



MAURITIUS ISLAND RESTORATION INTERNSHIP

ONE YEAR PROGRAMME



DURRELL
CONSERVATION
ACADEMY



MAURITIAN
WILDLIFE
FOUNDATION

OVERVIEW

This internship is targeting and enabling early career conservation professionals from Durrell's rewilding sites, primarily Mauritius, the South-Western Indian Ocean and related conservation contexts, to support the ongoing island restoration work on the Mauritian offshore islets and benefit at the same time from a range of sustained training and learning experiences, allowing them to develop the full set of competences - skills, knowledge and behavioural qualities – that they need to be effective in their current and future roles.

Five interns will be selected to participate in this unique one year programme combining both "on-the-job" and more formal classroom-based training.

The internship programme is delivered by Durrell Conservation Training Ltd (DCT) a non-profit training organisation based in Mauritius in partnership with the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF). It is an exciting opportunity to learn directly through exchange of skills and understanding with organisations that have a track record of conservation success in Mauritius and the South-Western Indian Ocean.

“ This internship offers amazing support and in-depth training. I am now a more resilient, confident, and resourceful biologist ”



DURRELL CONSERVATION TRAINING LTD (DCT)

Durrell Conservation Training Ltd (DCT) is a biodiversity conservation training organisation established on Mauritius to build capacity for conservation across the South-Western Indian Ocean.

DCT is part of Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, which was established by naturalist Gerald Durrell in 1963, and has a proven track record of saving species from extinction, and over 40 years' experience of delivering conservation training and has been working in Mauritius since the mid 1970s. DCT was registered in Mauritius in 2014 and has recently refocused its strategy to deliver vocational training courses and capacity building exchange programmes in threatened species recovery for the Mauritian Government and local conservation organisations across Mauritius and the region. We deliver much of our practical, field conservation training through our partnership with the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF) the National Parks and Conservation Service (NPCS) and the Forestry Service of the Ministry of Agro Industry and Food Security of Mauritius.

MAURITIAN WILDLIFE FOUNDATION (MWF)

The Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF) is a non-governmental, non-profit conservation organisation working in Mauritius, Rodrigues and their offshore and outer islets to save threatened endemic flora and fauna from extinction. It was established in 1984 under the initiative of Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust and other conservation organisations. The conservation work in Mauritius began as a species orientated programme concentrating on a few Critically Endangered species, including the Mauritius Kestrel and the Pink Pigeon. In 1985, the organisation expanded its operations to habitat restoration, including the management of native forests and small islands. The Foundation is now perfecting whole ecosystem management and restoration of offshore islets with a focus on removing invasive species, replanting native vegetation, monitoring and reintroducing threatened bird and reptile species.



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WHO IS IT FOR?

We are looking for highly self-motivated and conscientious individuals to assist with the conservation and restoration work on the offshore islands within our programme teams and to actively participate in the internship training component. This internship is specifically designed for early career conservation professionals from Mauritius, the South-Western Indian Ocean islands or related conservation contexts.



REQUIREMENTS

Applicants will need to:

- Be at least 21 years old;
- Have gained preferably a BSc in biological sciences (or similar);
- Have a first practical experience of field conservation and demonstrate a keen interest in field-based island conservation and restoration;
- Have a sound knowledge and understanding of spreadsheet applications and data management;
- Be physically fit and healthy for working in tough, remote conditions for extended periods of time;
- Have good written and spoken English (French/Creole would be an advantage);
- Be able to stay focused on repetitive work and ready to adapt to unforeseen circumstances with initiative and due care;
- Have preferably a driving license for car and/or motorbike;
- Be a good swimmer.



Due to the nature of working on islands, the hours worked will be irregular and at times will involve working nights, weekends and public holidays.

WHAT IS THE INTERNSHIP CONTENT?

“On-the-job” training will be provided notably through the field work you will conduct within our Island Restoration team on Round Island, and Ile aux Aigrettes with potential opportunities to participate in other island work:

- Implementing island biosecurity protocols and invasive alien species management;
- Surveying and monitoring rare plant species, endemic reptile and seabird populations;
- Supporting plant nursery work, habitat restoration;
- Assisting (when required) with reptile translocations and head-starting of young reptiles for reintroduction and use of species as ecological replacements (Aldabra giant tortoises);
- Biodiversity data entry, analysis and management;
- Supporting the maintenance of islet infrastructure



Around 200 hours, spread across the year, will be spent in classroom training to cover topics such as:

- Invasive species management and control;
- Scientific survey design and methods for island biodiversity monitoring (distance sampling, Capture Mark Recapture, Population Viability Analysis using Vortex, statistical analyses using R, GIS and mapping, data management using Excel);
- Preparing animal tissue samples for exportation and overseas analyses;
- IUCN Red listing process;
- Technical and scientific documentation and reporting;
- First Aid and responses in case of remote field-based accidents and emergencies;
- Communication, conservation education and community engagement;
- Forest restoration;
- Financial management and budgeting.

INTERNSHIP LEADERS

NIK COLE



Nik is the Islands Restoration Manager for Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust and Mauritian Wildlife Foundation, working in collaboration with the Mauritian Government's National Parks and Conservation Service. His work focuses upon the restoration of island ecosystems, through the reintroduction of threatened fauna and flora to rebuild native communities, the use of analogue species to restore lost ecological interactions and the management and removal of invasive species. Nik has been primarily located in Mauritius for the past 20 years. He has a PhD from the University of Bristol and is involved with research and restoration projects within the Indian Ocean and Caribbean.

MARTINE GODER



Martine is the Head of Durrell Conservation Training, Mauritius. She leads the internship programme in Mauritius; supports the Madagascar conservation training team and is setting up the professional development programmes for conservation practitioners in the Southwest Indian Ocean region. She holds a MSc in Conservation Leadership from the University of Cambridge and prior to joining Durrell in January 2023, worked for the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation managing both the Flora Programme and Education Programme. She has 18 years of experience in conservation, specialising in forest and ecosystem restoration; recovery and in-situ and exsitu management of highly threatened endemic reptile and plant species of Mauritius; invasive alien species management; conservation education and community engagement programmes.

TEESHA BABOORUN



Teesha is the Training Coordinator of the DCT Team, Mauritius and she is responsible of the coordination of the MIRI programme. She holds a BSc in Agriculture and Specialisation in aquaculture and has 10 years' experience working on various conservation projects on small islands. Previously she worked as a CEPF project leader and as the assistant conservation officer on the biodiversity hotspot Silhouette Island in the Seychelles. She has also been part of the MWF team working on birds (Shrike, pigeon and Passerine) and Flora project as coordinator

"I thoroughly enjoyed working in a range of environments, developing my knowledge across many disciplines"

MIRI Intern, 2022

VENUE AND FIELD STATIONS

Selected interns will be embedded in the field sites in Mauritius and classroom-based learning will take place at the Floreal Durrell Conservation Training Office.

ROUND ISLAND (ILE RONDE)

Located 22.5 kilometres off the north-east coast of Mauritius, the islet is a closed Nature Reserve and the second largest Mauritian island at 219ha with an elevation of 280m above sea level. Round Island represents one of the longest-running island restoration projects in the region, having been designated a nature reserve in 1957 and supporting the last remnant of a lowland palm rich community that formerly covered the dry lowland areas of Mauritius. It is jointly administered by the National Parks and Conservation Service and the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation. The Round Island field station and plant nursery has been permanently staffed by wardens and conservation biologists since 2002. Selected as one of Durrell's worldwide rewilding sites, the island has been the focus of a new longterm planning strategy aiming to restore the entire ecosystem and functionality.

ILE AUX AIGRETTES

Ile aux Aigrettes, Mauritius, sits within a Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) and is also an established Nature Reserve, hosting a unique lowland coastal forest assemblage. A wide range of conservation activities are undertaken on Ile aux Aigrettes, including terrestrial bird and reptile reintroductions, flora restoration, conservation education and eco-tourism. This work sits within an established island restoration plan. The Island is therefore an ideal training site, providing exposure to a range of conservation work that can then be applied within and beyond Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) elsewhere. The field station and facilities are well equipped to comfortably support 14 staff. The island also has an endemic plant nursery, a Visitor Centre, bird management aviaries and reptile head-starting facilities.

"An amazing opportunity which helps in boosting my self-confidence and to learn new skills"

Léa Raphaël, Intern 2022



LOGISTICS AND COSTS HOW TO APPLY

Return international flight, individual medical and repatriation insurance, in-transit expenses, visa fees (if any), and work-related local transportation will all be covered by Durrell for selected interns.

A monthly stipend will also be allocated to each selected intern to support food and personal expenses.

When not working at offshore sites, interns will be accommodated at Durrell and MWF shared accommodation in Blue Bay in the South-East of Mauritius.

Details of how to apply can be found on our website at:

www.durrell.org/training

For further information, please refer to our website www.durrell.org/training



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DURRELL WILDLIFE CONSERVATION TRUST

DURRELL CONSERVATION ACADEMY, LES AUGRÈS MANOR, LA PROFONDE RUE, TRINITY, JERSEY, JE3 5BP

T +44 (0)1534 860037

E ACADEMY@DURRELL.ORG

W WWW.DURRELL.ORG/TRAINING

SAVING SPECIES FROM EXTINCTION