



# **AFRICAN BAT CONSERVATION**

## **Research Assistant Recruitment Pack**

Registered Charity Number: 1170640

# About Us



African Bat Conservation (ABC) is a non-profit conservation research project based in Malawi, operating under UK Charity Conservation Research Africa (CRA) and in partnership with the University of Bath, UK. ABC works in collaboration with the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Malawi (DNPW) to conduct three core activities:

**1. Applied research for wildlife conservation management:** to determine and monitor bat population trends, assess species threats, and provide conservation recommendations; as well as a number of smaller student projects to facilitate and inform long-term conservation management of bat populations and their habitats. Project results are used to update IUCN species status reports and assist Government in long-term population monitoring and management.

**2. Education and awareness** of bats and biodiversity and related issues through comprehensive community based education programmes and human-wildlife conflict outreach.

**3. Capacity building** to increase project effectiveness and long-term success by building capacity in ecological research, biodiversity monitoring, and management for DNPW through training courses, attachment programmes, and postgraduate research projects at MSc and PhD level.

## Summary:

African Bat Conservation conducts research on bats across Malawi, both at field sites and in urban areas of Lilongwe, as part of our long-term applied conservation research project. Our work includes bat monitoring and research, such as mist netting, roost surveys, bat box programmes, and, at certain times of the year, radio-tracking bats in both urban and rural environments. We also conduct community outreach visits, responding to human-bat conflict calls by providing advice and practical mitigation solutions. We are currently recruiting for a research assistant to assist our programme across sites in Malawi.



# About You

We are looking for someone with:

- **Inspirational Leadership skills:**

You will need to be a great leader, able to inspire and motivate others.

- **Organisational skills:**

We are looking for someone who is highly organised and practical, with an eye for detail.

- **Management skills:**

You must have excellent interpersonal and management skills and experience of dealing with students and volunteers in a professional manner.

- **Maturity and Professionalism** is a must, as well as the ability to work maintain the motivation and research output despite the many daily challenges of working in Malawi.



The position requires flexibility to work at any of our sites based on project needs. This includes Lilongwe, Kuti Wildlife Reserve, and various other sites, with much of the upcoming work likely to involve extended periods in the south of Malawi.

Work is on demand, with long hours over a 5 day week and the possibility of additional days based on project needs. Being a conservation organisation we do not have regular office hours, so you will be required to conduct work as required by the project demand, including night work. Therefore, you must be willing to work in the field at night and outside regular hours as needed by

the programme, whilst maintaining a positive, can-do attitude. This post offers an excellent opportunity for career development for a researcher who is interested in applied conservation biology, bats, and human-wildlife conflict.



# Person Specification & Contract Conditions

The post-holder will work under the supervision of our Research Manager and alongside our ABC Community Outreach team. They will conduct field work at night and in the day, including:

- I. Bat harp trapping and mist netting
- II. Bat acoustic surveys (SM3/4 detectors)
- III. Roost surveys (internal, external, and emergence counts)
- IV. Community site visits and outreach, to educate communities regarding bat conservation and management and install/advise regarding conflict mitigation
- V. Tagging and radio tracking bats (at certain times of year)
- VI. Bat box surveys
- VII. Vegetation surveys
- VIII. and any other field work as required
- IX. Conduct acoustic analysis of bat calls
- X. Maintain, summarise, and store data in a specifically designed Microsoft Access database
- XI. Create and edit habitat and roost maps in QGIS
- XII. Manage volunteers and volunteer schedules
- XIII. Attend and contribute to project meetings every week
- XIV. Be flexible in the hours worked to fluctuating demand
- XV. Work closely and co-operatively with other team members and partner organisations
- XVI. Fulfil all administrative and budget requirements on time and accurately
- XVII. Maintain accurate records of work activities and data entry
- XVIII. Contribute to project reports, newsletters, bulletins etc. as required



## Requirements

### ● Essential

Positive can do attitude with mature approach

BSc in conservation biology, zoology, biology, or related field

Experience of working and living in field-based environments, preferably in Africa

Experience of field research, particularly with bats

Driving licence

A confident communicator who is able to relate well to people from diverse backgrounds and cultures

Experience of working with volunteers from diverse backgrounds

Proven experience of working co-operatively as part of a team

Maturity, and a positive mental attitude, resilient, ability to muck in and get on with it

Ability to work independently under minimal supervision

Experience of data collection under minimal supervision

Hard work ethic, flexible, and a conscientious approach

Enthusiasm and self motivation for working on applied conservation

### ● Desirable

MSc or PhD in ecology, zoology, or biology

Experienced in radio-tracking, tagging, harp trapping, and mist netting bats

Experience in dealing with human-wildlife conflict

Experience of off-road driving with a 4x4

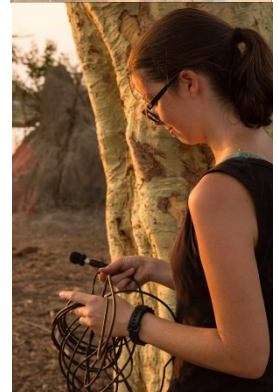
Experience of managing own workload and taking responsibility for projects

## Contract Conditions

● Timing - This is an 8 month position, commencing March / April 2025, or later if not filled sooner.

● Hours - Full time flexible working hours, 5 days per week, with additional days and night work as needed.

● Location - The location is flexible based on project needs, with you potentially being based at our camp in Lilongwe, Kuti Wildlife Reserve, or other sites as required. Much of the upcoming work is likely to involve extended periods in the south of Malawi.



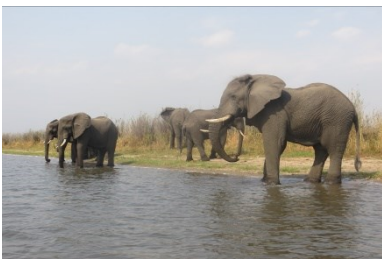


● **Accommodation** - In Lilongwe, the post holder will be based at the ABC research offices and staff house, staying in a shared room. The accommodation includes a living area, kitchen, showers, and toilets. Whilst in the field, accommodation will vary by site but may include sharing a walk-in safari tent with beds alongside another staff member.

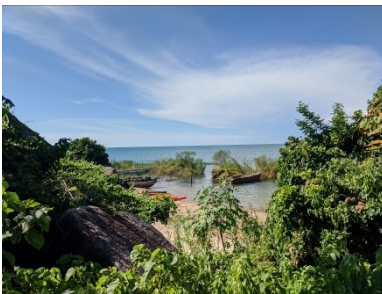


● **Conditions** - Please note that this is an unpaid position. ABC will provide 3 basic meals a day, accommodation and bills, work-related travel, airport transfers, and limited personal use of a project vehicle. You will be required to cover your own flights, food, visas, insurance, and vaccinations.

## Explore Malawi



While you are with ABC you will have time off to venture further afield to explore Malawi. Malawi is an amazing country, known as the "Warm heart of Africa". It is culturally and ecologically diverse, offering everything from mountain rainforests to the Lake of Stars festival. You won't be disappointed!



A trip to Malawi would not be complete without snorkelling in the crystal clear waters of Lake Malawi, infamous for its hundreds of endemic cichlid species. Relax on the beach or kayak out for a stay on one of the remote islands in Lake Malawi National Park. A visit to Nyika plateau when the orchids are in bloom or down to Mount Mulanje at 3000m high with its endemic upland rainforests are also a must.

## How to Apply

### Application process

To apply please send a completed Research Assistant Application Form and Covering Letter (outlining why you think you would be suitable for the post) and a CV if you wish to Kieran on

[kieran@africanbatconservation.org](mailto:kieran@africanbatconservation.org)

Further project information: [www.africanbatconservation.org](http://www.africanbatconservation.org)

