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Conservation Volunteers Australia

Adventure



Relaxation



Culture



Trip Name: Conservation Volunteers Australia **Trip Code:** OZCV **Duration:** From 2 weeks

Trip Highlights

- Sunshine, fresh air, amazing natural beauty and wildlife, and cool people.
- Make a real difference to conservation in Australia, and have loads of fun
- Flexible programme that offers you a choice of locations to fit in with your travel plans
- Tasks designed specifically to deliver positive conservation outcomes for Australia's fauna and flora – like tree planting, protecting endangered species and environmental monitoring
- Make great friends to continue your Australia travels with



Overview

This is real hands-on experience of conservation in Australia, and the team leaders know the areas like the back of their hands. They'll give you really great ideas of what to see and do in your time out.

The programme offers an amazing variety of locations and projects, whether you're caravanning or staying in hostels, shearers' quarters, bunkhouses or camping out under the stars.

Taken to the best places for sunsets and sunrises, shown kangaroo spots, with wallabies, koalas, platypus and all the other weird and wonderful wildlife in Oz - this is a totally awesome environment!

Destination Info

You can choose from a wide range of locations and stay for as little as two weeks. Experience the Great outdoors - Aussie-style!

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Choose from Cairns, Townsville, Brisbane, Newcastle, Sydney (includes Canberra), Melbourne, Bendigo, Adelaide, Perth, Darwin and Hobart (Tasmania).

Itinerary



This package gives you the chance to get out in the fresh air, feel the sun on your skin and do something new and challenging. The volunteering takes you on a range of different conservation projects, travelling to a new location every week or two and projects may take place in urban, regional and remote locations (please note that if you have selected to volunteer in Sydney you may be placed in or around Canberra). The following are examples of the types of things volunteers do – every volunteer has a different experience, and projects are selected according to conservation priority, weather and seasonal considerations.

Tree planting - participants have planted more than 10 million trees in the past decade.

Environmental monitoring - e.g. tracking wildlife numbers (such as echidnas), and identifying different species.

Erosion and salinity control - e.g. constructing fences around lakes to prevent soil washing away when cattle come to drink.

Seed collection - to re-vegetate areas in need of regeneration (i.e. areas affected by bush fires).

Construction and maintenance of walking tracks - e.g. clearing pathways and tracks that have become overgrown after bush fires.

Endangered flora and fauna surveys - Identifying and removing non-indigenous plants and trees.

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Planting of native species - e.g. planting native blackthorn to provide new habitats for the threatened purple copperwing butterfly.

Weed control - e.g. removing berberis bush to encourage native plants to grow, and poisoning prickly pear cactus that can get caught in kangaroo's feet.

Habitat restoration - e.g. to clear invasive Pond Apple which takes over the habitat of native plants and destroys the biodiversity, affecting native wildlife such as koalas, wallabies and thorny devils!

Heritage restoration - e.g. helping to restore some historic railway carriages from the 'Ghan' railway that travels through central Australia.

Fence construction - e.g. to protect sensitive wetland areas from farm livestock, or for bush fire protection.



Projects normally run for 5 days per week, and you usually have one or two days free per week for relaxing or sightseeing. Project hours are normally from 8am - 4pm, although this varies on some projects.

You will usually travel to a different project location every week or two. This means that you will generally get to take part in a variety of project activities in different areas! You will not be offered a choice of projects, as they vary according to seasonal conditions and conservation priorities. CVA will do their best to provide a variety of projects or locations during your time as a volunteer, while achieving their essential conservation outcome, which always remains the priority.

Nature Saturdays

Nature Saturdays run on the second and fourth Saturday of each month. They provide you with an opportunity to experience and enjoy the Australian bush and wildlife that you are helping to conserve.

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Second Saturday of each month – a guided bush walk with an experienced guide

Forth Saturday of each month – entry to a wildlife or cultural exhibition.

Please note that your project may be disrupted in extreme weather conditions. The guided bushwalks will not operate on days of total fire ban. Our team in Australia will aim to organise alternative activities in the event of adverse weather. However, please note that this is not always possible due to the location of some projects.

Please note: Itineraries and activities are subject to change. Projects are closed over the Christmas and New Year period.



Through the commitment made to conservation by our partners in-country and their volunteers, a number of major awards have been given to the organisation.

2000 – They were added to the Global 500 Honour Roll. This the highest honour in the United Nations Environment Program.

2002 - They won the Prime Minister's Award Excellence in Community Business Partnerships.

2003 – They won the Australian Financial Review Magazine Corporate partnership Award.

Our partner has won five Awards from the Banksia Environmental Foundation.

You will be part of a team of up to 10 volunteers, with a Team Leader. Your team leader will explain the project aims to you and help you to complete each project safely and effectively. Your team leader will also give you

regular safety briefings.

This is available to people from all across the world from the age of 18 years +. We are unable to guarantee the age range of your fellow volunteers, but everyone has at least one common interest – the desire to help conserve Australia's incredible environment!

Accommodation

Accommodation will vary from project to project. A combination of the following may be used during your stay - caravanning, hostels, shearers' quarters, bunkhouses and camping (tents will be supplied). You should bring a sleeping mat along with your sleeping bag. Please note - you may have to share sleeping quarters.

Programme Services and Facilities

Internet

It is difficult to say whether you will have access to the Internet whilst you are working on the projects, as we cannot say where you will be and what the facilities will be like. We advise you to ask your team leader on your first day.

Telephone

The international telephone access code for Australia is +61.

To place an outgoing direct dialled international call, dial +44 for the UK, +49 for Germany, followed by the telephone number. For example to call Real Gap Experience dial +44 1892 516164 / +49 69 222226 475.

It is possible, depending on your location, that you will have a mobile phone signal throughout your stay in Australia. But this, along with telephone facilities in your accommodation, depends on where you are and what projects you are working on. In outback locations you are unlikely to have mobile phone signal.

Laundry

Laundry facilities will vary depending on where you are and the accommodation that you are staying in. Be prepared to hand wash any of your clothes in a sink on site – remember to bring your travel wash!

Money

You will have access to banking facilities in your arrival city, but after this it will vary depending on the location of your project. However, as all your meals and accommodation costs are included whilst you are on the project it is unlikely that you will need much money during the week. We advise withdrawing a small amount of cash before you

travel to your first project location.

Meals

All meals are included in the price; vegetarian or vegan diets can be catered for. Please let us know at the time of booking if you have any special dietary requirements.

Typical meals consist of - Breakfast: cereals, bread or toast, tea and coffee. Lunch: a self-made sandwich and fruit. Dinner: A meal prepared by the group, typically something like pasta, roast or vegetarian option. CVA is all about teamwork and this includes cooking, cleaning and washing up!

What's Included

- Meals whilst on the project
- Accommodation whilst on the project
- Detailed orientation
- CVA membership
- CVA wildlife book
- Nature Saturdays



What's Not Included

- Flights
- Insurance
- Visas
- Transfer to the CVA office
- Accommodation before programme starts



What to Pack

Please note that this kit list is intended to help you plan what you may need to take with you and therefore, you may not need all of the listed items on your travels nor is it exhaustive.

As space is limited we ask that volunteers keep their luggage to a maximum of 15KGs.

Personal Admin

- Documents
- Passport
- Driving licence

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- NHS card or a National Insurance card or proof of entitlement to your National Health Service, or the German Krankenversicherungskarte
- Insurance policy document or card
- Credit card, for emergencies and booking internal flights

General

- Daypack
- Journal or diary
- Towel
- Toiletries
- Alarm Clock
- Torch/batteries
- Sleeping bag and mat (a sleeping bag is essential. Some projects may also involve sleeping in locations without beds or mattresses so you may choose to bring your own sleeping mat if you wish)
- Personal drink bottle
- High protection sun screen
- Small padlock to secure luggage
- Mosquito net

Clothing

- Clothing suitable for all weather conditions (long sleeved trousers and tops are essential to protect you from the sun)
- Raincoat and /or waterproof clothing
- Working clothing (items you don't mind getting dirty!)
- Sturdy work boots (suitable for rugged and wet conditions, protective toe caps are recommended) and thick socks
- Gardening gloves
- Wide brimmed sun hat
- Sunglasses
- Casual clothes
- Shorts
- T-shirts
- Swimming costume (swimming may be available during your free time)

Medical Kit

- Medication
- First Aid Kit
- Insect repellent

Minimum Age

Minimum age 18 years old, maximum decided on potential participant's health and fitness.

Flights

Your flight to Australia should arrive at the airport nearest airport to your project on your programme start date, please contact your travel advisor for further details. Your return flight should be arranged for the day after your programme end date.

To book your flights, please contact your travel advisor who will do their best to get you the best deal on the day. Please provide them with your full name as it is stated in your passport. Before you make the call please make sure you have your required departure dates, return dates and other details you may require.

Please note: If you are flying to Australia via the USA you will need to obtain Travel Authorisation by registering online through the Electronic System for Travel Authorisation (ESTA) no later than 72 hours before departure. This is compulsory and will cost USD\$14 to register. To register, please visit: www.esta.cbp.dhs.gov

It is important that once you have booked your flights you add these details to your Online account, or alternatively you can contact us with your departure date, the flight number and arrival time at your destination.

FAQs

1. How much spending money will I need?

While you are on the programme, you will not need much spending money as your food and board is included. But you will do excursions on the weekends, so minimum of £60 per week will get you by.

2. Can I split my volunteering between two different areas?

Yes! There are many areas throughout Australia, and you can choose to do a week in each. However, travel inbetween each location is not included.

3. Will I need a sleeping bag?

Yes, you will need a sleeping bag. You will be able to get one when you land in Australia.

4. Can I travel after my Volunteering?

Yes. Your Tourist Visa is valid for 3 months.

5. Do I need a Working Holiday Visa to volunteer?

You do not need a Working Holiday for this programme. You will get a Tourist visa on arrival.

6. Do I need to take a sleeping bag?

Yes, you will need to take a sleeping bag with you however some of the offices do have them for hire with a deposit. The fee is normally \$5 with a \$20 deposit and covers the cleaning between use. It is best to check before arrival in case they have been hired already or that the office does not have them.

7. Do I need to take a mosquito net?

Yes, you will need to take a net with you however some of the offices do have them for hire with a deposit. The fee is normally \$5 with a \$20 deposit and covers the cleaning between use. It is best to check before arrival in case they have been hired already or that the office does not have them.

8. Is there a safety deposit box/safe available?

There won't be a safe or safety deposit box available for you and it is recommend that you do not bring or make alternate arrangements for expensive equipment. Passports etc are your own responsibility (but staff may have useful suggestions if you are unsure). If you have extra equipment/ luggage over 15kgs, it is recommend that you use storage such as those available at airports/ train and bus stations etc as there is not enough room in accommodation.

Support & Advice

Your safety is paramount which is why all our programs have been visited and assessments have been conducted to ensure any major risks have been minimized.



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In addition, you will have access to a 24 hour emergency contact number so you can contact one of our staff at any time should you need to. In addition our overseas partners and coordinators are on hand in-country to assist you.

Financial Security

We know that the last thing you want to worry about when you're planning your trip of a lifetime is whether your money is in safe hands. As a leading global gap year provider it's our job to make sure your finances are secure, so when you book with us you can be confident that we do just that.

Real Gap Experience is part of TUI Travel Plc, one of the largest travel organisations in the world, and these days in the travel industry, large means secure.

Insurance

Whether you're traveling for two weeks or two years, trekking the Amazon in Ecuador or on safari in Africa, insurance is an essential part of your adventure and will help you enjoy your travels, secure in the knowledge that you have the protection you need. In fact, everyone traveling with us must have adequate cover before their trip begins.

Of course you are free to buy insurance from any provider, however at Real Gap Experience, we have partnered with World Nomads to offer policies that have been specifically designed to meet the needs of global travel. If you think you're already covered by an existing policy, such as those offered by credit card providers, check the policy wording very carefully to ensure it covers you for your Real Gap Experience.

For more information on travel insurance please contact us to speak to one of our travel advisors.

Money Matters

The unit of currency is the Australian Dollar. Changing foreign currency or travellers cheques is usually no problem at banks throughout Australia or at licensed moneychangers.

Australia is affordable by Western European and American standards, but if you are travelling on from Southeast Asia you'll notice a big increase in costs!

Meal, Inexpensive Restaurant 13.37 \$

Domestic Beer (0.5 litre draught) 5.04 \$

Coke/Pepsi (0.33 litre bottle) 2.40 \$

Water (0.33 litre bottle) 2.14 \$

(Prices quoted in US Dollar)

Passports and Visas

You should ensure that you have a full passport that is valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is

your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information provided below is to help you with that process. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

All visitors to Australia need a visa – only New Zealand nationals are exempt, however you will receive a 'special category' visa on arrival.

For entry into Australia you will require an eVisitor visa. UK passport holders can apply for a 90-day tourist visa online at www.immi.gov.au All other nationalities should consult the relevant embassy.

If you intend to work after your week in Sydney you will be required to apply for a working holiday visa.

Working Holiday Visa

To take part in this programme you will require a working holiday visa. The working holiday visa is available to anyone age 18-30. The emphasis is on casual employment: you are meant to work for no more than six months at any one job. If you want to stay in Australia for up to 24 months, this is now possible for some nationalities. Speak to one of our sales advisors for more information.

To be eligible for a Working Holiday Visa, you must:

- Be aged between 18 and 30 years at the time of application
- Have a valid passport for one of the countries listed at Australian Immigration, www.immi.gov.au
- Have no dependant children
- Have not previously entered Australia on a working holiday visa
- Meet health and character requirements
- Be outside Australia at the time of visa grant

To be granted a working holiday visa you must also agree that:

- Your main reason for coming to Australia is to holiday
- You must not undertake studies or training for more than 4 months
- You will leave Australia at the end of your authorized stay
- You must have sufficient funds to support yourself for the initial part of your stay. AUD\$5000 minimum is regarded as sufficient. You may have to provide evidence of this in the form of a bank statement.

For the most up to date information on visa requirements, please visit <http://www.immi.gov.au/>

Cultural Considerations

Australia is a melting pot of different cultures. It has a population of over 21 million people with most of the population living on the east coast between Adelaide and Cairns. High waves of immigration from England, Ireland, Italy, Greece, Malta and Eastern Europe have occurred during Australia's brief history, particularly after World War II, and the later waves from the Middle-East, East, and South-East Asia, as well as the Indian subcontinent, have created a truly diverse population.

Although Australia has no official language, English is spoken by 80% of the population. Chinese, Italian and Greek are respectively the next most common languages, reflecting Australia's cultural diversity and concentration of nationalities. Australians have very strong attitudes and belief systems which are reflected in their culture. Australians traditionally have a very ironic sense of humour.

Vaccinations & Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad. The risks to your health whilst travelling will vary depending on your general health and the type of activities you are going to be partaking in and the length of your stay.

Since we are not medically qualified, it is recommended that you consult with your Doctor or a recognised Travel Medical Advisory Service who will assess your particular health risks before recommending vaccines and/or anti-malarial tablets and advising you on what precautions you should take.

Safety

As in most countries there are people who try to take advantage of tourists. The following advice is intended to help you keep safe:

- Always keep your personal items such as passport, money and camera with you and in a safe place. You can buy mini padlocks to prevent people from going into your bag without your permission.
- Don't carry excess amounts of cash
- Wherever possible, walk around in groups, especially after dark, and avoid taking short cuts
- Do not pick up hitchhikers if you are driving and do not hitch hike yourself
- When you are out do not leave your drinks unattended, as there have been reports of drinks being spiked

We advise that you check your government's advice before travelling abroad. For UK and American customers please see the relevant links below;

UK: www.fco.gov.uk

USA: www.travel.state.gov

ATM Theft

It is very likely that you will need to withdraw cash at some point during your travels. Please be cautious when withdrawing money from an ATM and ensure that you are vigilant of other people near the ATM, especially those that offer unsolicited assistance if your card is detained. It has been recognised that individuals are operating unlawful withdrawals by placing 'traps' in ATMs whereby personal bank cards are being detained, causing the victim to believe their card transaction has not been completed, and leaving their bank card in the ATM which is then later retrieved by the thief.

If your card is confiscated or you are concerned that your card has been tampered with, please report immediately to the bank or cancel your card.

Language Guide

Here are some Australian terms and phrases that you might find useful:

Bottle Shop - *Off-licence/Liquor store*
Bonzer - *Good*
Bush - *Unsettled country area*
Dag - *Nerd*
Esky - *Portable insulated box to keep food/drink cold*
Fair Dinkum - *Honestly, truly*
Pokies - *Gambling machines*
Pom - *Person of English descent*
Singlet - *Sleeveless cotton vest*
Smoko - *Tea break*
Thongs - *Flip flops/Sandals*
Ute - *Utility vehicle/pick-up truck*

Food & Drink

You will find food in Australia to suit all taste buds, with the larger cities in particular offering a great range of places to eat. Due to the large amount of British settlers, Australian food is reasonably similar to that in Western Europe, but if you are feeling particularly adventurous get involved in some bush tucker (kangaroo, emus) or the infamous vegemite. For less scary Aussie food, look out for fresh seafood and of course, a typical Aussie barbecue!

Please let Real Gap know before you depart if you are a vegetarian or have any other dietary requirements.

Public Holidays

When planning your trip, you should be aware of the major national holidays celebrated throughout the country.

To view a list of the public holidays for Australia, please see the link below:

www.timeanddate.com/holidays/australia/

Weather

Australia is located in the southern hemisphere, where seasons are the opposite of those in the northern hemisphere.

The summer months in Australia (November to March) can get very hot. Up north, in Queensland for example, the summer period brings the rainy season and the weather can be very hot and humid with lots of rainfall. The winter months (June to August) in Queensland bring much dryer weather but still heat. The further south you go the colder and wetter winter becomes and in some mountainous areas of New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania skiing is possible.

Time

Australia is such a big country that it has three time zones:

Eastern Standard Time (Queensland) – 10 hours ahead of GMT depending on Daylight Savings

Central Time – 9.5 hours ahead of GMT

Western Time - 8 hours ahead of GMT

Electricity

Electricity in Australia is 240 Volts, alternating at 50 cycles per second.



Sockets in Australia are V-shaped flat prongs.

Trip Note Disclaimer

The information contained in this trip note has been compiled with great care and is provided in good faith. Any itinerary featured is correct at time of release. However, our itineraries may change as make improvements that result from travellers' comments, our own research or from time to time as a result of recommended travel advice.

You can rest assured that it is always our goal to provide you with the most rewarding trip and experience ever!

Our Details

If you have any questions about this trip please do not hesitate to contact us and we'll be happy to answer them.

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