



A Pre-Vet Experience

Name: Patty Calvin, pjh55@unh.edu

Where was it? Harnas Wildlife Conservation, Namibia, Africa

Was it a Job, Internship, or Volunteer position? Volunteer

How long were you/have you been there? 3 Weeks

What did you do there? The main goal was to take care of injured animals that could not be returned to the wild, and give animals a place to stay until a new safer home could be found in order to re-release them back into the wild. Normal tasks would be feeding, cleaning enclosures, walking, interacting, entertaining, and giving the animals love in order to provide them with the best life possible.

What species did you work with? Cheetahs, leopards, lions, caracals, wild dogs, baboons, vervet monkeys, cats, dogs, horses, meerkats, ostriches, geese, springbok, birds, bat-eared foxes, crocodiles, and other assortments of animals.

What did you enjoy most about the experience? I loved the hands on interaction with the animals, not everyone can say that they took a cheetah out of a walk, or slept outside with the caracals lying across them like a house cat or dog would do. How many people can say they have got so close to a lion roaring you could feel your chest vibrating. I loved when I would have free time in the middle of the day and would go lay under a tree and take a nap with a cheetah, who would purr so loud you could barely sleep. It was amazing to be around people who loved animals as much as I do, and to see and feel the love these animals have for people.

Any additional comments? Although Veterinary learning experience is not the main goal, there was some opportunities to see and help, give shots if needed, bandage animals, or help with anything that came up. At Harnas you always have to expect the unexpected and be ready for anything to happen, like when a leopard attacks a tortoise and you need to bandage a leg that he has tucked into his shell, or two meerkats families attack each other and need medical care, or giving an ostrich physical therapy because his legs did not work properly. With the amount of animals Harnas has there is plenty of medicine and experience to be learned, even if medicine is not the main goal of this program.