

Are you interested in human-wildlife coexistence?
Wildlife conservation research? International collaboration?



Undergraduate Opportunity in International Wildlife Conservation and Research



Wild carnivore populations around the world are under threat from continued agricultural development and encroachment. Be part of a team developing new strategies for advancing human-wildlife coexistence, while you gain hands-on experience working across cultures to conduct wildlife research and solve real-world conservation challenges.

This program provides two semesters in Botswana working with research scientists, local communities, and NGOs. Students will also participate in a summer internship with USDA-Wildlife Services working on similar issues in the United States.

This program is recommended for wildlife majors with an interest in the human dimensions of wildlife conservation and in conducting wildlife research. It will require a two-year commitment from Spring 2022 to at least Spring 2024, and may extend your graduation date past the standard four years.

Space is limited and applications are competitive.



Human-Wildlife Coexistence: Protecting Wildlife — Protecting Livelihoods

For more information see the attached materials or contact:

Dr. Heather Mathewson
Mathewson@tarleton.edu





Undergraduate Opportunity in International Wildlife Conservation and Research



Program and Application Details

This program provides a unique experience for undergraduate students interested in human-wildlife coexistence and research. The program has two major components, research in the Kalahari Desert of western Botswana and an internship in the US with USDA Wildlife Services, supplemented by required coursework. Research projects in Botswana will focus on conflict, coexistence, and complex interactions between people and wildlife. Students will participate in all elements of research, including study design, data collection, analysis, and presentations and publications. USDA Wildlife Services internships will be within the US, likely outside of Texas. We will accept students for the full program and students for an amended experience that includes all aspects except for the travel to Botswana or the USDA Wildlife Services internship (at least one is required; please specify preference in application).

Timeline for Undergraduate Research Scholars

- Spring 2022: Coursework, including one online course in conjunction with Texas A&M University.
- Summer 2022: Coursework, including WSES 4341 (Southern African Ecology and Culture) and WSES 4340 (Natural Resources Field Studies).
- Fall 2022: Coursework, including WSES 3308 (Analysis of Natural Resource Data); begin development of potential research projects
- Spring 2023*: Research in Botswana; remote coursework.
- Summer 2023*: Internships in USA with USDA Wildlife Services.
- Fall 2023*: Research in Botswana; remote coursework.
- Spring 2024: Coursework, analysis of data, professional presentation of research, completion of peer-reviewed publications.

*Participants should expect only minimal time (at most two weeks) between the travel experiences in Fall, Summer, and Fall 2023. In addition, participants should expect to remain in Botswana for the entirety of each field experience (i.e., no returning to the United States until the completion of each semester).

Degree Plans and Coursework

Program participants will be required to register for specific courses associated with the program in lieu of some standard courses on their degree plan, including summer courses beginning Summer 2022. There may be alterations to course degree plans to reduce excessive delays in completing graduation requirements; nevertheless, graduation may be delayed past the normal four-year time-line. To be eligible for the program, participants must remain full-time students during every semester (including summers) of the program. Program participants may be required to register for courses that exceed the 120-credit-hour minimum for the bachelor's degree. Participants in the program will receive academic advising from Drs. Mathewson and Schwertner to ensure completion of their degree in a timely manner.

Costs and Stipends

There are no additional costs to students associated with the program, other than standard tuition and fees associated with university courses. The program pays all travel and lodging costs. Participants will receive a \$1,000 monthly stipend while in Botswana and during the US internship (approximately Spring 2023 through Fall 2023).

Qualifications

- Strong interest in conducting research.
- Strong interest in human-wildlife coexistence concepts.
- Strong interest in international travel.
- Strong interest in working with local communities in Botswana and USA.
- Research will be conducted in the Kalahari Desert of western Botswana. Participants must be able and willing to live for extended periods in remote areas with minimal amenities (e.g., occasional periods with no electricity), extreme temperatures, and natural hazards.
- Ability to walk long distances in rough terrain and adverse weather conditions.
- Valid driver's license with clean driving record.
- Due to the duration of the program, preference will be given to first- and second-year students.

For more information, contact Dr. Heather Mathewson (mathewson@tarleton.edu)

Program partners include Texas A&M University AgriLife, Cheetah Conservation Botswana, and the US Department of Agriculture – Wildlife Services. Program funding provided by the US Department of Agriculture – National Institute of Food and Agriculture.



Application Process

1. Required documents, combined into one packet:
 - a. Cover Letter
 - i. Detail your interest in human-wildlife coexistence
 - ii. Detail your interest in research
 - iii. Detail your interest in interacting with other cultures
 - iv. Explain if you prefer to participate in the full program, or a reduced experience without travel only to Botswana or the US internship
 - v. Describe your career goals
 - b. Resume
 - i. Do not limit to one page
 - ii. Include all jobs, volunteer positions, organizations, activities, research experience, honors, etc. from the last 5-6 years including high school
 - c. Contact information for at least three references
 - i. Provide phone and email address
 - ii. Provide your affiliation with this reference
 - iii. One must be former employer and one a university employee (faculty, instructor, etc.)
 - d. Completed Essays
 - i. See below
2. Name the packet of documents with your last name first followed by Botswana application (example: "YourLastName Botswana Application")
3. Send to Dr. Mathewson via email. In the subject line of your email, enter the file name as described above.
4. All applicants must attend a mandatory meeting on the first week of May. Students may attend via Zoom.

Deadline

For guaranteed consideration applications must be received by **21 April 2021**. After this date applications will continue to be reviewed until all positions are filled.

Essay

Please write a thorough, professional one-paragraph response to each of the questions below, using complete sentences. We understand you are not an expert in this field, we just want your thoughts on the following questions.

1. How do programs that address human-wildlife coexistence benefit people and wildlife?
2. How do students benefit from interacting with different cultures in other states and countries?
3. How do students benefit from participating in undergraduate research programs?
4. Would you prefer to participate in both the Botswana research experience and the US internship experience, or just one of these? If only one, which one and why?