

# *Lao Conservation Trust for Wildlife*

VOLUNTEER GUIDEBOOK





# Lao Conservation Trust for Wildlife

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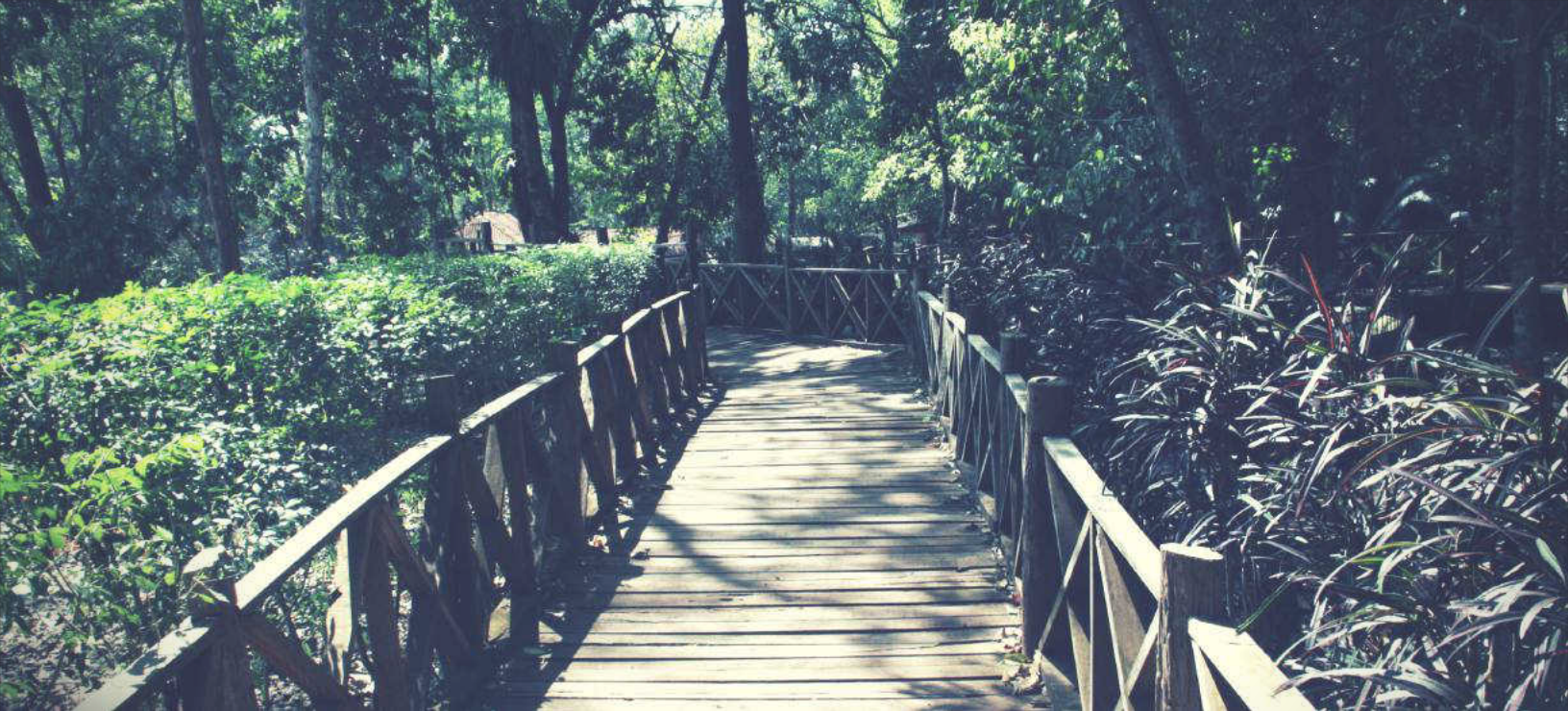
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WORK RULES





# WELCOME TO THE LAO CONSERVATION TRUST FOR WILDLIFE

Welcome to the Lao Conservation Trust for Wildlife!  
We look forward to welcoming you to our centre here in Lao PDR.

The LCTW is based in a small town around 60km north of the capital of Laos, Vientiane.

The centre is based at the national Lao Zoo, which was run by a Lao-Thai family, who are passionate about wildlife here in Laos. Now the whole site is operated under LCTW's nonprofit.

In association with the Lao PDR government and the Lao Zoo, the Lao Conservation Trust for Wildlife was born. We are the first wildlife rescue, conservation and education centre, which is a registered nonprofit organisation in Laos. It is our mission to improve the lives of the animals that currently live here and transform all of the Lao Zoo grounds into a world-class rescue, rehabilitate, and release centre with global conservation and educational programmes.

Prior to the birth of LCTW, the zoo had been left without the expertise needed to run a wildlife facility, the team has faced many challenges in accomplishing all we have achieved already. None of it would be possible without the help of volunteers like you!

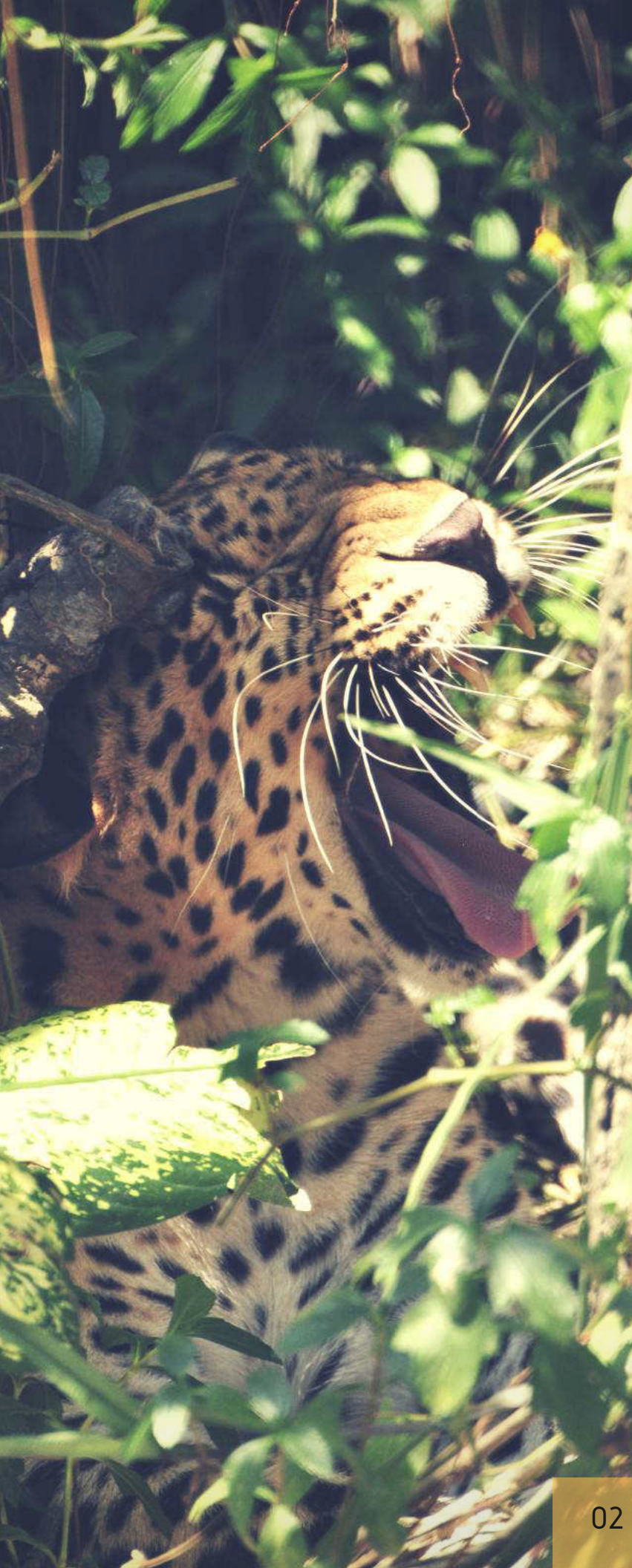
From caring for, feeding and enriching our animals, to helping build new enclosures, as a volunteer you will be able to see the impact you make directly on our animals' lives throughout your time here.

Everyone who volunteers at the LCTW leaves something behind - whether it's building a pool, climbing structures or even new enclosures. Creating enrichment items for our animals is a regular occurrence, every volunteer leaves here having given something to the animals that will be used for years to come.

If you are coming to intern with us or lend your professional skills, expect to take away truly unique experiences with our wonderful wildlife, under the one on one guidance of our wildlife professionals here at LCTW. This is what makes our project unique; the development of our centre is in full force, everything you do will have a lasting impact and you will be able to see how much the animals and our local staff appreciate it!

On behalf of our team and our animals, thank you for wanting to come and volunteer with us. We greatly need and appreciate your help. We look forward to meeting you and having you as part of our team!





## ABOUT LCTW

Lao PDR is sadly one of the major gateways of the illegal wildlife trade from South-east Asia. There is thought to be thousands of protected wild animals and their parts being smuggled in and out of the country every month. Therefore, having a facility in Laos to directly combat this illicit activity is of great importance, this is where LCTW comes in.

One of the aims of our project is to improve the conditions for animals currently in the zoo and transform the zoo into a wildlife rescue centre which can provide a home and specialist rehabilitation, for animals rescued from the illegal wildlife trade. Over the past 3 years, our work has grown and expanded to also encompass local and global conservation and education programmes, whilst continuing to do our important rescue, rehabilitate and release projects for Lao native species, as well as the Lao Zoo project. In 2018, our organisation officially became a registered Lao nonprofit - the first and only all inclusive wildlife rescue and conservation organisation in Lao PDR. The management team of the LCTW moved onsite in early 2017 and since then have made huge strides in improving the welfare of the animals at the old zoo, as well as working with Lao government authorities to rescue abused and suffering animals.

Moreover, we foster a strong relationship with the government, with whom we assist with animals confiscated from the illegal trade. We also work in cooperation with the Lao government in building better infrastructure, laws, welfare and community projects to help protect the wonderful wildlife of Laos. Our Rescue Team, which is on call 24/7, covers cases throughout the whole of Laos and has become a vital partner for law enforcement.

Our project also works with other global NGOs and together, we share knowledge and help fight issues which can help with conservation and wildlife issues across the country and region.





As we are unique in Laos, we are open for the public to visit and engage with nature and provide access to knowledge and education, in an ethical setting. We have started a management plan for visitors that keep them safely away from the animals. We are also developing a variety of onsite educational programmes, a large education centre and patrolling education officers. Outreach programmes that will help to educate people of all ages in schools and other community hubs about nature and conservation, make a direct impact to our community and sees LCTW's educational programmes and staff hitting the road.

The united vision of the whole team at LCTW is for our whole site to contribute to wildlife conservation, become a hub for education and to protect and provide the best care to our rescued and long term wildlife residents.

We want to see as much wildlife we rescue to be able to live freely in the wild where they belong and animals who are suitable to be released to the wild, will be returned to their homes. Every animal that comes to our centre will be assessed by our wildlife professionals in one of our rehabilitation programmes, this checks their suitability for release to the wild.

Sadly, many victims of the illegal trade will have long term or permanent health issues. If this is unfortunately the case, we can provide lifelong sanctuary for wild animals, who can't be returned back to the wild. In our wildlife sanctuaries, we allow our residents to live in natural environments with appropriate social groups, excellent nutrition, daily enrichment and world class veterinary care, which is why what we do is so important.

By creating conservation and education programmes for the local community and the entire nation of Lao PDR, we can help put an end to the illegal wildlife trade and stop the vicious cycle.

With your help, we can make this happen!



# ENRICHMENT

Enrichment is exactly what it sounds like, a way to enrich the lives of our animals and stimulate them mentally and/or physically by providing activities to work on throughout the day. Prior to our arrival, the animals spent many years without any sort of mental or physical stimulation.

Enrichment is an essential part of any animal husbandry routine, as it helps prevent boredom and stress behaviours in animals.

Enrichment can play a critical part in wildlife rehabilitation and preparation for a life back in the wild. It can be tailored for certain animals to train them to complete specific tasks in order to survive in the wild.

Our Husbandry and Enrichment Volunteers follow an enrichment schedule for our animals in the morning and afternoon, we encourage fresh ideas to create new enrichment programmes that we can add to our routine. Challenging our animals and making them think through new problems is extremely important to keep their quality of welfare high.

# CONSTRUCTION

Our centre is still being developed and many sections of the old zoo are in poor condition and in need of repair.

We have a big construction schedule for building and improving homes for all our animals, volunteers are an essential part of our team.

Working with our onsite construction team of local staff, volunteers will help build new enclosures and environmental enrichment structures including, swimming pools, shelters and climbing towers. This is your opportunity to leave a lasting legacy for our animals.

If the weather does not permit our volunteers to do construction outside, we move inside the enrichment room to work on enrichment furniture for our animals such as, wooden houses, rope ladders and many other smaller projects.

We are also more than happy for volunteers to suggest ideas for our animals!





# Husbandry & Enrichment Based Programme

## WORK SCHEDULE

Our volunteers work between 08:00 and 17:00, six days a week, with volunteers having one day off.

We elect for all volunteers to have the same day off, generally a Sunday. Though this experience is what you would like to make of it, therefore you can ask for another day off during the week, if you need extra breaks.

We have a general work schedule for our Husbandry and Enrichment Programme, with volunteers working on both animal rounds and construction projects each day.

However, this can change depending on season, weather, and requirements for our animals.

We have a small team of wildlife professionals and we ask volunteers to be patient if things do not follow the schedule exactly, if a rescue comes in or a situation arises, the animals will always take the priority.

Here is an example of what your day may look like:

- 08:00 Morning Rounds - Mornings start with animal rounds which includes feeding, cleaning enclosures, and making enrichment for newly rescued animals and some of our long term residents.
- 10:30 Construction/Special Projects - We will be outside building new enclosures or renovating older ones. If it is too hot or raining, we will move inside our enrichment room creating new environmental enrichment for our animals.
- 12:30 Lunch and Midday Break
- 13:30 Enrichment Rounds - We have over 500 animals on site! Some need enrichment everyday while others are on a set weekly schedule. Staff can help you develop ideas based on what materials we have available, safety considerations to animals and durability for the animals you want to enrich.
- 16:00 Here we finish up any projects for the day and feed new rescues and some long term residents
- 17:00 Finished! The rest of the day is now your own. You can relax with the other volunteers, wander around the sanctuary and watch some of our nocturnal species, or take a stroll to the local market.





# WILDLIFE HOSPITAL PROGRAMME

If you are a Vet or Vet Nurse student, or you have already graduated, why not join us on the front line and volunteer or intern at our onsite Wildlife Hospital. This can be to complete your university placement requirements, gain international experience in wildlife medicine and expand your knowledge base!

At our centre, Vet and Vet Nurse volunteers have the opportunity to be trained and lend their skills in wildlife husbandry, care and medicine, all whilst assisting our full time Vet team.

Daily duties include, but are not limited to: caring for animals in quarantine and hospital areas, shadowing and assisting our Vet team on a daily basis, performing daily health check rounds of 500 animals, providing treatment to any current inpatients and outpatients and assisting our resident Veterinarians with any emergency cases and surgeries.

We do not keep to a specific schedule for our Wildlife Hospital, as the required daily tasks change depending on the animals in our care. Volunteers usually work from 8:00am to 5:00pm, we ask all Wildlife Hospital volunteers to be flexible and understand that if there is an emergency, changes in these times can be made, as we will always put the care of our animals first. Be prepared to be kept on your toes as no day is the same for our Vet team! At any time, we could go on a call out for a huge confiscation of wildlife, receive donated wildlife at our gates or have an animal which needs critical veterinary attention in our centre. We also encourage individuals to get stuck into their own research project at the centre, feel free to suggest any ideas you may have with our team!

Our Vet Team will always put the safety of our volunteers first. You must always follow the instructions of our Vet Team and NEVER act on your own without permission. If you witness an injury or other incident when a member of staff is not with you, always inform our Vet team before attempting to handle or treat an animal.



# OTHER VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

## ANIMAL-BASED STUDIES

Are you working towards an animal or conservation based qualification? We are open to take students who are looking to work on projects or research in areas including, but not limited to, wildlife behaviour and zoology, diets and nutrition, the rehabilitation process, illegal wildlife trade, and conservation.

Simply email us with your proposed study or project, we can then assess whether we can accommodate your plan.

Animal-based studies students stay onsite and are provided with 3 meals a day. As each study will have different needs, please let our staff know what you require!

We ask that students follow all of our volunteer policies. Please read through our Policy section at the back of this guide thoroughly so you are prepared.

Whilst staying at our centre, you must follow all instructions of staff, and must not enter staff areas without permission.

## DONATION OF PROFESSIONAL TALENT

Are you a professional who would like to donate your talents to help us in our fight to protect wildlife?

Whether you are a professional/qualified Graphic Designer, PR, Illustrator, Photographer, Animal Nutritionist/Behaviourist, Website Designer, Filmmaker or have a particular skill/profession which you think could aid us, get in touch! Let us know how you could help us at [info@lctwildlife.org](mailto:info@lctwildlife.org)





# VOLUNTEER LIFE AT LCTW

Volunteering with us is a unique and special experience, not only because you're helping wildlife, but also because you have the chance to meet and work with like-minded people from around the world. Read over this section about your new life as a volunteer, and take time to carefully read our rules and policy section. Please respect all these rules and policies during your time with us.

Our volunteer programme has welcomed volunteers from all over the world and each one has made a real difference.

Our Husbandry and Enrichment Based Programme focuses on three main areas: the animals' enrichment, animal husbandry and our centre's construction programme.

Our Vet Nurse and Vet Internship Programmes focuses on providing medical care for the 500 animals across the site.

Please note: we are a no contact rescue centre.

We take our role to try and rehabilitate our animals very seriously and direct physical human contact can be a detriment to their rehabilitation and recovery.

As a result, Husbandry and Enrichment Volunteers do not have any direct physical contact with any of our animals. It's great to be able to sit back and watch animals using the enrichment you have made or the meal you have prepared, and we encourage all our volunteers to enjoy observing our animals' natural behaviours!



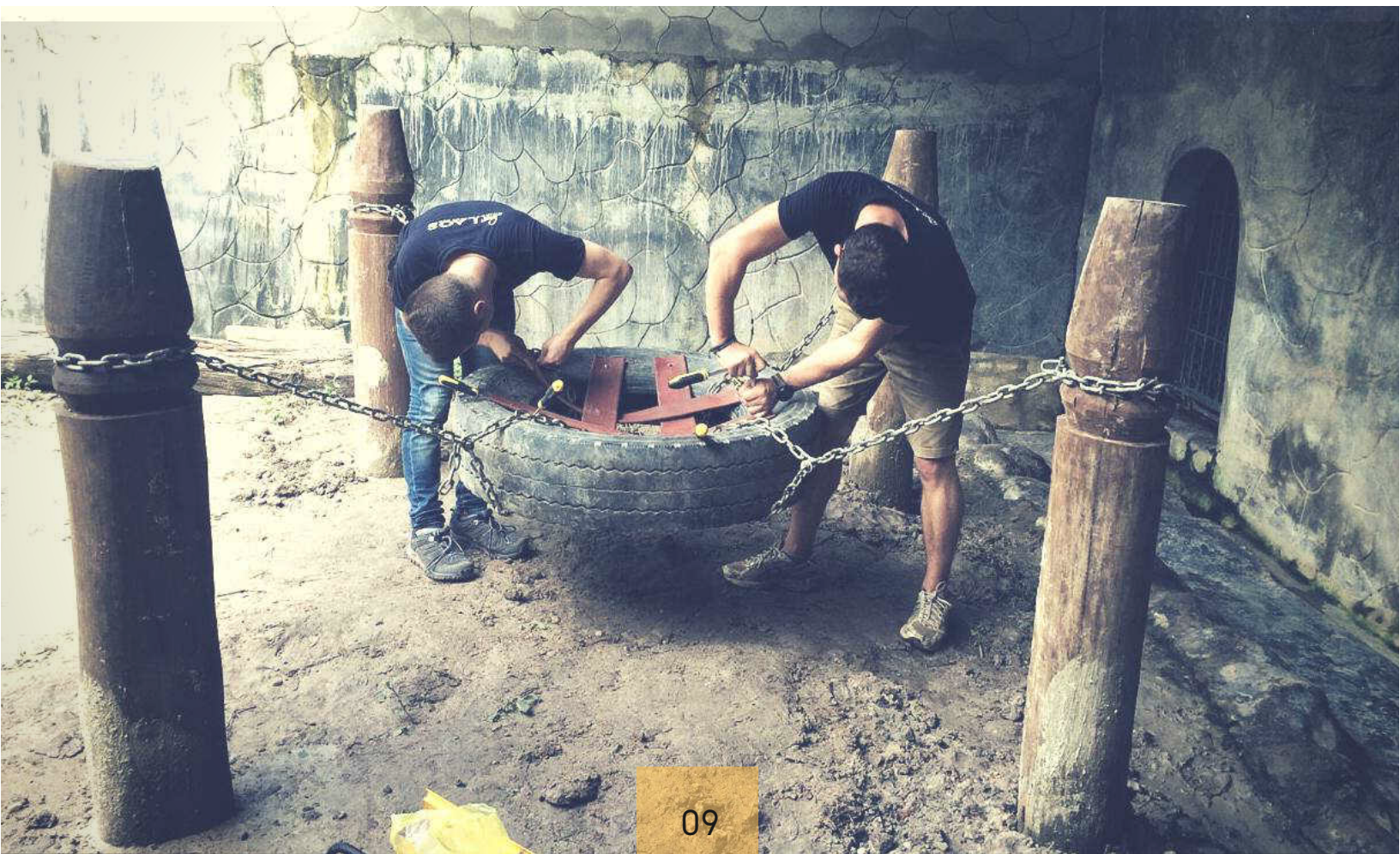


# REQUIREMENTS FOR VOLUNTEERING WITH LCTW

To volunteer with LCTW, you do not need any previous wildlife experience. As we require dedicated volunteers all year round, we are simply looking for volunteers with a positive attitude who are interested in helping wildlife and a willingness to learn!

However, we do have a few general requirements for volunteering with us:

1. Speak a moderate to high level of English.
2. Be generally fit and healthy.
3. Be able to tolerate a hot and humid climate, including working outside in these conditions.
4. Be minimum 18 years of age - volunteers under 18 years can join our project with a parent or guardian, but this must be approved prior to booking so please enquire with our booking staff.
5. Have a positive attitude, be motivated to help us build our centre and learn new skills.





# HOW YOUR VOLUNTEER FEE IS SPENT



LCTW could not function without the ongoing support provided by sponsors, individual fundraisers throughout the world and the donations generated by the volunteer programme.

Here is where your donation goes:

- Enclosure construction.

As you will see around the LCTW, construction projects are ongoing. We have already created new homes for many of our residents, however much can still be done. Donations pay not only for the raw building materials of the enclosures, but also to pay the local Lao staff employed to build them.

- Feeding the animals.

With over 1000 portions of food being served every single day, the food cost alone is a huge expense. More expensive specialist food for certain species is also needed for those with specialist dietary requirements.

- Animal health care.

From routine vaccinations and treatment of animal wounds, to providing full veterinary attention to critically injured and sick wildlife, the health care of the animals is another expensive part of life at LCTW. Animal sedation, medical supplies, drugs, equipment and the general running costs of the hospital are funded by donations and the volunteer programme.

- Rescues and releases.

Often having to drive long distances in our rescue vehicles, LCTW staff have to be prepared with the right transport crates and equipment to ensure rescued animals are safe and well cared for. Wildlife of many species of Mammals, Birds and Reptiles have been released back to the wild, all funded by donations!

- Renovation and enrichment.

As well as building brand new enclosures, donations ensure that we are able to continue to renovate enclosures, and provide building materials for environmental enrichment that help keep the animals stimulated as we are always striving to give the animals the best environment we can.

- Local staff

We are proud to be the main employer of local workers within our town. We strive to give the people of our community the opportunity for education and training they would not receive elsewhere within our town. We currently employ over 70 full time local staff from animal carers, management, construction, gardeners, cooks and cleaners.



# 8 WAYS TO HELP US

1. **VOLUNTEER** - Why not join one of our volunteer programmes? E-mail [info@lctwildlife.org](mailto:info@lctwildlife.org) for more details or see our website <https://lctwildlife.org/volunteer>
2. **DONATE** - Individual or group donations can be made online, through our Facebook page or on our website at <https://lctwildlife.org/donate> or contact us at [info@lctwildlife.org](mailto:info@lctwildlife.org) or see staff onsite for more details.
3. **FUNDRAISE** - From sponsored walks and donation boxes to bake sales, there are many ways to fundraise to help wildlife!
4. **CAMPAIGN & EDUCATE** - Spread awareness of LCTW's current campaigns and educate others to the issues surrounding the illegal wildlife trade.
5. **SUPPLY US WITH MATERIALS** - We are always in need of supplies for the animals and the Wildlife Hospital. Check out our wishlist or contact us on [info@lctwildlife.org](mailto:info@lctwildlife.org) for the most up to date or urgent requirements.
6. **CORPORATE** - Do you know of or work for a company that would be able to provide us with corporate sponsorship? Contact [info@lctwildlife.org](mailto:info@lctwildlife.org)
7. **PROMOTE** - Promote LCTW through local media by contacting your local outlets. Like, share and review our Facebook page and follow us on Twitter and Instagram. Why not give us a review on Google to share your experience with others. Let your friends and family know about us too!
8. **VISIT** - Want to find out more about our project? Visit <https://lctwildlife.org>



# ONSITE SUPPORT

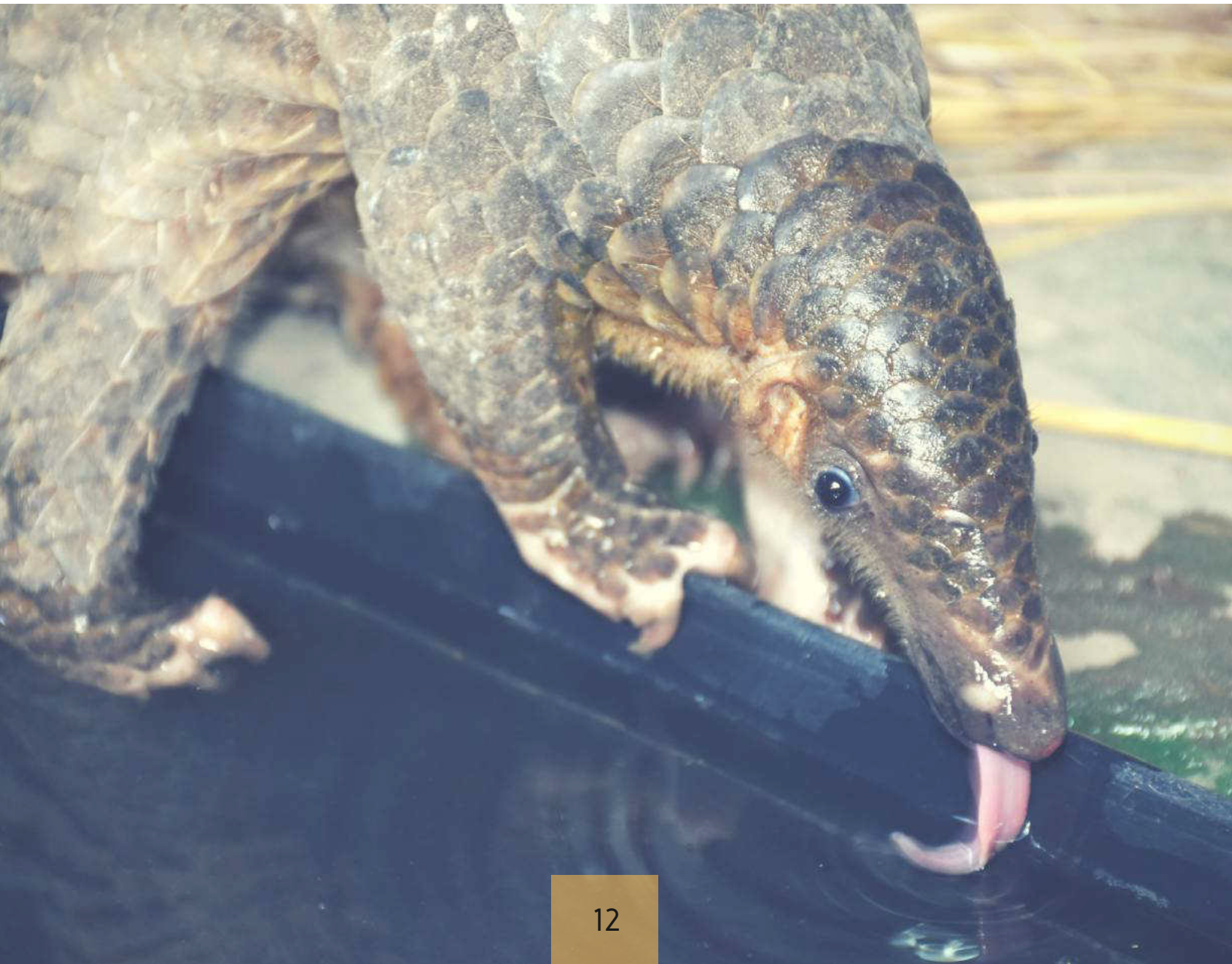
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Our Husbandry & Enrichment Coordinators will be with you during your time volunteering with us.

Our Coordinators will not only lead you through animal rounds and construction projects, but will also be your onsite contact for any issues that may arise such as if you are not feeling well, emergencies at home, or any questions you have about LCTW.

Every morning you will meet with your Coordinators who will tell you about the day's plans and activities. Our management team have an open door policy and are also available to talk to about any issues or questions you have.

After you arrive from Vientiane, our Coordinators will show you to your bungalows. After this you will be taken to lunch where you can meet and greet the rest of our staff and the other volunteers. In the afternoon you will be given an orientation tour around the centre and volunteer facilities and an information session to explain our rules, policies, and emergency procedures.





# ONSITE AMENITIES AND FOOD

We have 5 beautiful bungalows for volunteers to stay in, with 2 people per bungalow.

We try to maintain single sex rooms, with the exceptions of couples, friends and families, but this is not always possible due to our capacity for volunteers.

Fresh bed linen is provided when you arrive and can be changed during your stay if you are a long-term volunteer. Please note that the mattresses provided are traditional Laos style so they may be quite a bit harder than you are used to. If you think you will have trouble sleeping on a hard surface feel free to bring your own additional mattress padding.

We have two shower and toilet blocks that are a short walk from your bungalows, one for males and one for females, each fitted with two western style toilets and two showers: one hot and one cold. They are traditional open-air style which means you may have an occasional friendly frog or spider keeping you company from time to time.

During your stay, we ask all volunteers to look after their own space by keeping your personal area tidy and rooms swept. This will help with keeping ants and other bugs from coming inside. However please keep in mind that we are in a rural area of Laos and that encountering insects inside and outside will be inevitable. It is all part of the experience of being in nature! If you're lucky you might even get a gecko roommate who finds these bugs to be a tasty snack. Feel free to bring a mosquito net or buy one locally if you are concerned.

Air conditioning is not provided however each bungalow is equipped with it's own rotating fan. We recommend you check the temperatures for the time of year you are joining as the climate here can be extremely hot.

Wifi is not available anywhere on site. You may want to use this as a reason to disconnect but it is also very cheap and easy to purchase a local SIM card for data as long as your phone is unlocked.

You will find tips and policies on the volunteer house wall for a reminder, please follow these.

Keys for rooms will be provided on arrival.

All rooms have electrical outlets for you to use.

In Laos, two flat pins or two round pins, of 220v are used.

All your meals are provided during your stay.



Volunteers prepare their own breakfast in the volunteer house, we provide you with buffet style

ingredients such as eggs, bread, jams, milk, butter/margarine, tea, coffee, and seasonal fresh fruit.

Clean drinking water is also provided in a number of locations onsite for volunteers.

Lunch, served at 12.30 and dinner, served at 18.00, are cooked by our staff, and are predominantly traditional and local Lao style, however we do have western cuisine nights.

We can cater for meat, vegetarian and vegan diets. You must inform us if you have any special dietary requirements before your arrival here, allowing our kitchen staff to plan for your arrival.

We also have onsite laundry where you can get your clothes washed at 1,000 Kip per item. LCTW t-shirts are for sale in the Director's office at 100,000 Kip and there are a number of small kiosks across the centre where you can buy soft drinks, snacks and ice creams.



# FREE TIME AT AND AROUND LCTW



The rescue centre is in a rural location in Laos and you will be living in a authentic Lao setting.

After work hours, volunteers can socialise in our volunteer house where we occasionally have movie and education evenings, games nights, or have a few drinks and relax.

On days off we can take volunteers to a resort close by that has a pool and restaurant if requested in advance.

It is in a beautiful location on the banks of the Nam Ngum River. They charge a small fee to use the pool, food and beverages are also cheap here.

There are a few basic local shops, markets, local style food houses and bars all within walking distance from our front gates.

If volunteers want to experience these destinations, we recommend adding a few days to their trip before or after their time volunteering with us.

## LIVING EXPENSES

Whilst all your food and accommodation is covered while you are here, volunteers should bring some additional currency with them for spending money, such as for local sightseeing, meals out with friends, snacks, etc.

Laos is a little bit more expensive than other Asian countries for hotels and Tuk Tuks, but other items like snacks and beverages are still cheap. The local currency here is the Lao Kip and this is the only currency accepted with smaller vendors, though some larger hotels and restaurants in Vientiane will also accept US dollars and Thai Baht. Check the exchange rate with your own currency from one of the many online resources.

Vientiane is a small capital city in comparison to other countries, but you can still find most items you need, and will easily be able to exchange foreign currencies.

In the local area around the rescue centre, shops will only accept Lao Kip. There are some money exchange locations in our village and there are a couple of ATMs that work on most, but not all international cards. We recommend you bring additional Kip with you just in case your card does not work here.





## VOLUNTEERING IN LAO PDR

Laos is a beautiful, tropical and mostly untouched country that is becoming an up and coming destination for travellers looking for a authentic taste of South-east Asia, due to this, the rewards here are plentiful. It may not be as developed as neighbouring Thailand, or Vietnam, though this is exactly Laos' uniqueness and charm. Laos is a developing country and like others in South-east Asia is still communist, though you would never realise this, as its people have freedom of business and movement.

Laos is a relatively safe country to travel to, with a slow and laid-back lifestyle, or "Bor Pen Nyang" as the locals say, "No worries!"





## LAO CULTURE

Laos is such a friendly place that there are generally no major cultural issues, though to really settle in, here are a few pointers:

- When Lao people meet, they do not shake hands, they 'wai'. When meeting someone, put your hands into prayer formation thumbs pointing towards your nose and bow your head slightly. If they 'wai' you first, you should 'wai' back.
- Do not point the soles of your feet at anyone, or any images depicting Buddha. As feet are considered impure, make sure you are not putting your feet on tables, chairs or anywhere close to someone's head or in line of their eyesight.
- Touching heads of Lao people or Buddhist statues is also an insult.
- Remove shoes when entering a temple, shops, houses, as well as your rooms. It's a sign of respect (it also keeps your room clean).
- Physical expressions of love (eg. hugging, kissing) is not very common and you are advised to avoid such actions in public.
- Smile and speak a little Lao and you will be loved by the locals. 'Sabaidee', pronounced 'Sab-ai-dee' is the standard Lao greeting, which you can use for all people. Do not take offence if they call you 'farang', pronounced 'fa-lang' - this translates as foreigner and is often used to describe westerners.

Lao people are very proud of their country, if you make a real effort to understand and respect the Lao culture, you will find this really enhances your experience of Laos.

## LAO PEOPLE AND ANIMAL WELFARE

In Laos, the way people treat each other is very different from the way they treat animals.

Some Local people may not treat animals in the way a lot of people in a developed country expect.

You can be confronted with shocking situations and may see wild animals kept in captivity: like a Primate on a chain, or an Eagle in a cage no bigger than itself.

Note that not all Lao people have this attitude towards animals and generally, due to Laos being a Buddhist country, if you see any neglect it usually comes from the lack of access to knowledge than from cruelty.

This attitude towards animals seems to be changing in Laos and people seem to be more conscious of nature preservation and the bigger picture, with the help of many NGO education projects such as the work LCTW is undertaking.

Please be prepared for difficult situations and hold back if they occur. You are a guest in the country and animal welfare foundations are lobbying for changes in order to improve the situation.

It is also worth remembering that certain forms of what we would deem as animal neglect can be legal in developed countries.





# LOCAL AMENITIES

Just 200 metres from the gate to the volunteer house, is a small village with a market for fresh fruit, snacks, beverages, toiletries, some clothing and some other supplies, as well as a pharmacy. There is also a phone shop to buy internet and call credit and a hairdresser. This village has a few local style eateries, which serve traditional meals.

There are some other small snack shops and restaurants in front of the main gate to the rescue centre.

We are situated about 2.5km from the main centre of Ban Keun. This town also has a few small supermarkets with a limited range of products such as toiletries and food.

There are ATMs that do accept most international cards in the town, though please note that it is not possible to use international cards in shops. There are also facilities in the village to exchange international currencies, we recommend bringing local currency with you as these services are open and closed intermittently. There is a large regional market with a large variety of fruit and vegetables, local freshly made snacks and general household items.

We can provide transport to the main market for volunteers weekly, upon request, which can also coincide with trips to the local swimming pool for volunteers on days off or upon request. There are also a few larger riverside restaurants close to the centre that volunteers may visit. Please take the time to read our rules and policies section about going into our local village.

We ask volunteers to always be respectful of Lao culture and behave appropriately.

## LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

President:	Bounnhang Vorachith (2016)
Prime Minister:	Thongloun Sisoulith (2016)
Land area:	89,112 sq. mi (230,800 sq. km);
Population:	(2016 est.): 6,758,000 (growth rate: 1.59%); life expectancy: 63.51
Capital city:	Vientiane, population 810,000
Monetary unit:	Lao Kip, Thai baht, US Dollar
Ethnicity/race:	Lao 55%, Khmou 11%, Hmong 8%, other (over 100 minor ethnic groups) 26% (2005 census)
Religions:	Buddhist 67%, Christian 1.5%, other and unspecified 31.5% (2005 census)
Hot Season:	March to Mid-June (28-36°C, 75-90% humidity)
Wet Season:	June to October (25-33°C, brief but frequent/heavy rain showers)
Cool Season:	November to February (18-30°, cooler at night)



# Lao PDR

Lao PDR is a landlocked country bordering Myanmar, Cambodia, China, Thailand and Vietnam.

About 6.8 million people live in its 18 provinces, with most people (63%) still living in rural areas.

However, urbanization is occurring rapidly.

The country is largely mountainous, with the most fertile land found along the Mekong River plains and has the second highest forest density in Asia. The mighty Mekong River flows from north to south, forming most of the border with Thailand.

Despite still being one of the least developed country, Lao PDR has made significant progress in poverty alleviation over the past 2 decades with poverty rates declining from 46% in 1992 to 27.6% in 2008.

Lao PDR's economic boom is driven primarily by direct foreign investment in natural resource extraction and hydropower.

The 'Secret War' resulted into the presence of unexploded ordnance (UXO) which continue to wreak havoc in rural Laos and limits agricultural development.

More than 8 million bombs were dropped on Laos between 1964 and 1973, with 30 percent of those failing to detonate. This results in Laos ranking as the most bombed country in the history of the world.

Although these bombs have been cleared in populated areas and the tourist trail, they continue to still affect the most poor and remote communities, whom rely on their land for their livelihoods. The correlation between UXO contamination and the prevalence of poverty is clear.

Like some other developing countries, a developing judiciary and legal system can cause business regulations and law enforcement to be less effective.



That being said, between 1985 and 2012, substantial progress has been made in the main Human Development Index indicators: life expectancy increased by 19 years, mean years of schooling increased by 2.5 years and Gross National Income (GNI) per capita increased by 310%. Consequently, Lao PDR has seen steady improvement in its HDI value over time, making it one of the HDI growth leaders in the medium human development category, where it currently sits. Politically, the country has considerably opened up in recent years, ratifying six out of the nine core human rights treaties, creating a more conducive legal environment for civil society and actively pursuing regional and global integration. Lao PDR joined the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1997, the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2013 and the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015.

Laos became a signatory to CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) in 2004, which means it has to abide by rules and regulations stipulated by the international treaty on the trade in endangered species.

Although there is still much more to be done by Laos regarding wildlife conservation, the government is reaching out to LCTW and like-minded NGOs to improve the country's policies and enforcement of wildlife protection.



# IMPORTANT PRE-ARRIVAL INFORMATION



## VISA INFORMATION

To enter Laos, a passport valid for at least six months is required by all nationals. You may not always be required to show a return ticket if you are travelling overland. It is wise to procure a travel itinerary to avoid problems, these may be asked for on rare occasions. Most nationalities can obtain a 30-day visa on arrival at road, river and air borders for entry into Laos.

Bring two passport-sized photographs with you for the visa. To volunteer in Laos, volunteers only need a tourist visa. You do not need to apply for a special volunteering or work visa. Check specific requirements for your nationality online or with the consulate in your home country before you arrive, as there is some variation, including cost. A visa on arrival costs approximately \$35 USD, depending on your nationality this can be more or less, once again check before arrival. Please ensure that you bring the exact amount in USD to pay for your visa, the immigration checkpoints do not always provide change if you do not have the correct change.

Long-term volunteers (those staying in Laos greater than 30 days) will need to extend their visa. If you need to extend your visa for up to 2 weeks and you are in Vientiane, the most convenient method is to go to the Immigration Office behind the Joint Development Bank (JDB) on Lane Xang Avenue, opposite the Morning Market (Talat Sao). The office is open Monday-Friday, 8:00am to 4:00pm and closed 12:00pm to 1:00pm for lunch and Friday afternoons for applications. Here you will pay \$2 USD for each day you need to extend your visa for.

If you need to extend your visa for more than 2 weeks (up to 30 days), volunteers will need to do a 'visa run' across the Lao-Thai Border. A Visa Run means you will exit and re-enter the country in a short period of time, with the sole purpose of obtaining a new visa, these border crossings will take no longer than a day. Please note that if you are staying with us for longer than 3 months you will have to fly out of Laos to extend your visa.

Please note, that your visa is your responsibility and make sure you talk to your LCTW Coordinators or LCTW management regarding when you need to go and we can help guide you through the process in person here. If you overstay your visa you will have to pay a fine when you leave the country of \$10 USD per day overstayed.

## PERSONAL INSURANCE

Although we will do our best to ensure your safety, LCTW does not accept any liability for you or your possessions whilst on or offsite, as a volunteer.

Please make sure you have the necessary insurance cover for any emergency that could occur and that you bring a copy of your policy with you.

There are many travel sites online which will recommend insurance when undertaking volunteer work.



# HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVICE

## - PRE ARRIVAL

This section covers health issues which you should discuss with your doctor before coming to Laos, and some safety information for whilst you are in Laos.

We recommend that all volunteers should see a specialist travel doctor or their family doctor before coming to our project, as they can provide the most up-to-date information for safe travelling in Laos and working with animals. It is best to schedule an appointment up to three months before you leave, as some vaccinations may need to be administered over multiple appointments or weeks.

We recommend all volunteers, at the very least, have their DTP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Polio) vaccinations up-to-date. We also recommend you discuss the following diseases specifically with your doctor:

### RABIES

The Rabies vaccine is used in two distinct occasions. Firstly, to protect those who are at risk of exposure to the disease and secondly, to prevent the development of Rabies upon exposure as a form of treatment. The schedule of vaccinations to prevent the disease varies between each brand so check with your doctor, as you may need to begin vaccinations as long as 3 months before travel.

### MALARIA AND DENGUE FEVER

While the risk of Malaria is low in other urban areas and areas surrounding Vientiane, you should discuss this with your travel doctor. Medications to reduce the risk of disease may be recommended, but deciding whether or not you will use malaria medication is your own responsibility. Taking mosquito repellent precautions with Picaridin (minimum 20%) or DEET products is recommended. There is a risk of Dengue Fever in Laos, which is transmitted by mosquitoes. There is no vaccine for Dengue Fever & prevention is based upon insect avoidance via repellents, nets, and insecticides. Our area is classed as the lowest risk area for contracting Malaria and Dengue Fever.

### HEPATITIS A&B

Your doctor may recommend a Hepatitis vaccination. Hepatitis can be found in Primates and although there are no known cases at our centre or the surrounding area. As we function as a no contact facility, mention this to your doctor. There are available vaccines to combine Hepatitis A and B that will protect you for several years to come.

### TUBERCULOSIS

Depending on your age and country of origin, some of you may have had this vaccine as a teenager at school. Once you have this vaccine, it will protect you for life. Tuberculosis (TB) is found in some Primate species and can be transferred to humans through coughs and sneezes. Although we have no Primates diagnosed with this disease at the centre, we still recommend that you mention this to your doctor as a precautionary measure.





# HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVICE

## RABIES

Rabies is a deadly viral infection of the brain transmitted from animals to humans. The disease itself is rare in travellers, but the risk increases with extended travel & the likelihood of animal contact. Dogs are the main carriers; however Primates, Bats, Cats & other animals may also transmit the disease.

Pre-exposure vaccination is recommended for extended travel & those who work with, or are likely to come in contact with animals. Note that many domestic animals roam freely through South-east Asian streets.

In case of any incidents onsite, there are vaccines available at the international hospital in Vientiane.

## SAFETY AROUND ANIMALS AND ZOO NOTIC DISEASES

The health and safety of our volunteers is very important to us and we take all possible precautions to ensure that there are no accidents. Please see details below which will help you to stay safe at the centre.

Our facility has certain procedures for animal management, including the hands-off policy, in place for both the safety of people as well as the animals. However, consider if you are not being consciously aware of your surroundings or are not following your coordinator's guidance, an animal with a long reach and fast reflexes may grab you. You will also be warned about specific animals during your introductory tour, with whom extra caution is advised.

Volunteers that are scratched or bitten by animals are unfortunately often victims of their own lack of attention, in the failure to listen to staff member's guidance, or failure to correctly judge the risk involved. Please always be alert when working near animals and please be aware that you are not expected to take any risks, in any situation. In fact, you are specifically instructed not to take any risks with the animals. If in doubt about handling any situation, please ask a member of staff.

Zoonotic diseases are passed from animals to humans and vice versa. All of the animals cared for at LCTW are thoroughly tested and kept in specific areas of the rescue centre, unless we suspect illness. However, it is important to be aware of the health risks that can occur when working with any wild or domestic animals. Some of these were discussed in the previous section.

Zoonotic diseases are a very important reason why volunteers should not handle any of the animals at the centre and a good reason for not keeping Primates, in particular, as pets. Viruses and bacteria can be transmitted to humans through bite wounds and scratches, or by coming into contact with faeces, saliva and urine. Close petting of animals can result in exposure to diseases. A further concern is the possibility of humans transmitting diseases to the animals in our care. Respiratory infections are the most common diseases transmitted from humans to Primates, even when there has been no physical contact. Primates are very close to us genetically, so infections can easily cross.

All volunteers will be given a safety briefing before working with our animals. Rules are very clear and if any volunteer does not follow our safety procedures or endangers the safety of other volunteers by acting recklessly, they will be immediately asked to leave the centre without refund. A list of policies and rules are found further on in this guidebook (is this true?) and volunteers are expected to follow them. If you do not agree with these policies and procedures please not apply to volunteer with us. Our policies are in place to protect our animals, staff and volunteers. You will also read through our Volunteer guidelines during your introductory tour.



## SNAKES AND SCORPIONS

Please be warned that, on rare occasions, you may encounter Snakes and/or Scorpions during your stay in Laos. In such cases, DO NOT panic or approach them and move away from the animal. If you are onsite at LCTW, alert a member of staff, who may move them to a safe area. Occasionally Snakes are encountered in long grass, in the trees, pools, etc. but rarely attack people unless they are threatened, so keep your distance. Scorpions may be found under tree bark, logs, in piles of leaves, etc. Be sure to take precautions, wear proper closed-toe shoes and working gloves if handling logs and leaves.

We have staff sweeping leaves every day around the rescue centre and working areas, but please also take precautions yourself by keeping work and living areas tidy. Scorpions and other animals could even seek refuge in piles of clothes strewn around the floor. Please ensure your room is kept clean and tidy at all times to avoid harbouring any unwanted visitors. Don't forget to also check your footwear for any unwanted visitors before you put them on.

On the rare occasion that someone is bitten or stung, withdraw immediately and call for help. It is important that the person stays as still and calm as possible, this will help to slow down the effects of venom, if someone has been inenomed. Do not attempt to catch the animal, as this will increase your risk of being bitten again. Most of the species here are not venomous, and even those that are, do not always inject venom when they bite. You will be given first aid and then taken straight to the hospital if deemed necessary. If you are bitten on the hand, then remove any rings you might be wearing, due to risk of swelling.

## MOSQUITOES AND OTHER BUGS

There will be bugs here! This is a rural and tropical environment and insects come with all of the beautiful and untouched nature that we get to enjoy. This means you will encounter ants, mosquitoes, spiders, etc in and around your work and living area. That being said you should aim to protect yourself from bites as much as possible. During dusk hours or working in the forest, use adequate insect repellent and preferably wear long sleeves and trousers to cover up your skin. If you do get bitten, then TRY NOT TO SCRATCH!

Working in this environment means you could infect your wounds, especially in wet muddy conditions. It is important to keep wounds of any kind clean and dry at all times to prevent infection. If you infect your wounds, let a member of staff know immediately, so that we can treat or take you to the hospital before the infection spreads. If you have a mild allergic reaction, it is recommended to use antihistamine pills and/or cream, these can be purchased from the local pharmacy.

## MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

Some staff at the rescue centre can perform basic first aid including our medically trained veterinarians. If you or a staff member feels you need to see a doctor, there are a number of options available.

We have a couple of local pharmacies in the village for basic illness treatment, however for anything serious, staff will drive volunteers to one of three international, 24-hour clinics in Vientiane. These clinics have experienced foreign doctors whom speak English or French, provide pathology services, x-ray, ultrasound and many other services. For serious medical emergencies or surgery, volunteers are taken into Thailand from the border bridge in Vientiane, as the services provided in Thailand are more comprehensive. Ensure your insurance policy covers travel over borders for medical emergencies.







## EXTREME WEATHER

At the centre, we can have varied weather patterns such as extreme heat, heavy winds, and heavy rain storms. If we happen to have any out-of-the-ordinary events, please follow the directions of staff. For example, we can have very heavy storm onsite that may not come with much warning.

If staff say to seek cover, please follow instructions immediately and do so.

## OUTSIDE THE RESCUE CENTRE

Here we can only advise caution as we do not accept any responsibility for your safety when you are not on the premises. We recommend that you dress and behave in a respectable manner in the local village; this includes refraining from smoking and drinking in public, including the streets.

We also strongly recommend that you return from the village before it gets dark and to not go out after dark. If you must do this, then please try to do so in groups.

If you do decide to go off-site (especially alone or after dark) we ask that you use our sign in/sign out sheet located at the volunteer house. This is for your safety and in case of an emergency so that we can always know the general whereabouts of our volunteers.

Please be aware that you will be liable for injuries to yourself or others for when you are off grounds outside of work hours.

Volunteers at no time are to get into cars or on the back of motorbikes which are not owned by or being driven by LCTW members of staff. This can be dangerous for a number of reasons, one of which is that drink driving is common place in developing South-east Asian countries.

Sexual relations with local people is **ILLEGAL** in Laos. If volunteers engage in sexual relations, mutual or not, with a local person whilst volunteering at the LCTW, they will be asked to leave immediately.

It is strictly illegal and when here, you represent our centre to the local community.



# PACKING LIST

Here is a suggested list of items to bring to the LCTW for your volunteer experience.

Many of these items are available in Vientiane also, however please make purchases before your pick up time.

We suggest:

- Lightweight work clothes, you do not mind getting dirty or stained.
- Long sleeved tops and trousers: to protect you from the sun and insect bites.
- Sunhat, cap, or bandana to protect you against the sun, along with plenty of sun cream.
- Torch/flashlight and/or headtorch.
- A device with a alarm clock.
- Wash towels (they can be bought locally, but choice is limited).
- Comfortable shoes or sandals for lesiure and enclosed toe shoes for work shoes.
- Lightweight rainproof clothing (e.g. poncho - cheap quality ones can be bought locally).
- Ensure your mobile phone is unlocked if you wish to buy a Lao sim card for data.
- Simple first aid kit with plasters, bandages, antiseptics and various medications for gastric bugs etc. Working gloves.
- High-factor sunglasses are recommended for eye protection from the sun.
- Power adaptor (2 straight pin or 2 round pin)

## Optional and Rainy Season Specific

These items are not required for you to stay here, though may make your time here more comfortable.

- Mosquito net (especially towards the wetter season in June- August)
- Rubber boots if coming in rainy season and a good supply of socks (rubber boots can also be bought locally).
- Good supply of clothes, especially underwear (getting clean clothes dry is more challenging in wet and humid seasons)
- Warmer clothes for the evening in cool season (December-February).
- Extra padding for your Laos style mattress if you think this will make your stay with us more comfortable



# GETTING TO AND FROM LCTW

Please Note: Volunteers are responsible for arranging and paying for their own flights and travel expenses to and from Vientiane, Laos.

## ARRIVALS

We are able to arrange taxi pick-ups for volunteers from Vientiane or our local town Ban Keun with a taxi or an LCTW vehicle.

If you require this service, please see all the information below.

### Vientiane Pick-up - 400,000 LAK fee

We are able to arrange pick-ups every Sunday from Vientiane between 09.30-10.30am only, to allow time for your volunteer welcome and orientation tour, ready for your first full day on Monday.

### Local Pick-up - Nil fee

We are also able to pick you up from local guesthouses or hotels in Ban Keun. This is done every Sunday around midday and should be arranged in advance with our team. Ask our team for a recommendation of where to stay in our local town, the night before your scheduled arrival

### **Your Pick-up details**

Please send us the hotel name, address and contact number at least 48 hours prior to your pick-up.

Payments for transfer need to be made directly to the driver in cash (LAK) on arrival at the centre. If you have no cash on your person, please inform the team and an ATM drop-off can be arranged.

We may arrange for you to be picked up together with other volunteers. If this is the case, the taxi fare can be split between all volunteers being picked up, as the fare is per vehicle, not per person.

Please note, there are no pick up options we arrange from Vang Vieng or Luang Prabang to our centre.

### **Drop-off details**

We are also able to arrange drop-offs in Vientiane, at the Lao-Thai border Friendship Bridge, at Wattay Airport on your departure day or on any other day when necessary. Inform your Coordinator as soon as possible when your planned departure is. We can arrange these drop-offs when you are at the centre, for the same fee.

For independent travelers, it is also possible for us to help advise you on local transport options to Vientiane, Vang Vieng or Luang Prabang. We are able to inform you about the details of these options when you arrive at the centre.

Please note national holidays may affect the times and dates available, make sure you plan ahead.

## TELEPHONE AND INTERNET

Even if you are only staying a few weeks, the best option is to bring your own mobile phone and buy a cheap Lao SIM card here (available in the local village), so you can receive calls/SMS for free and makes calls at a reasonable cost. Your phone must be unlocked. The mobile wavebands in Laos are the same as Europe, Australia, New Zealand, etc. so a mobile phone from these regions will work fine here. Mobile phones from North America will need to be multi-band to be able to work here.

We recommend you get a Unitel or Lao Telecom brand SIM card. There is no wifi anywhere on site. You can grab one of these at the airport or staff can help you buy one after your orientation tour. If you have a smart phone we recommend the data plans only as they are more cost efficient than the call plans.

If you do not have your own phone with you, it is not possible to make international calls from LCTW.



# CONTACTING HOME & EMERGENCIES

The background of the page is a faded, high-contrast image of several crocodiles. One crocodile is prominently in the foreground, looking towards the viewer, while others are visible behind it, creating a sense of depth. The image is semi-transparent, allowing the text to be legible.

## EMERGENCIES

In case of an emergency, you can receive telephone calls to the rescue centre.

The best time for people to call is in working hours in Laos.

Please stress that calling the LCTW numbers must only be in a real emergency, and preferably not during the night in Laos.

Emergency Phone Number +856 2052 902 093

We DO NOT have internet or Wifi available for volunteers at LCTW.

There are no Internet cafes or computers close by for volunteers to use.

However local SIM cards can be purchased in the village, these are inexpensive. You can call home and get online.

## MAIL

We cannot receive mail or packages at the rescue centre.

If you wish to make a donation of items that needs to be mailed, please contact [info@lctwildlife.org](mailto:info@lctwildlife.org) and we can provide assistance and a mailing address in Vientiane.

## TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

You should make copies of important travel documents (passport, tickets, traveller's cheques, driving license etc) and keep these somewhere safe and separate from the originals.

Leave an extra copy with family or friends back home.

We also highly recommend registering your travel details with your home countries Foreign Affairs Departments, if they have one. .



# WISH LIST

Some volunteers ask us if there is anything they can bring to help us with the animals at the centre. We are very appreciative of anything you can bring us and are always looking for larger and more specialised enrichment and basic stocks and sundries for our animals.

We also readily accept specialised equipment such as husbandry tools, medical supplies and supplements.

If you think you can help with specialised animal equipment, please contact  
[info@lctwildlife.org](mailto:info@lctwildlife.org)

We can also make great use of your old household items for our animals such as old towels and bedding.

Alternatively, you can donate money towards supplies that are cheaply available in the local area.

Below is a general list of items we are commonly in need of. If you are veterinary professional and wish to donate more specialised veterinary items, please contact us and we will provide you with more specific information on things needed, and how to get them into the country.

## WE CAN BUY

- Cleaning supplies i.e. brooms and scoops – 10-40,000 kip (\$1-4 USD)
- Mesh netting – 7,000 kip/ m - (\$1 USD/m)
- Shovels – 28,000 kip (\$3.50 USD)
- PVC tube – Prices vary per size
- Thick rope – 25,000 kip/ kg (\$3 USD/ kg)
- Construction supplies – Prices vary
- Specialized dietary food – Prices vary
- Enrichment Toys, i.e. Mesh Balls – 20, 000 kip (\$2.40 USD)

## YOU CAN BRING

- Old towels/ blankets /sheets for Wildlife Hospital
- Plasters and bandages, first aid supplies
- Good quality metal pet water and food bowls
- Human (for Primates), puppy and kitten milk powdered infant formula
- Flea and tick shampoo & normal animal shampoo
- Unsalted nuts and edible seeds
- Strong pet toys for the rescued animals (kongs, balls, puzzle feeders)
- Thermo pad (microwavable or otherwise)
- Bike padlocks with number locks
- Reptile keeping apparatus e.g heat bulbs, thermostats, heat lamps
- Infant animal feeding kits e.g puppy and kitten bottles
- Karabiners/Quick links of all sizes
- Exotic & domestic animal supplements e.g Reptile calcium powder, Critical care
- Dewormer for dogs, puppies, cats, birds, and reptiles
- Specialized pet food (Bird seeds, reptile pellets).
- Small padlocks, key locks and number locks.
- Good quality, rust-proof tools i.e. Saw, hammers, pliers
- Blowing Bubbles
- Boxes of dust masks
- Work gloves
- Boxes of Latex gloves
- Old perfumes or scented sprays for enrichment
- Old games, movies, books, etc. for the Volunteer Hangout
- Thermometers





# PRE-ARRIVAL CHECKLIST



- Pay full payment to LCTW
- Health check-up with travel doctor including vaccinations
- Visa (if required before entering the country, depending on your nationality)
- Travel Insurance
- Book flights
- Notify LCTW of arrival and pick up details **at least 48 hours** before arrival date
- Give travel document copies & LCTW contact details to family/friends in case of emergencies
- Read & review LCTW Volunteer Guidebook thoroughly

Please take time to read some of the stories and campaigns on our Facebook page Lao Conservation Trust for Wildlife - @lctwildlife, our Instagram @lctwildlife and our website <https://www.lctwildlife.org> so that you can start to familiarise yourself with our organisation. Most importantly- come with an open mind, a willingness to learn and get your hands dirty, considerate attitude, and lots of enthusiasm, so you can have an amazing experience here with us at LCTW!

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with the Lao Conservation Trust for Wildlife,  
we look forward to meeting you!



# PLEASE READ AND ABIDE BY THESE



## LCTW RULES AND POLICIES

Please review the following pages closely and abide by these rules during your stay with us. Most of these involve common sense and will help you and fellow volunteers create life-long memories at LCTW.

When you arrive you will be given a safety briefing and an orientation talk.

It will mostly cover the following rules and policies.

The rules and policies are not limited to what is below and you may be informed of changes or new rules, which you will also need to follow strictly.

### OUR ANIMALS

Our animals' welfare, safety and needs, come first at all times.

Our centre rescues new animals frequently, so some schedules and rules will change to meet the specialised needs of our animals.

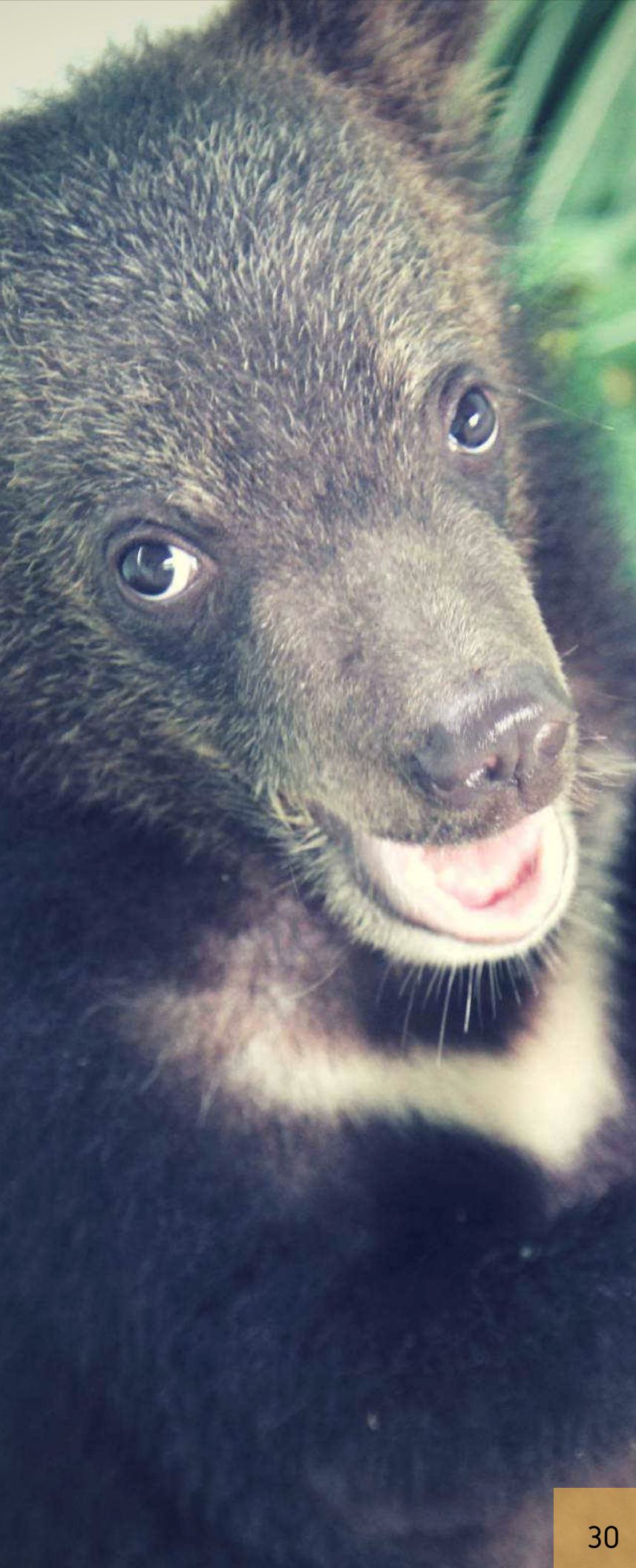
Keeping animals happy and busy is a major task at our rescue centre. Whenever you have an idea, please discuss this with a member of staff (e.g. enrichment or enclosures, improvements of enclosures and never act alone or without permission.

Please help to observe the animals at the rescue centre so we can detect any problems as soon as possible. Always tell someone as soon you notice something out of the ordinary. For example, if you notice any wounds or behaviour that is unusual for the animal, report this to a member of staff.

These situations may involve an animal which is mostly cared for by our volunteer team and we need your help to ensure that all animals are happy and healthy while they are with us.

We also ask that you notify staff if you see anything that is broken or needs to be replaced.





# NO CONTACT POLICY

LCTW HAS A STRICT NO CONTACT POLICY. WE WILL ASK VOLUNTEERS TO LEAVE IMMEDIATELY IF THEY TOUCH THE ANIMALS. Unless previously specified by your coordinator e.g you are a vet volunteer helping with surgery.

LCTW has a strict no contact policy, this is so we can ease the integration of wildlife with their own species, facilitate future releases back to the wild, as well as ensuring staff, volunteer and animal safety.

Unfortunately, most of our animals have already had too much contact with humans as most are victims of the illegal wildlife trade. Due to this, some may look like they want attention, we ask volunteers not to touch them. Animals appearing to give social interaction are NOT trying to be friendly. In the majority of cases, this behaviour is a sign of significant stress and submission. Do not be drawn in by it.

For example, a Gibbon showing you his/her back is not a gesture of wanting a back scratch, it is a sign that the animal is submitting due to your presence. Though it may be a nice experience for you to touch an animal, there is a very real risk of disease transmission, some with obvious symptoms (if you have a cold or cough) and some without.

We will ask volunteers to leave immediately if they touch animals without permission.

If you see something you are unsure about, or do not agree with, please talk directly to the Coordinators or Directors. They can answer any questions you may have regarding the animals here at LCTW.

We are open to new ideas and we are transforming this site into a world class rescue centre. We would encourage you to share your creativity, ideas and opinions with your coordinators or LCTW Directors.



# SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

We encourage volunteers to share our work and our messages of wildlife conservation with friends, family, and other travellers. You are allowed to share pictures of animals at LCTW on social media, preferably tagged with our hashtag or location to further spread the message of the work you are doing here at LCTW. We encourage you to share the official LCTW social media posts to further spread our messages of conservation.

Below are some rules for posting your own photos on social media:

Do not share any photos from 'behind the scenes' areas which are strictly staff and volunteer only areas. Do not share images of staff (or veterinary volunteers) interacting physically with animals including surgeries and ongoing care. We also regularly have many orphans in the care of staff. You may take these photos to show friends and family at home if given permission by staff, however they are NOT allowed to go on social media, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or Snapchat. This is for two reasons.

Firstly, we do not want to advertise ourselves as a project where you can 'play' with animals. This attracts the wrong type of volunteers to our project. If we are to responsibly release animals back into their wild homes, they need to have a cautiousness around humans.

Secondly, when people see others, doing what could be perceived as 'playing' with wildlife, it sends a message that they can also 'play' and interact with wildlife. Which means more animals are taken from their wild homes and put into the illegal wildlife trade. All due to the demand, which is either individuals wanting these animals as pets or businesses knowing that tourists/customers taking photos or interacting with these animals will bring in a profit. All LCTW orphans have been taken from the wild and sold into the illegal wildlife trade before their rescue here. Photos can contribute towards the illegal trade, do not be part of it and think before posting. This is a serious policy.

Volunteers who ignore this policy will be asked to leave immediately.

## STREET ANIMALS

If you compare Laos to other South-east Asian nations, you will notice there are considerably less street animals. Though you will still encounter some and those that are on the street usually belong to people in nearby homes. Whilst this may be hard for volunteers, we ask you not to bring any dogs or cats back to the centre.

Please do not feed any of the temple or street animals or give them attention, as they are likely to follow you back to the rescue centre. Street dogs and cats are also the largest carriers of Rabies and many other diseases, please resist all temptation to touch any street animals for your own safety.

Please note: we have a couple of dogs and cats that are rescues and now live with staff onsite, they will be pointed out to you during your induction tour. These animals are not to leave the property with you, go to the village, into the zoo section, or your rooms.

Despite us giving monthly treatment to our domestic animals onsite, they can still carry ticks due to the tropical climate here.

For this reason, do not have them in your rooms.

If we find you with any animals in your rooms we will ask you to replace linen and beds as a precaution, this washing will be at your own cost.



# PAYMENT POLICY



We require **full payment** to reserve your booking into our system. This payment is fully refundable, if you need to cancel for any reason, up to 31 days before you are due to arrive at the centre. Please note that a full refund does not include any bank fees, PayPal, card fees or any other form of transfer fees that are incurred by LCTW and are non refundable at any point.

**Please read our cancellation policy below.**

**10%** of your total fee will be charged if you notify us of your cancellation or any changes to your booking between **30 and 22 days before** your scheduled arrival date.

**30%** of your total fee will be charged if you notify us of your cancellation or any changes to your booking between **21 and 15 days before** your scheduled arrival date.

**50%** of your total fee will be charged if you notify us of your cancellation or any changes to your booking **14 to 8 days before** your scheduled arrival date.

**70%** of your total fee will be charged if you notify us of your cancellation or any changes to your booking **7 to 3 days before** your scheduled arrival date.

**100%** of your total fee will be charged if you notify us of your cancellation or any changes to your booking **2 days before** your scheduled arrival or **in the event of a no show**.

Returning volunteers will receive a 5% discount, let us know if you have volunteered at the Lao Conservation Trust for Wildlife previously during the booking process.

To make your payment and confirm your volunteer booking, please follow the payment options and instructions that are located on the volunteer pricing guide that has been sent to you.

If you have any questions or queries regarding our cancellation or payment policies, please do email us at [volunteer@lctwildlife.org](mailto:volunteer@lctwildlife.org)





## VOLUNTEER DUTIES

- The work day starts at 08.00. If you wish to have tea, coffee and breakfast before you start work, please make sure you wake up early enough so that you are ready to begin work at an appropriate time.
- Your Coordinators will start work at 08.00 everyday. If it is your first day as a volunteer your Coordinators will meet you at the volunteer house and show you where to begin the work day. Following that if you wish to walk over from the volunteer house to the work area with your team then you will need to be ready by 08:00. If you are not ready by 08.00 it is your responsibility to meet your Coordinator and the other volunteers at the designated work area later on when you are ready.
- Volunteers usually work 6 days a week depending on the needs of the Centre. The elected volunteer day off is Sunday.
- Please advise your Coordinator or your job leader if you are feeling ill, depending on the job you have been allocated, you may be asked to switch for the day or ask for extra days off.
- Never walk around the enclosures with food or drink, the animals can reach through the cages and grab what you are holding.
- Always be aware of your surroundings. You may be working very close to some animals that can scratch, bite, or pull you towards their enclosures. Be careful not to leave equipment where you may trip over them. You should know where an animal, other staff and fellow volunteers are at all times, so you can work accordingly.
- Always follow instructions of staff. If they ask you to stop something, immediately do so.
- Animal escapes are rare, though if an animal escapes, remove yourself immediately but calmly from the area so you do not stress the animal or look threatening to the animal. Never attempt to catch or lure an animal back. This is dangerous. Inform a staff member and make sure you retreat to your closest safe place. This can include inside a building or inside an empty enclosure. Stay there until you are told the situation is safe.



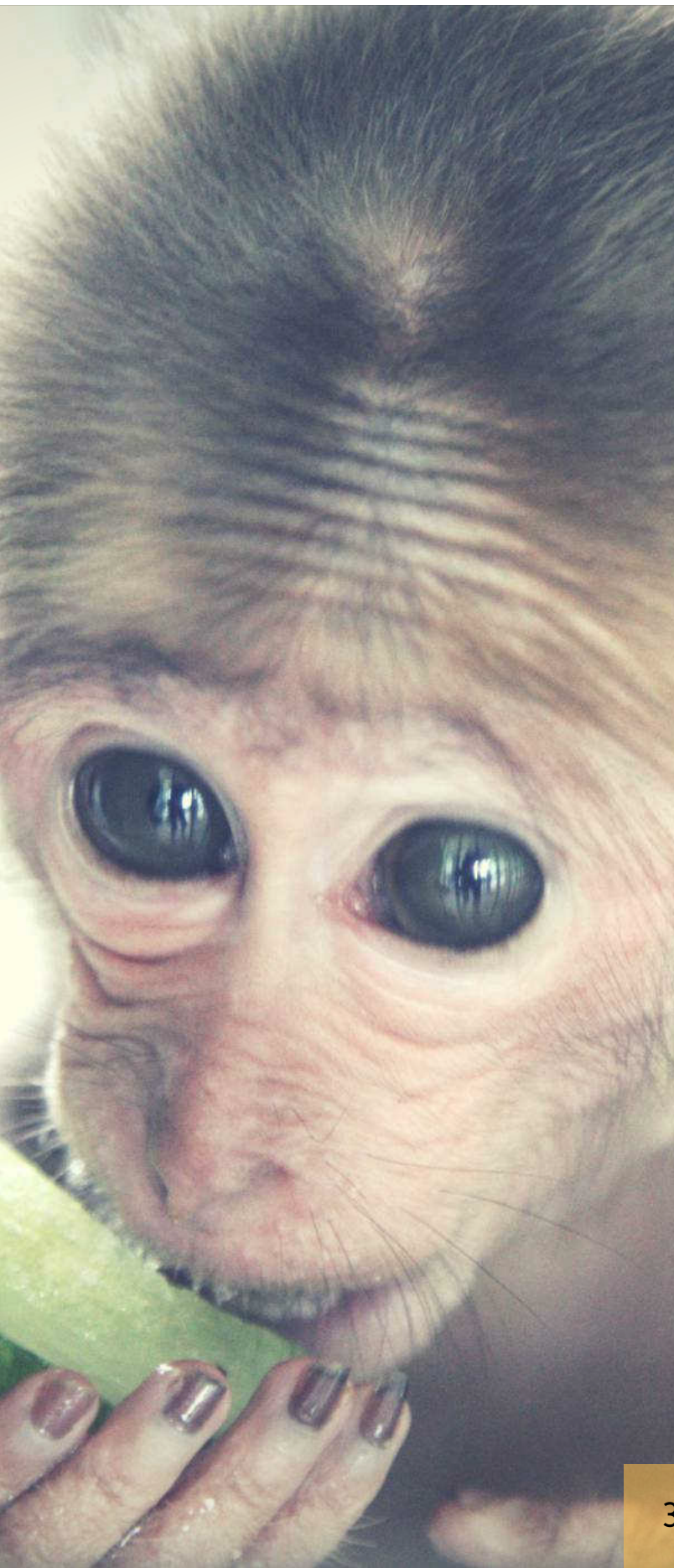
# WORK AREAS AND TOOLS

- For all jobs you will find the tools you need in the Volunteer House or designated work areas. Please treat these with respect and return them to the correct place after use. If you use brooms or tools, clean them and put them back where they belong. If you are asked to borrow a tool from the staff in another area, it must be returned to its original place.
- Make sure your work areas are always clean, before and after your task. After you're finished, make sure all areas are swept and cleaned. This is for hygiene and to stop unwanted visitors such as pest species. Wipe over benches, wash all utensils, and neatly return everything to where it belongs.
- Ensure that you return any enclosure keys to the key box it came from directly after use. Other staff also need access to these keys on a regular basis, or in the case of an emergency.





# DRESS-CODE AND FOOTWEAR



- Please do not wear any jewelry whilst working in the Centre. The Primates especially are very attracted to shiny objects and they can grab and pull. This is particularly the case with earrings and facial piercings. It is also possible to get jewelry stuck in cages or on tools when working.
- Headphones are not be worn whilst working around the rescue centre. Apart from the risk of being distracted if something is happening around you, it is also dangerous if you cannot hear any warnings being shouted out.
- It is recommended for everyone to wear closed toe footwear (no bare feet) for both cultural and safety reasons. Ground based infections such as tetanus and a variety of parasites are not uncommon. Toe, foot, and ankle injuries are common injuries when conducting physical work. Therefore footwear with good ankle support and even steel toe caps are recommended. Take extra care after a rain, the ground becomes very slippery.
- Remember that cultural expectations may be different here than in your country.
- Women: should not display any midriff, cleavage, or large amounts of back. Tank tops/singlets with thick shoulder straps are preferable over 'spaghetti' straps. Though tops that cover your shoulders or even long sleeve are recommended as this will give you extra sun protection, along with being culturally appropriate.
- It can be hot and we understand it can be uncomfortable to work in a lot of clothing, though cultural differences need to be considered.
- Women: should wear shorts that are no shorter than mid-thigh range.  
Women: must not walk around onsite in swimwear at any point.
- Men: cannot walk-around or work without a shirt.



# VOLUNTEER HOUSE, ACCOMMODATION, KITCHEN & AFTER WORK RULES

After dark, do not leave the volunteer house/accommodation area, go into animal enclosures or attempt to do animal work.

We have guards patrolling our site all throughout the night, so don't be alarmed if you see men in blue uniform upon an evening, they are here to keep the site safe.

- Please always wash your own utensils after use and remember to clean up after yourself when cooking your own breakfast or a snack at the volunteer house, so others can use the cookware provided. Especially at breakfast, as this is the busiest time in the kitchen, please wash everything up straight after using it.
- Be considerate of others. You are now living in a group situation. Think about other people before leaving a mess in the communal/shared areas.
- Label your own food and do not take other people's food. We have a volunteer refrigerator where you can store personal items you buy or bring from home. Please remember in this refrigerator, if you did not buy it, it's not yours.
- Smoking is confined to one specific area: the smoking area at the volunteer house is the table outside of the volunteer house. Please do not smoke anywhere else, even if you see staff or visitors smoking in other areas. Ensure your cigarettes are put out properly and empty the ashtrays on a regular basis.
- Milk is only bought for tea, coffee, and other hot drinks. If you wish to have cereal with milk, please buy your own milk.
- Bread, eggs, jams, condiments, tea and coffee are provided for all volunteers.
- If you empty the filtered drinking water bottle from the dispenser, please replace it. If you are struggling to do so, ask for assistance.
- Remember that we are in a rural area and tropical climate so there will be insects in and around the house, things like keeping areas clean, mosquito nets, and bug spray will help but it is an unavoidable and inherent part of the natural Laos wildlife experience.
- All food waste is composted in the compost bin outside of the volunteer house.
- Always keep all communal areas (including your room) clean.
- Regarding noise levels, please consider the staff who need to sleep in the volunteer house rooms, and close to other communal areas. Noise should be kept to a minimum after 10:00pm.
- You may receive new roommates; you will be told of this before their arrival so please have rooms tidy. If you need new bedding please ask your Coordinator.
- Do not leave fans and lights on in your bedroom during the day. It will not keep the room cooler at night when you wish to be there and it will drain energy needed for the rescue centre during the day. If fans and lights are left on, staff can enter your room to turn it off.
- Please turn off your outside bungalow lights once you are ready to go to bed as the safety light on the bungalow path should always be kept on at night.
- If you are the last one to leave the volunteer house please make sure all doors are completely shut.
- When moving out, please remember to remove bedding from your bed and leave in a pile on your bed. Remove all rubbish and personal belongings. Sweep up, clean up and leave your room tidy. Please be packed and ready to leave your room before 10:00am on the day you are leaving. Return your key and leave your bedroom in the condition you would like to find it on your arrival.

If you have any issue with something or someone, please talk to a Coordinator.

# DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND SOCIAL ISSUES

LCTW has a ZERO TOLERANCE for drugs. If volunteers are found with illegal substances, they will immediately be escorted off the premises and reported to the police. If the police find you onsite with drugs, this will have serious consequences for our centre. After 5:00pm on your working days (and days off) you can socialise in the volunteer house, or in the restaurant area during dinner, this includes the moderate consumption of alcohol, if you are of legal age in your home country. However, after 10:00pm please keep noise down and return to your accommodation. Remember other volunteers and staff who live in the volunteer house may not want to socialize. Be respectful! Heavy drinking and drunken disruptive behaviour will not be tolerated, this could lead to you being asked to leave the centre. Working with wild animals early in the morning when you have a hangover is dangerous for yourself, other volunteers, staff and the animals. If we think you are hungover, we will tell you not to work. If you turn up to work drunk you will be asked to leave the centre.

Volunteers are permitted to go to local bars in the village during the evenings. Be aware that as soon as you leave the centre, we are not responsible for your well being. If you plan on leaving the center please remember to use the sign in/sign out sheet located at the volunteer house for safety and security reasons.

DO NOT get in cars or on the back of motorbikes/scooters which are not driven by LCTW members of staff under any circumstances.

Drunk driving is very common around South-east Asia, as well as fatal accidents from alcohol. If you are found to have been in the car, or a bike of someone who has been drinking you will be asked to leave immediately. Sometimes volunteers will go to a local restaurant or beer garden with LCTW staff in a staff vehicle. If this occurs, there will always be a LCTW staff member who is the designated driver, who does not consume alcohol.

If you walk out of the centre after hours, please always have a light or torch with you. Hold it in front of you at all times as there are not many streetlights and many cars and bikes do not have lights on them. Walk close to the sides of the road or off it and do not walk in large groups or lines across the road.

Women should pay special note to Lao culture since it is quite different to what you are used to. Showing too much skin is unacceptable so please cover your midriff, cleavage, top of your thighs and preferably your shoulders in the village. Wearing a bra is absolutely essential if visiting a temple, please cover your shoulders, legs and wear non-heeled shoes.

Sexual interactions or sexual relationships with the local or expat staff are prohibited.

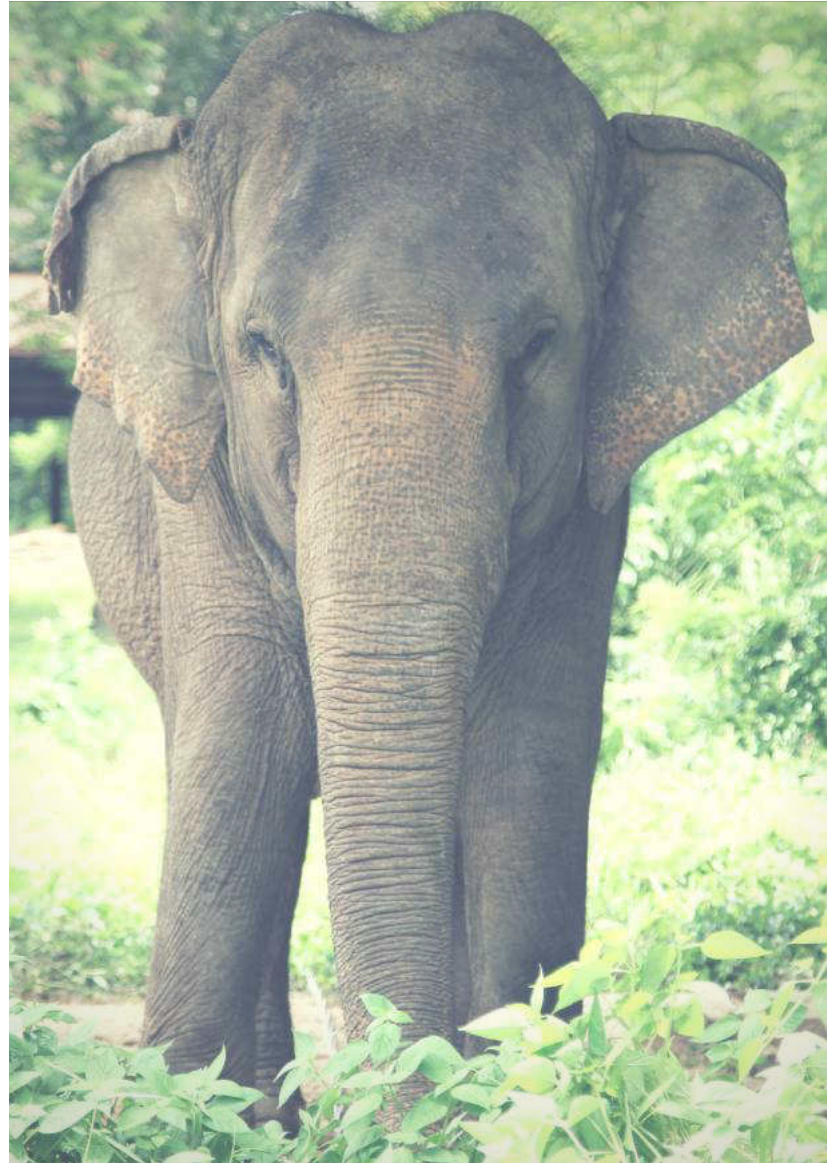
Sexual relations with Lao people is illegal and carries heavy punishment here in Laos.

DO NOT engage in an sexually intimate behaviour with a local person while you are volunteering with us. You will be asked to leave if this conduct takes place.



# LCTW RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ASK YOU TO LEAVE IF:

- You do anything to harm or cause distress to any animal, including touching the animals.
- Your behaviour is causing distress to staff and/or volunteers.
- You have acted with reckless disregard for the safety of staff or volunteers, or have caused them actual harm.
- Your use of alcohol is considered excessive or unacceptable by staff.
- You are found using, or are in possession of illegal substances.
- You are charged with a criminal offense during your placement.
- You have acted in such a way that you are likely to bring a bad reputation to the organisation.
- You are not fulfilling your obligations as a volunteer and continually refuse to carry out reasonable requests.
- You do not follow the rules outlined in the Volunteer Information pack, or explained to you by your Coordinator.
- You handle any native wildlife you find onsite.



If you are asked to leave for not following the above rules and policies and those explained to you onsite by LCTW staff members, you will not get refunded. Upon confirming to join our project, it is with the understanding that you have read and accepted all the policies, guidelines and advice recommended in this guidebook.

**Thank you again for choosing to volunteer with us. We hope you have a wonderful experience at LCTW! On behalf of the animals thank you for your time and dedication.**



# OTHER IMPORTANT BITS

## BOOKINGS AND GENERAL ENQUIRIES

All bookings, pick up arrangements and general enquiries go through our Coordinators here in Laos. Please consider office hours in Lao time when contacting our team.

### CONTACT LCTW:

Phone: +856 2052 902 093

EMAIL: [info@lctwildlife.org](mailto:info@lctwildlife.org)

### CONTACT YOUR COORDINATOR:

EMAIL: [volunteer@lctwildlife.org](mailto:volunteer@lctwildlife.org)

### ISSUES WITHIN LAOS

For any problems whilst you are in Laos before you arrive at the centre, please contact the Phone: +856 2052 902 093 Please contact our management on the above number for all emergency issues, and leave this number with your family.

## FOLLOW US AND SHARE

You can find out further information on Lao Conservation Trust for Wildlife on: Website - <https://lctwildlife.org>

Facebook - [www.facebook.com/lctwildlife](https://www.facebook.com/lctwildlife)

Instagram - [@lctwildlife](https://www.instagram.com/lctwildlife)

Twitter - [@lctwildlife](https://twitter.com/lctwildlife)

Please review your experience at LCTW on - [www.facebook.com/lctwildlife](https://www.facebook.com/lctwildlife) and <https://goo.gl/maps/6A7c2T5sGgE2>

## SPECIAL CONDITIONS

Our centre accepts volunteers all year round, though there are only two days that our volunteer programme does not operate. These dates are the 24th and the 25th of December. Volunteers can still stay onsite during these days, though no programme will be running.

To get the most out of your experience we would recommend you avoid these dates.

