

Angola Volunteer Program

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Content

[Aim](#)

[What is the Role of a Volunteer](#)

[Key Roles of a Volunteer](#)

[Travel and Accommodation](#)

[Meals](#)

[Day in the Life](#)

[Pricing](#)

[Safety](#)





Aim

FALCOPOLIS is dedicated to the protection of biodiversity and the promotion of sustainable relationships between humans and nature. Our primary aim is to contribute to wildlife conservation through scientific research, environmental education, and hands-on fieldwork.

We focus on protecting vulnerable species, like the Red-footed Falcon and ecosystems by combining practical conservation efforts with training and awareness-raising. By offering structured volunteer training programs, educational workshops, and field-based research opportunities, FALCOPOLIS empowers individuals to actively participate in environmental protection.

Our work is rooted in collaboration with local communities, international experts, and partner organizations to ensure that conservation is not only scientifically informed but also socially and culturally sustainable.

Through FALCOPOLIS, we strive to inspire long-term stewardship of the natural world and to support a new generation of environmentally conscious leaders.



What is the Role of a Volunteer

Volunteers play a very significant role in FALCOPOLIS.

They contribute to the conservation of the world's largest known roosting site for the Red-footed Falcons. This site hosts up to one million falcons during their wintering period, making it a unique and vital location for avian biodiversity.

Through multifaced roles (see below), volunteers contribute to the preservation of FALCOPOLIS' unique ecosystem, ensuring the survival of the Red-Footed Falcons and supporting the well-being of local communities.



Key Roles of a Volunteer

Field Research and Monitoring: Volunteers assist ecotourists, who would like to visit the site, making sure there is no disturbance regarding the birds' daily lives. They also help with tracking the falcon populations through bird ringing and attaching transmitters. The data collected is essential for understanding migration patterns and identifying threats to the species.

Habitat Restoration: Efforts include planting trees and installing (even building) artificial nests to support falcon breeding and roosting in order to prevent habitat loss and to provide safe nesting sites.

Community Engagement and Education: Volunteers raise awareness among local communities about the importance of falcon conservation. Educational programs and workshops aim to reduce practices like bushmeat hunting and encourage conservation-friendly behaviours.

Infrastructure Development: The construction of research camps and birdwatching platforms enhances both scientific research capabilities and ecotourism potential, fostering sustainable economic opportunities for local communities.

Ecotourism Support: By participating in organized workshops and tours, volunteers help promote responsible tourism. This does not only generate income for our conservation project but also educates visitors about the ecological significance of FALCOPOLIS.





Travel and Accommodation

FALCOPOLIS is represented by Jose Pedro Agostinho (aka Zeca) in Angola. His team will be assisting you for the duration of your stay in Angola. We will provide you with administration, logistics, communication, travel, basic accommodation and catering support. So please do not hesitate to express any concern you might have and contact us about your needs at office@facopolis.org.

Airport Pickup

All volunteers are picked up upon arrival at Luanda International Airport and transported directly to the project site.

Accommodation

Volunteers will stay in a well-organized tented camp, designed to ensure safety and comfort in the field.

The camp includes: a fully equipped kitchen tent, a designated area with hot showers, reliable solar-powered electricity, on-site internet access and mosquito nets provided for all sleeping areas.



Meals

You will receive **three meals per day**, prepared on-site. Angolan dishes have strong Portuguese influence, so in most case, you will have Rice, potatoes, sweet potatoes, spaghetti, pork, beef, chicken, fish, soup, manioc (cassava), corn (maize), vegetables, fruit and cereals.

Our team takes dietary needs and preferences into consideration wherever possible.

Please put any dietary requirements in your application and check with us upon arrival. For major concerns (like allergies), contact us by email at office@falcopolis.org.

Let's see a day in the life of a Volunteer in Angola

February or March

05:00 AM – Sunrise over FALCOPOLIS

You wake up in our canvas tent nestled in the Angolan Highlands. The golden light spills across the landscape, and the calls of hundred thousand of Red-footed falcons create a wild, rhythmic alarm clock. A quick breakfast of fruit, maize porridge, and coffee fuels you for the day ahead.

06:00 AM – Bird Monitoring in the Field and Visitor Support

With binoculars, a field notebook, and a camera slung over your shoulder, you document behaviour of falcons, habitat conditions or other variables depending on your selected research topic. Guiding professional photographers, you take photos of falcons sunbathing in the morning light at the roost site, for subsequent identification of moulting stages of the falcons. Occasionally you control the entrance of visitors at one of the main gates and give help to tourists exploring what the entry terms and conditions are to enter FALCOPOLIS. If a tourist group is scheduled, you may assist as a guide—pointing out animal species, explaining the region's ecology, and sharing the importance of sustainable conservation practices.

10:00 AM – Ecotourism Trail Maintenance

For lunch we head to a local cafeteria for a warm meal. You take an hour to relax, nap, or chat with fellow volunteers from around the world, exchanging bird stories and learning about local culture.

12:30 PM – Communal Lunch and Cultural Exchange

Lunch is a social moment, shared with local staff and other volunteers. Dishes may include grilled fish, cassava, beans, rice or potatoes and tropical fruits. Conversations flow in a mix of Portuguese, local languages, and English—offering a rich cultural exchange.

02:00 PM – Data Logging, Outreach Work, Workshops

As the sun begins its descent, the team heads back out. You monitor bird species or patrol to ensure no human disturbance or predation threat is affecting the nesting areas. In September, night roost counts of Red-footed Falcons and late evening bird catching and ringing are practices on the field.

04:00 PM – Enjoy the unique miracle of FALCOPOLIS

As the light softens, it's time again for more birdwatching. You lead or assist on sunset walks close to FALCOPOLIS with visiting birders and photographers. Red-footed Falcons arrive to FALCOPOLIS from all over the world and their immense flocks makes the sky obscured. Cameras will take thousands of pictures in the sunset with hundreds of thousands of falcons. Occasionally we will set up canopy nets and catch falcons for satellite tagging. These busy days the research work may last for much longer than it usually would and probably will go into the night.

07:00 PM – Campfire Dinner and Debrief

Dinner is served under the stars, often accompanied by the sounds of drums, guitars or laughter. The team shares highlights of the day—new species spotted, fun stories, or progress with conservation goals. It's both grounding and inspiring.

09:00 PM – Rest

You retreat to your tent and get some good sleep before the new day comes.

Pricing

Price Includes

Accommodation
Meals (breakfast/ lunch/ dinner)
Airport transfer
24 hours support
Volunteer starter package
Local tax fees
Exam Certificate
Learning experience

Price excludes

Flights
Travel insurance
Visa (if needed)
Background check*

Payment

A non-refundable advance payment of 50% is required at the time of reservation. The remaining 50% is due upon arrival.

Becoming a Wildlife Conservation Field Assistant offers an unforgettable opportunity to live and work in the heart of nature while directly contributing to conservation efforts. As a volunteer in Angola, you will play an active role in protecting FALCOPOLIS, supporting scientific research, and gaining practical field skills that make a lasting impact. As a Wildlife Conservation Field Assistant, your experience encompasses both field-based and theoretical practice, providing a comprehensive and immersive approach. Your time in Angola includes weekly workshops to further develop your skills and daily opportunities to benefit from what you have learned during your training in Hungary.

* (all volunteers must have clean criminal record)

Addressing Safety Concerns in Angola

Volunteering in Angola can be an incredibly rewarding experience, but it's important to be aware of certain health and safety considerations before your trip. Here are the key safety concerns you should prepare for:

Health and Illnesses Volunteers should be aware of:

- **Malaria and Dengue Fever** are prevalent, especially during the rainy season (November to April). Preventive medication, insect repellent, and mosquito nets (provided at camp) are essential.
- **Yellow Fever** is endemic. Proof of vaccination is not required for entry into the country anymore, but we recommend to consider getting it.
- **Tuberculosis and Hepatitis A & B** are also common. Vaccinations and general hygiene precautions are recommended.
- **Limited Healthcare Access:** Medical facilities outside Luanda are usually basic. Travel insurance with emergency evacuation is strongly advised.

Addressing Other Factors

While Angola is mostly peaceful, people are extremely friendly, some risks remain:

- **Crime:** Street crime may occur in Luanda. Other towns and cities are remarkably friendly and safe. The most common crimes are pick-pocketing, purse-snatching and vehicle break-ins. Armed muggings, robberies, and carjacking involving foreigners are not frequent but do occur. In Luanda and Huambo, please, take reasonable precautions, just as you would in any other big city. Nowadays, given the economic crisis, there are more and more opportunistic minor incidents of street robberies.
- **Political Unrest:** The security situation in Angola has improved markedly since the end of the civil war. Though generally stable, occasional protests or civil unrest can occur. Stay informed and avoid large gatherings.
- **Dealing with Authorities and Police:** The basic rule is to always be polite and always stay calm. Be respectful and never be arrogant or display anger. You will achieve far more with a smile. Angolans are friendly and pleasant people; they expect others to be so as well. If you get into difficulty with the police let úr team know. Avoid taking photographs of sites and installations of military or security interest, including government buildings, since this can result in fines and possible arrest. If we need to take pictures of such buildings, please inform us and we will ask for permission.

General Danger Factors

Water and Food Safety

- **Drinking Water:** Tap water is not safe to drink. Always use bottled or properly filtered water—even for brushing your teeth and washing your hands. Regular handwashing or use of hand sanitizer is crucial to prevent illness.
- **Food Safety:** Avoid undercooked meats, unwashed fruits and vegetables, and street food unless it's freshly cooked in front of you. Fruits produced in Angola are remarkably tasty. If you come across fruit being sold in the streets, please make sure you wash it with bottled water before eating it.
- **Food Storage:** In hot climates, spoilage happens quickly. Be cautious of food that may have been left out too long.

Other Environmental Concerns

- **Wildlife & Insects:** Angola is home to snakes, spiders, and other potentially dangerous animals. Be alert in rural and forested areas.

Climate

- Luanda: has a tropical savanna climate with distinct wet and dry seasons. Temperatures are warm to hot and vary little throughout the year. Luanda has high humidity. Hence, during the wet season people tend to sweat. Huambo Province has a subtropical highland climate, characterized by mild temperatures year-round with a distinct wet season from October to April. Due to its high altitude, the climate is significantly cooler than other parts of Angola, with average temperatures ranging from 19°C to 21°C. Huambo receives substantial rainfall in March and April. If possible, please bring an umbrella or raincoat; also bring sturdy boots, jeans trousers, t-shirts for the field. Add a jumper or fleece, as it can get chilly in the evening.



Through volunteer programs, eco-adventures, and community initiatives, we empower people to become protectors of the natural world, not just visitors.

Every tour, every project, and every partnership fuel a future where humans and wildlife thrive together.

Discover how one small act can ripple into lasting change for generations to come.

Join us!

Explore! Learn! Protect!