



Panthera's Furs for Life Project Coordinator Vacancy

Organisation: Founded in 2006, Panthera is a 501(c)3 non-profit that develops, implements, and oversees range-wide species conservation strategies for the world's largest, most imperilled wild cats (www.panthera.org).

Project: Across southern Africa, large numbers of leopards are killed for their skins, which are used by members of the Shembe (Nazareth Baptist) Church in ceremonial dress. While the desire for leopard skins stems from a cultural reverence for the animal, most Shembe do not realise that leopard populations in Africa are in jeopardy, or that hunting them is illegal. The Church continues to grow, particularly in northern KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, putting tremendous pressure on regional leopard populations. In response to this threat, Panthera initiated its Furs for Life project. Working with digital designers and clothing companies, Panthera has created a high-quality, affordable faux leopard skin for use in religious ceremonies. Importantly, the project is widely supported by the Shembe leadership. To date, Panthera has donated more than 5000 faux leopard capes to Shembe followers. We hope to significantly expand this effort, with the goal of distributing 20,000 capes by the end of 2017.

To evaluate the impacts of the Furs for Life project, as well as other threats facing leopards, Panthera, in partnership with government conservation agencies and other NGOs, has established a provincial monitoring network for leopards in KwaZulu-Natal. Camera-trap surveys are undertaken annually at key sites to provide rigorous estimates of leopard population density. These data are combined with coarser indices of relative abundance to track changes in leopard population trends and inform management decisions. In 2015, we plan to expand the surveying in KwaZulu-Natal to southern Mozambique and Swaziland, monitoring leopards across the entire Lubombo Transfrontier Conservation Area.

Key Responsibilities:

- Coordinate the manufacture and distribution of faux leopard skins among members of the Shembe Church.
- Liaise and foster support for the project among the Shembe leadership.
- Oversee educational outreach among Shembe followers.
- Assist provincial and national conservation agencies to develop and implement policies to regulate the illegal trade and possession of leopard skins for ceremonial regalia.
- To oversee the maintenance of the current leopard monitoring network in KwaZulu-Natal, and the expansion of monitoring to southern Mozambique and Swaziland (including the supervision of post-graduate students on this project).

Qualifications & Experience:

- A Doctoral degree in a relevant discipline of conservation, ecology or the social sciences with a minimum of 2-years work experience post degree, or a Masters degree with a minimum of 5-years work experience, or at least 10 years demonstrable experience in a conservation-related field.
- Good communication, facilitation and diplomatic skills.
- Ability to coordinate a multifaceted program with both strong human and technical dimensions.
- Good popular and scientific writing skills.
- Willingness to travel regularly and work outside typical office hours.
- Possession of a valid South African or international driver's licenses, with suitable off-road driving experience.

Remuneration: An annual salary ranging from USD35,000 to USD45,000 commensurate with qualifications and the level of experience, plus a comprehensive medical insurance package (valued at approximately USD2500 per annum).

The successful applicant will need to be based in KwaZulu-Natal, preferably in Pietermaritzburg or Durban but northern Kwazulu-Natal might also be feasible. The preferred start date is the 1st April 2015.

To apply, please send your CV plus a motivation letter of no more than 450 words to Dr Guy Balme (gbalme@panthera.org). Application closing date: 28th February 2015 (applicants who have not been contacted within 7 days of the closing date must please assume that their application was unsuccessful). Panthera reserves the right not to fill this position.