences and barriers and allowing the existence of natural corridors to permit free wildlife movement and connectivity of wildlife habitats. Pardamat is therefore a key conservation area as it has continued to play a significant role in the survival of the Mara ecosystem and its inhabitants while also generating economic benefits for the local communities. The Pardamat hills also provide important habitat for elephant herds. This protects the savanna from being overutilized by these megafaunas. The unique setup and operation of this conservation area intentionally allow for human-wildlife interaction and coexistence, thus providing for a key case study in the multiple elements of biodiversity conservation and the human development interface.

ACADEMIC MENTOR



PROF STEWART THOMPSON

Stewart Thompson is a Professor of Biodiversity Conservation and has led the Spatial Ecology and Land-use Unit in Biological and

Medical Sciences at Oxford Brookes University for over 25 years. He has a particular interest in how threatened species use landscapes in response to policy and management initiatives. Much of his current work surrounds understanding herbivore population changes and movement patterns in protected areas. In the last decade, he worked on projects in the Maasai Mara as he investigated herbivore responses to the creation of wildlife conservancies and assessed aspects of eco-tourism impacts on wildlife.