



# CARNIVORE RESEARCH MALAWI VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME ENQUIRY PACK



UNIVERSITY OF  
**BATH**



# WELCOME TO THE CRM VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME



## WHY CRM?

Thank you for your interest in CRM. Volunteers play a vital role in helping us to achieve our aims.

We need as much help as we can get to make a difference for carnivores in Malawi, we are a small team with a big task ahead. In return it is our hope that volunteers will enjoy volunteering with us, meet like-minded people and develop some new skills.

Human population density in Malawi is very high and as a result carnivores experience regular conflict with communities. Carnivores in Malawi are threatened both inside and outside protected areas from poaching, snaring and persecution. Spotted hyaena (*Crocuta crocuta*) are the most widespread carnivore, which occur throughout the country in most villages, creating fear and conflict. In addition there are healthy populations of hyaena, jackal and serval living in the capital city Lilongwe.

Malawi is a unique country with remnant populations of carnivores in each national park and very little conservation research. CRM are the only carnivore research organisation working in Malawi to conserve carnivores across the country. CRM focuses on conducting applied research to inform human wildlife conflict management.

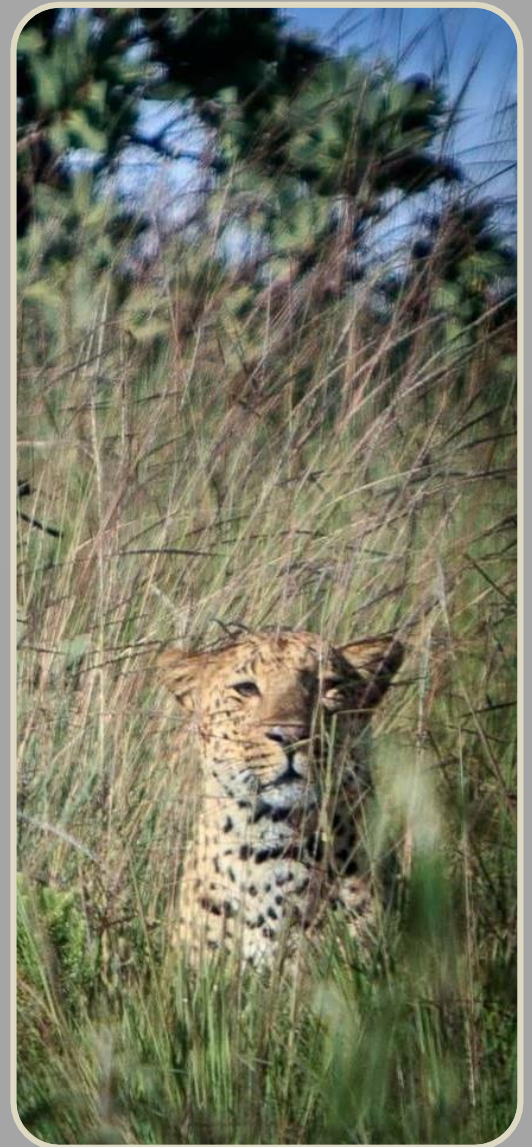


# WHY MALAWI?

Carnivores in Malawi are heavily persecuted and threatened both inside and outside protected areas. From poaching, snaring and persecution. Spotted hyaena (*Crocuta crocuta*) occur throughout the country in most villages, creating fear and conflict. Currently there is a lack of understanding of the drivers of conflict and the resource requirements of carnivores outside protected areas, limiting conservation management.

Conflicts in Malawi are high, as the human population density is amongst the highest in Africa. Combined with increasing deforestation (second highest rate in Southern Africa) and habitat loss, carnivore populations are under increasing pressure and are in significant decline. CRM are the only carnivore research organisation operating in Malawi and work in close collaboration with the Department of Parks and Wildlife and Traditional Authorities to ensure results generate conservation impact and inform conservation management.

Carnivore Research Malawi (CRM) is a non-profit conservation project based in Malawi, which falls under the umbrella of the charity Conservation Research Africa (CRA) (registered in England and Wales, No. 1170640). CRM and CRA were founded by Dr Emma Stone and operate in collaboration with the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Malawi (DNPW), the University of the West of England, and Nottingham Trent University UK. CRM conducts three core activities across three research bases/stations.



Applied Research



Education & Outreach



Capacity Building



# WHAT WE DO

## Applied Research

We conduct applied research to understand the ecology, spatial behaviour and threats to carnivores in Malawi. We aim to understand the impacts of habitat fragmentation, urbanisation and human wildlife conflict on carnivore ecology and survival to inform conservation management.

We are running a number of research projects across our sites and our current main focus is the Urban Hyena Research Project which aims to assess the behavioural ecology of urban and suburban hyena populations, to understand resource requirements, drivers of conflict, and hyena population density. The KNP project aims to assess the density and trends in carnivores in Miombo woodlands in KNP.



## Education & Outreach

We educate communities about carnivores and human carnivore conflict through comprehensive community based outreach, community conflict mitigation and awareness programmes through our network of community facilitators. We are also developing an education centre at our Urban Research site in Lilongwe from which we will conduct education programmes for local schools.

## Capacity Building

We are increasing long-term project success by building capacity in carnivore research, monitoring and management for the Department of Parks and Wildlife and students from Bunda University Malawi through training courses, attachment programmes and postgraduate research projects at MSc and PhD level.



# WHY WORK WITH CRM?

## Real Scientific Research

CRM is led by Dr Emma Stone (Founder/Director) who has been conducting research in applied African ecology for over 20 years, and has a passion for hyaena. Emma completed her MSc research on Brown Hyaena in South Africa, is a member of the IUCN Hyaena specialist group and the Southern Rangewide Steering Committee for Cheetah and African wild dog. Emma is senior lecturer at the University of Bath, UK.

Emma works in close collaboration with Dr Richard Yarnell (Associate Professor at Nottingham Trent University UK, and CRA Trustee). Richard and Emma have been conducting collaborative projects in Africa for over 15 years. Dr Yarnell is a member of the IUCN specialist group for Hyaena.

CRM also works in collaboration with the Range Wide Conservation Programme for Cheetah and Wild Dog which informs IUCN action planning for these species.

We offer a unique opportunity to work alongside established internationally renowned research scientists and assist in applied conservation research & community conservation.



NOTTINGHAM  
TRENT UNIVERSITY



HYAENA  
SPECIALIST  
GROUP  
IUCN SPECIES SURVIVAL COMMISSION



UNIVERSITY OF  
BATH



# WHY WORK WITH US?

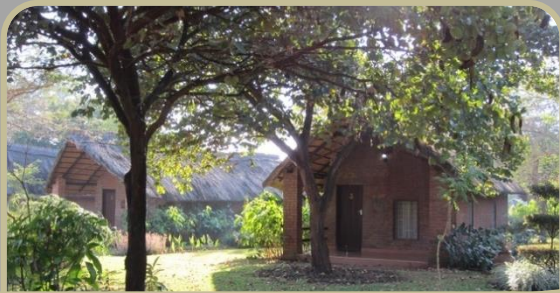


## Experience Bush and City!

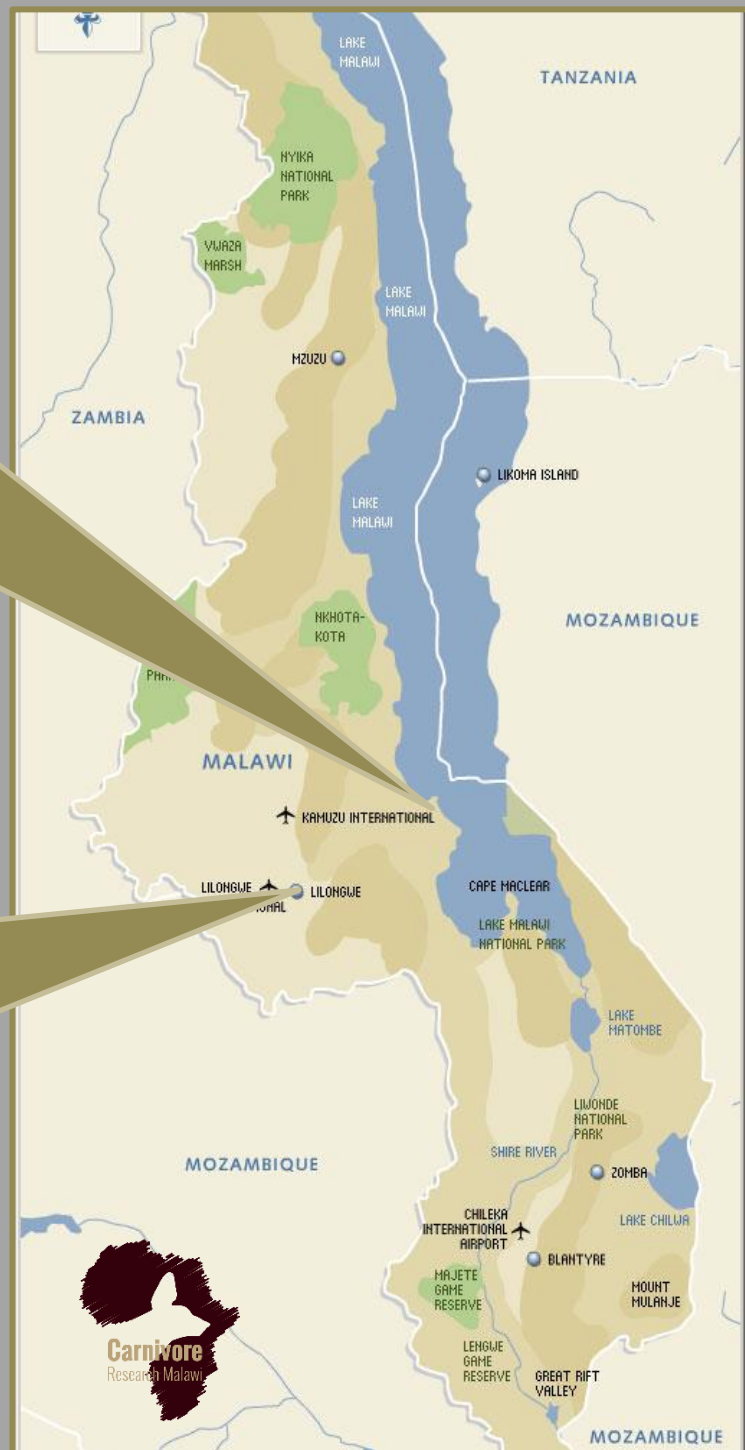
You have a choice of camps with CRM as we have research camps in Kuti Wildlife Reserve and Lilongwe city, where our Conservation Research Centre is based. At certain times of year we also conduct satellite camps to other sites including Kasungu National Park. This gives you a diverse range of carnivore research and conservation experience, both inside and outside protected areas, in the communities where human carnivore conflict is common, and also on the urban carnivore programme in Lilongwe where we are researching the ecology and conservation of large carnivores surviving in urban Africa.



Kuti Wildlife Reserve & surrounding areas



Urban Research Centre Lilongwe



# URBAN RESEARCH CAMP LILONGWE CITY



## Carnivore research in the heart of Lilongwe



From our Urban Research Camp you get a chance to experience the hub of African city life. Our centre is located just outside Lilongwe city in beautiful native woodland on a lovely property at Barefoot Safari Lodge, located only 3km from the city centre. Volunteers are accommodated in the dorm rooms which include beds, bedding, mosquito nets, hot showers and flushing toilets. Meals are prepared and taken together with the CRM staff, interns and placement students at the adjacent staff house. Here you experience urban carnivore research and the conflicts and challenges

In 2021 and 2022 we are focusing on **hyaena clan composition monitoring and GPS collaring** around the city as part of our Urban Hyaena Project. You will conduct den surveys to monitor den activity and use by urban hyaena, camera trapping and scat transects, as well as some hyaena darting and collaring. From our lab at Urban Camp you will conduct dietary analysis of scats using cross section and follicle analysis. From here we sometimes conduct satellite trips to other field sites to monitor hyaena clans and understand human carnivore conflict.

Based at the urban research camp you will get to experience other projects including urban bat research and community outreach work.



### Research Work Summary

Research Projects	Urban Hyaena Research Project Human Carnivore Conflict Research Project Urban Jackal Research Project
Research Methods	Radio tracking, den visits, camera trapping, systematic scat transects, scat analysis, some conflict visits and data collection, camera trapping.
Habitats	Riverine, Garden, Parkland, Village

# KUTI RESEARCH CAMP



## Carnivore research in the heart of the bush

Working with us gives you a unique opportunity to work in a remote unspoilt African wilderness with very few visitors, untouched by mass tourism as found in Kenya and Tanzania. The CRM field research centre is based in Kuti Wildlife Reserve), near Salima town and the shores of Lake Malawi.

Kuti Wildlife Reserve is located around one and a half hours from Lilongwe so an easy drive for short field visits.

Kuti has a diversity of wildlife and in camp you will be on permanent safari, with regular visits to by zebras, vervet monkeys and bush babies. Camp is very comfortable with thatched A-Frame chalets equipped with beds, mattresses, linen and solar lights. There is a fully equipped ablution block with hot showers and flushing toilets. A trip not to be forgotten with visits to world famous Lake Malawi, and sundowners on the starlit sundeck.

In Kuti we conduct camera trapping and community work in the surrounding areas to locate carnivore populations in the local communities.



### Research Work Summary

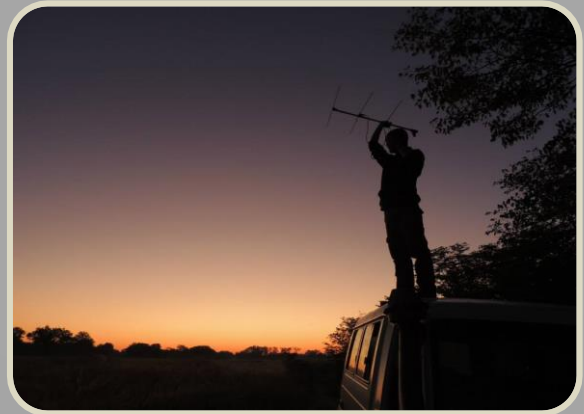
Research Projects	Leopards and Landscapes Project Carnivore Diet Project
Research Methods	Camera trapping, scat transects, scat dietary analysis, spotlighting, large mammal transects, some outreach work in villages
Habitats Surveyed	Dambo grassland, Miombo woodland, Villages, Lake Shore



# WHY WORK WITH US?

## Gain new skills, build your CV & your career

With CRM you will have the opportunity to gain many new skills including field research techniques including camera trapping, individual ID recognition, large mammal transects, spotlighting, den searches, scat tracking, hair cross section analysis and radio tracking and cage/leg hold trapping of hyaena and jackal (Lilongwe Site Only).

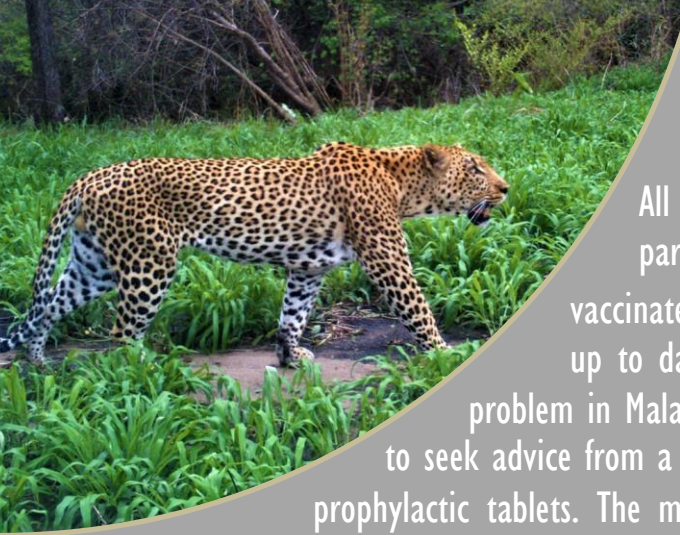


## Comprehensive training for carnivore biologists

If you are pursuing a career in carnivore or conflict research you can gain specific skills which can take many years to obtain including: carnivore trapping, radio tracking, dietary analysis (cross sectioning and follicle analysis) and camera trapping. For those joining us for more than 3 weeks we conduct a training needs assessment on arrival to identify and plan your training targets to be achieved during your placement. We develop a structured training programme for your placement and you receive a CRM training manual to take away. Training covers both practical and theoretical training in the following areas:

Subject	Lectures	Practical Sessions
Camera Trapping	Camera Types, use, pros and cons. Data collected, occupancy modelling, how to design a survey	Setting and checking camera traps, downloading and processing data
Diet analysis	Scat ID, systematic scat searches, use of scats to assess carnivore diet, prey abundance estimates and use of data	Processing scats, analysing extracting and conducting cross sections and follicle analysis
Radio tracking	How to radio track, use of data, basic use of GIS for home range analysis	Radio tracking in the field, triangulation, homing in, data collection and write up





# HEALTH & SAFETY

All volunteers **must** be vaccinated against Tetanus and Rabies to participate in the volunteer programme. We also advise you to be vaccinated against Typhoid, Meningitis, Hepatitis A & B, and Polio but up to date professional advice must be sought. Malaria is a serious problem in Malawi and in some cases it can be life-threatening. You will need to seek advice from a qualified travel health professional. You should get appropriate prophylactic tablets. The medication is normally started before you leave and continued for a short time after you have returned. Please consult your GP or travel clinic, as there are several options available to you, at different costs. Once you have chosen one they will prescribe it for you.

## How we support you

Our team are very experienced and have worked in the remote African bush for over 12 years. We always work with armed scouts when conducting surveys at night or on foot and conduct a full risk assessment for each volunteer that arrives.

We have a medical evacuation procedure in place and conduct a comprehensive safety briefing and training period on arrival, covering dangerous wild animals and snake bite. We keep volunteer group sizes small to ensure maximum safety and a high staff to volunteer ratio.



# COSTS & ARRIVAL

CRM volunteers can play a vital role in helping us to achieve our aims. We need as much help as we can get to make a difference for carnivores' conservation in Africa, we are a small team with a task ahead. In return it is our hope that volunteers will enjoy volunteering with us, meet like-minded people and develop some new skills. The cost of volunteering varies according to the length of your stay. A minimum 4 weeks stay is required at present due to COVID, but you can stay up to 12 weeks, the longer you stay the cheaper it is per week. Placements longer than 12 weeks are available subject to availability. Extensions can be made once in country, also subject to availability.

## Arrival and Departure

Please note that you can arrive on any day during the year.

We will collect you from Lilongwe airport on arrival and take you back to camp.

Please ensure you check the COVID procedures for your country, as some countries require you to quarantine on return home and have COVID prior to travel. You can get COVID tests in Malawi.



## Mix and match!

For placements more than 1 month you may be able to come to Kuti and Lilongwe and mix and match between them depending on our work priorities at the time. Contact us to discuss which of our camps you want to come to on: [volunteer@carnivoreresearchmalawi.org](mailto:volunteer@carnivoreresearchmalawi.org).





# COSTS

We are passionate about supporting up and coming scientists and researchers in gaining the skills required to make a real difference in wildlife conservation. We recognise that money is tight during your time as a student trying to gain experience and therefore we offer a special placement rate to students.

## What's included

- Airport transfers
- All accommodation (at camp)
- Three meals a day at camp
- Free local sim card upon arrival
- Induction and research training pack
- Comprehensive safety training
- A donation to the project
- On site project support by on site scientists
- Access to project vehicles (subject to requirements)
- Access to facilities and some research kit

No Months	Kuti/Lilongwe Base Price	Equivalent rate per month
2	£1,900	£951
3	£2,725	£907
4	£3,540	£885
5	£4,360	£872
6	£5,180	£863
7	£5,998	£857
8	£6,820	£852
9	£7,640	£849

## What's not included

- Travel and medical insurance
- Your personal project related fuel (if conducting MSc/PHD/BSc project)
- Flights, visas and vaccinations
- Internet and personal calls
- Excursions and personal expenditure
- Personal kit and batteries
- Meals and travel beyond the placement



# HOW TO APPLY

Download and complete online application form at [www.carnivoresearchmalawi.org/volunteer](http://www.carnivoresearchmalawi.org/volunteer) and email it to us at [volunteer@carnivoresearchmalawi.org](mailto:volunteer@carnivoresearchmalawi.org)

Once we have received your completed application form we will contact you to confirm dates, costs, and send you a detailed volunteer information pack with all the information you need before you arrive.

To confirm your placement we will need a £200 holding deposit (sent via bank transfer, which is deducted from your total), once received you can get started organising your trip. We will assist you with this and send you all the information you need, but there are a few things you will need to put on your to do list:

- Check the COVID requirements from your country for travel to Malawi
- Book your flights and insurance (making sure they are COVID secure)
- Visit a doctor/travel clinic for advice on vaccinations
- Go shopping for your kit, we will send you a recommended kit list, you will not require any specialist kit, but there are still the odd bits and pieces you might need

Thank you for your interest in CRM  
We look forward to hearing from you



[www.facebook.com/carnivoresearchmalawi](http://www.facebook.com/carnivoresearchmalawi)  
Visit us: [www.carnivoresearchmalawi.org](http://www.carnivoresearchmalawi.org)  
Email us: [volunteer@carnivoresearchmalawi.org](mailto:volunteer@carnivoresearchmalawi.org)





# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **Are there set arrival and departure days and what about COVID?**

You can arrive any day of the week. Currently you are not required to quarantine on arrival in Malawi, however you must show a valid certificate of COVID vaccination or if you don't have this then a valid PCR COVID test, obtained within 72 hours before arrival in Malawi. If you cannot show a negative test obtained within the 72 hours prior, you will be required to pay for a test in Malawi. Please be sure to contact us prior to departure to check for any changes in the COVID policy and visit the Ministry of Health — Malawi Facebook page for updates <https://www.facebook.com/malawimoh/>.

## **How much luggage am I allowed to bring to Malawi?**

Most airlines have baggage size and weight limits and assess charges for transport of baggage that exceeds those limits. Most airline allowance is two checked pieces of luggage and a carry-on bag. You should check with your airline carrier to confirm.

## **What is the electric current and outlet type in Malawi?**

Roughly 220–240 volts, 50 cycles; it may range from 190 volts to 260 volts when it is on. We have limited solar power at Kuti Research Camp and mains power at the urban camp. Batteries are available to purchase in Lilongwe however it may be worth bringing a charger and rechargeable batteries in all sizes. The sockets are the UK type, so if you have other power cords than UK you will need to bring adapters.

## **How much money should I bring?**

Volunteers based at Kuti have little access to shops and therefore spending money whilst in camp is limited to the occasional drink or meal at the lodge. If you have a few drinks per week and a meal, expect to spend around £15-20. If you are based in Lilongwe there are more spending opportunities including shopping, restaurants, bars and cafes. Volunteers may wish to bring additional money for vacation travel around Malawi or other countries. Suggested sources for local currency are covered below.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **Can I call home from Malawi?**

Cellular internet is widely available in Malawi at a reasonable price. We recommend WhatsApp calling and texting which is cheap and convenient and so make sure you and your family have the App and are connected before leaving home.

## **Should I bring a mobile phone with me and what is the sim card you provide?**

Yes, you are required to have a phone whilst you are on placement with us. A Malawian Sim card will be provided on your arrival. Make sure that the phone that you bring is **unlocked** and is SIM card and GSM compatible. The sim card we give you can be used on all unlocked cellular telephones. If you have any concerns about the phone you want to bring please discuss with the volunteer coordinator before travel.

## **Will there be email and Internet access?**

### **1. Lilongwe Research Centre**

At the Urban Camp office in Lilongwe we have satellite internet for work and emergency personal use. Cellular internet is available on your smartphone using a data bundle at a cost of MWK10,500 (approx. £11) for 6GB. Internet cafes and Wi-Fi are available in Lilongwe, and the larger towns.

### **2. Kuti Research Centre**

Internet is limited to cellular internet service on your cell phone. If you bring an unlocked smart phone you can purchase internet data bundles and access the internet from anywhere using your phone.

## **Should I bring my computer?**

Having your own laptop is not a necessity but it is very useful in data entry and communication with friends and family. The recommendation is to bring something lightweight and expendable.

## **What are the sleeping arrangements is there a cot or camp bed, would you recommend I bring an additional sleeping pad?**

- 1. Lilongwe Urban Camp** The accommodation in Lilongwe includes a bed, mattress, bedding and a mosquito net. You will need to bring your own sleeping bag.
- 2. Kuti Research Camp** - In Kuti the beds are standard bunk beds with mattresses so you will only need a winter sleeping bag for the cold season (April — Sept) and a summer weight sleeping bag in the hot humid season (Oct — Mar). There is no need to bring a pad or camp cot.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **What are the arrangements for washing clothes?**

You can wash your own clothes, or you can pay for them to be washed for MWK 2,000 (£2) per bag. Washing powder is available in camp.

## **How strictly should I follow the kit in regards to the medications in**

You need to have the full recommended medical kit as outlined in the kit list in the pre arrival pack according to the location / camp you are staying at. This is because we are located in a remote location in a poor country with little and often no access to medicines.

## **As well as no camouflage clothing are there any other colours that are not recommended for wear in the bush?**

Blue is not so great as it tends to attract more flies, but otherwise fine.

## **What type of mosi net should I bring?**

Mosi nets are provided in both camps.

## **What kind of footwear should I bring?**

In rainy season (Nov — Mar) we recommend bringing hiking boots and a pair of sturdy rain boots like bogs. The rest of the year hiking boots will suffice. Sneakers are not suitable for walking in the bush, but can be worn around camp if you wish.

## **Should I keep my currency in USD or GBP?**

Cash in USD or GBP (notes over \$20/GBP20) can be changed on arrival at the airport or at one of the bureau de change offices around Lilongwe. Note that **Scottish and Irish pounds** are not accepted in Malawi. The simplest way to get local currency is to use the ATMs which are available at the airport and most towns around the country where you can withdraw Malawi Kwacha using your international VISA or MasterCard, credit or debit card. Don't forget you will need US\$50 cash for your entry visa.

## **What food is provided and is the water drinkable?**

Ingredients for healthy vegetarian meals are provided by ABC. Research Assistants, Volunteers, Interns and Placement Students all cook and eat together in the communal eating areas. Water is either bottled or from a borehole/boiled before drinking and is provided at all ABC facilities.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Are there any recommended field guides?**

You can bring the following if you wish, but it is not a requirement:

*Humans and Hyenas, a Monster Misunderstood. 2021. [https://www.amazon.co.uk/Humans-Hyenas-Misunderstood-Conservation-Environment/dp/0367436418/ref=pd\\_lpo\\_3?pd\\_rd\\_i=0367436418&psc=1](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Humans-Hyenas-Misunderstood-Conservation-Environment/dp/0367436418/ref=pd_lpo_3?pd_rd_i=0367436418&psc=1)*

*The Kingdon Field Guide to African Mammals. ISBN-13: 978-0691164533*  
<http://www.amazon.com/Kingdon-Field-Guide-African-Mammals/dp/0691164533>

*The Behavior Guide to African Mammals: Including Hoofed Mammals, Carnivores, Primates. ISBN-13: 978-0520272972*  
[http://www.amazon.com/The-Behavior-Guide-African-Mammals/dp/0520272978/ref=pd\\_sim\\_14\\_3?ie=UTF8&dpID=51Ziyq7gETL&dpSrc=sims&preST=AC\\_UL160\\_SR106%2C160\\_&refRID=07CAYJ8RAP8NQXQZ4PZG](http://www.amazon.com/The-Behavior-Guide-African-Mammals/dp/0520272978/ref=pd_sim_14_3?ie=UTF8&dpID=51Ziyq7gETL&dpSrc=sims&preST=AC_UL160_SR106%2C160_&refRID=07CAYJ8RAP8NQXQZ4PZG)

*Birds of Africa: South of the Sahara. ISBN-13: 9781770078840*  
<http://www.nhbs.com/title/128105/birds-of-africa>