

Sri Lanka Elephant & Leopard Conservation

Help in the protection of some of Sri Lanka's most striking wildlife. Enjoy this dazzling location, collecting data and helping to conserve these rare and beautiful animals.

Discover Sri Lanka, a glittering jewel of an island nestled in the aquamarine waters of the Indian Ocean. Help in the protection of some of Sri Lanka's most secretive and striking inhabitants. The fertile jungles of Sri Lanka are home to herds of wild elephants and the enigmatic leopard; while the elephants can be heard crashing through the undergrowth, the latter are notoriously hard to track. Their habitats are at risk, and with both species occupying large territories, their numbers have consequently fallen significantly. This project gives you the chance to enjoy this exotic and dazzling location whilst collecting data that will aid in the conservation of these rare and beautiful animals.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Help conserve the rare & beautiful leopard
- Explore lush & mysterious Sri Lanka
- Make lifelong friends

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

- Minimum age of 18 years

FAST FACTS

Location	Sri Lanka
Activities	Behaviour surveys - elephants & leopards Liaising with the locals Monitoring movements
Transport	Volunteers must make their own way to project site Taken by car between accommodation & project site
Accommodation	Shared volunteer lodge

WHAT DOES THE PROJECT DO?

Before the large scale destruction of Sri Lanka's previously flourishing forests, leopards existed successfully across the island. However a combination of significant factors, such as poaching for fur

and habitat destruction, as well as persecution by local communities, has resulted in their steady decline. Although leopards are highly adaptable and able to live close to human settlements, elephants are not, and their population levels have continued to fall at a worrying rate. Years of civil unrest in the country have largely hampered conservation efforts, particularly in the country's national parks and other regions. There is an agreement amongst researchers and conservationists that more data must be collected in order to instigate effective protective measures, which is why this programme is ultimately so essential and relevant. Join this project and help ensure a brighter future for these wonderful creatures.

WHAT WILL I BE DOING?

The work that you will be carrying out on this project is highly varied. You will be participating in activities that represent efforts to discover more about the behaviour of elephants and leopards, in order to protect them more effectively. You will have the chance to monitor and investigate their movements using various methods, surveying tracks and liaising with local people. All of these tasks will be carried out in the dramatic forest environment of this exotic region of Sri Lanka.

Work programmes are flexible and detailed project schedules are agreed with the research coordinator on arrival.

Volunteers should be prepared for the heat and humidity of tropical jungles and be willing to walk up to 15km per day. You will be trained in the skills you need to conduct the fieldwork. The project staff will prepare each group for their fieldwork. They will explain to you the research methods and the goals of the research.

You will be in teams of up to 9 volunteers plus staff. Your activities broadly fall into two categories: Elephant Research and Leopard and Biodiversity Research. They will range from tank and fence monitoring to transect work to elephant damage surveys to data entry, from wildlife observations and birding to working on the leopard project. We endeavour to make sure that every team member participates in each research activity at least once. In many cases you will be travelling to remote sites for these activities.

A typical daily itinerary may consist of early morning bird surveying before breakfast, followed by elephant and leopard transects out in the jungle before returning to the security of our stationary observation posts as darkness falls.

You'll find your team to be a fun, dynamic mix of ages and experiences, with members who all share a passion about travelling in developing countries and saving endangered life. Your staff will be young, friendly individuals who are highly experienced in their field.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I ARRIVE?

Upon arrival at Colombo airport you will make your own way to a local guesthouse 30 minutes away using our easy to follow instructions. You will then be collected the following morning by a friendly representative from the project team before making your way out to the project site. Once on the project all travel will be included; you will be transported via car between your accommodation and the project site. Please aim to arrive and depart on Sunday.

WHERE WILL I BE STAYING?

Depending on the number of participants at the time of your visit you will be stationed at one of the two field sites operating in the region. Both camps are located close to the Wasgamuwa National Park. As a result elephants and other wildlife often visit the camp and on numerous occasions sloth bear and leopard have been spotted in the vicinity. Accommodation will be shared, either in large dormitory-style lodges or sharing a room between 4 people. Both sites have a dining/meeting shed, a kitchen, a water supply and modern toilets. One of the sites has electricity while the other is reliant upon solar power.

Your first night (Sunday) will be spent in a local guesthouse close to the airport, the cost of which is not included in the cost of your project.

WHAT WILL I BE EATING?

The food that is provided is simple and nutritious and consists largely of rice, vegetables, beans and noodles, all of which are purchased locally in order to help support the local economy. Luxuries such as chocolate, peanut butter and drinking chocolate are only available from some of the nearby towns, so make sure you stock up before heading to the field! Also, with luck you'll be invited to local feasts and festivals – a great way to meet locals and enjoy local culture. Exploring the colourful and bustling markets that happen daily is another great way to sample Sri Lankan delicacies. The staple diet in Sri Lanka is rice which is usually served with curry, which varies regionally. Many of the herbs and vegetables that are served are believed to have medicinal "ayurvedic" properties by Sri Lankans. Most desserts are made with coconut milk, and this ingredient is also incorporated into savoury treats such as pittu, which is rice flour and coconut cooked in bamboo. Another simple and nutritious food you might like to try is "hoppers", which are plain or egg fritters.

COSTS

2 weeks	£ 879
Extra week	£ 449

DEPARTURE DATES

Every 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month. Please arrive on the Sunday as you will be collected from your guesthouse by the project staff on the Monday. Please aim to depart on the Sunday following the completion of your project.

DURATION

From 2 weeks

This project is available throughout the Christmas period

Fully booked from December 10th to 20th 2018

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Before you go

- Pre-departure support
- Travel & medical advice & documentation
- Equipment advice
- Discounted medical kit
- Free Frontier t-shirt

In-country

- Accommodation
- Food
- Local orientation
- Project training
- Project equipment & materials
- In-country emergency support
- 24-hour international HQ back-up

AIRPORT INFORMATION

Nearest airport(s): Colombo Bandaranaike Apt (CMB)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Call us on 020 7613 2422 (UK) / 1 949 336 8178 (US)

Mail us on info@frontier.ac.uk

Check out our social media here:

Project details were correct at the time this document was generated. Price, dates and other details are subject to change. Please see our website for current details for this project.