

Veterinary Experience Programme



The Southern African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds (SANCCOB) was established in 1968 and is a non-profit organization whose primary objective is to reverse the decline of seabird populations through the rescue, rehabilitation, and release of ill, injured, abandoned and oiled seabirds – especially endangered seabirds like the African penguin.

In over 50 years, SANCCOB has treated around 100 000 seabirds. In a non-spill year, SANCCOB treats up to 2 500 seabirds, of which approximately 1000 - 1 500 are African penguins. Other seabirds treated by SANCCOB include various Cormorant species (including the endangered Bank and Cape cormorant), the endangered Cape gannet, various species of terns; pelagic birds such as albatrosses and petrels, oystercatchers, gulls, pelicans and other coastal seabirds that are found in the region. On average, SANCCOB admits between 24 and 30 different seabird species for rehabilitation per year.”

Programme description

The Veterinary Experience Programme has been developed to expose participants to a career in veterinary medicine. While SANCCOB is not a typical veterinary practice, participants will nonetheless benefit from the opportunity to observe the clinical veterinary work in this world-renowned seabird rehabilitation centre. The programme is only offered at the Table View centre in Cape Town, South Africa.

Participants will be required to work during normal business hours, namely Monday to Friday, 8 am to 5 pm. The programme involves daily supervision and instruction from a qualified clinical veterinarian. Due to the nature of our facility, the veterinarian may on occasion engage in activities which do not constitute clinical veterinary care. During those periods participants will have access to veterinary textbooks, research papers and veterinary standard operating procedures for self-study.

Only one participant will be accepted into the programme at any given time to ensure the most beneficial experience for the participant.

Board of Directors: *Dr S Petersen (Chairperson), Natalie Maskell (Chief Executive Officer), I Cilliers (Treasurer), Dr A Makhado, Dr A Wolfaardt, V Boule.*



Areas of instruction

Participants will be exposed to hands-on experience in a variety of areas, including:

1. Clinical evaluation of the basic treatment of seabirds
 - a. Physical evaluation (body condition, hydration, chest assessment, presence of wound etc.)
 - b. Discussion regarding medication choices and different treatment options
 - c. Blood sampling
 - d. Intramuscular injections
 - e. Subcutaneous injections
 - f. Lab evaluation (decision making involving blood results and faecal smears)
2. Microscope work
3. Post-mortems
4. X-rays
5. Anaesthesia
6. Wound care
7. Advanced surgery: endoscopy, fracture repair, enucleation (*case dependent*)
8. Weekly health checks and planning for specific cases

Level of involvement

ONE WEEK participant	TWO WEEK participant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observe during clinical evaluation of basic treatment of seabirds - Microscope work (practice smears) – depending on the level of experience/background - Assist during post-mortem evaluation - Assist with taking X-rays and related evaluation - Observe anaesthesia (to monitor as a 2nd person) - Observe wound care (evaluation, procedures and bandaging) - Observe advanced surgery: endoscopy, fracture repair, enucleation (case dependent) - Discuss weekly health checks and plans (Case dependent) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assist in clinical evaluation of basic treatment of seabirds (including blood sampling, intramuscular injections, subcutaneous injections) - Microscope work – depending on the level of experience/background - Assist with post-mortem evaluation - Assist with taking X-rays and related evaluation - Assist with basic procedures under the supervision of clinical veterinarian - Assist with wound care (evaluation, procedures and bandaging) under the supervision of a clinical veterinarian - Observe advanced surgery: endoscopy, fracture repair, enucleation (case dependent) - Discuss weekly health checks and plans (case dependent) - Prepare a presentation on an interesting case/area of seabird veterinary work observed at SANCCOB

Programme types and costs

The degree of veterinary experience of each candidate will determine the programme available to them.

International Participants

- Students in their pre-clinical year of Veterinary science studies or are interested in a career or studies in veterinary science may apply for the **one-week Veterinary Experience Programme**.
- Qualified veterinarians, vet nurses or technicians and students in their clinical years of study may also apply for our **two-week Veterinary Experience Programme**.
- **Cost:**
 - One-week programme – R1500
 - Two-week programme – R3000
 - Qualified veterinarians- R2000 per a week

Local Participants

- South African citizens, aged 17 years or older, who have an interest in veterinary sciences and intend on pursuing a career in this field may apply for our **one-week Veterinary Experience Programme**. There is a maximum of six positions available throughout the year and the programme will be run during school holidays. No experience is necessary.
- Local veterinary students in their final year of study may apply for our **two-week Veterinary Experience Programme**.
- **Cost:**
 - One-week programme – R500
 - Two-week programme – R1000
 - Qualified veterinarians- R800 per a week

To apply, applicants should complete an application form and send it, along with a motivation letter, to volunteers@sanccob.co.za.

Thank you for your interest in our programme. If you have any further queries or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

We look forward to welcoming you to SANCCOB.

Warm regards

Brittany Lowe

SANCCOB Volunteer Coordinator

Email: volunteers@sanccob.co.za

SANCCOB is a non-profit organization (Registration No. 2001/026273/08, Non-profit Number: 003-134 NPO).