

## Senegal Field expedition

Do you fancy learning something which will aid you in getting a job whilst enjoying being abroad?

Have you been looking at job websites and seeing words like “survey experience”, “identification techniques”, “sampling”, well come and get that experience whilst in West Africa.

Join our expedition to Senegal and add to your CV whilst you're here.

Djoudj National Park is a migrating birds haven as it is one of the first areas of water after the Sahara Desert which is why it is used by up to 1.5 million birds. With weather patterns becoming more uncertain but increases in global temperatures areas like this are rare and vital for migratory species. Understanding the ecology of local and migratory species is vital to aiding the effort to reduce the impact of these threats.

Working with experienced researchers and staff you will gain experience in many different techniques and with a variety of industry used equipment. Including GPS mapping endangered habitats and surveying bird species using point counts along transects. Your data will be added to previous monitoring to compile rigorous scientific datasets. After all this a well-deserved break in the Hotel's pool or on a boat trip is in order.

### Techniques taught

- Bird surveys
- Ground invertebrate sampling
- Moth collection
- Mammal identification
- Remote sensing/photography
- GPS recording and tracking

### Equipment used

- Infrared cameras
- Hand-held GPS
- High quality telescope
- Heath moth trap (Mercury Vapour model?)
- Magenta bat detector
- Small mammal traps (Ugglund traps)
- Possibility of mist netting

### Scientific Purpose

1. Conduct scientific research which will add to long term data
2. Gain experience which will contribute to your ecological training
3. An introduction to overseas fieldwork
4. Opportunity to see some animals never seen before.
5. Have a break from the cold UK weather (20-30deg).

### Senegal – Country profile

**Location** – Senegal is located in western Africa in the Sahel region just below the Sahara. We will be flying into the capital, Dakar, and proceeding north to the national park of Djoudj (Parc National des Oiseaux de Djoudj). Our base will be in one of the most important wetlands in West Africa. The park covers approximately 16,000ha with a multitude of habitats including rivers, reedbeds, and scrub, grassland. It is a sanctuary for up to 1.5million birds including white pelican, whiskered tern, spoonbill and flamingo. The closest large inhabitation is St. Louis which is 1.5 hours drive depending on weather and road quality. We

will be based in Djoudj national park for the duration of the stay with the exception of the arrival night and travel time.

**Weather** – We will be visiting during the dry season which are associated with ‘cool’ ocean breeze and Harmattan winds which blow sand from the Sahara. It is possible that during our time there we may experience a sand storm of unknown magnitude! The average temperatures for Jan are highs of 30°C and lows of 15°C. This may mean a light fleece and even a sleeping bag liner might be a good idea for the evenings, but sun tan and hats are a definite during the day!!

**Culture** – There are a number of local villages on the outskirts of the park, inhabited by park guards mostly. The people are friendly and welcoming. Previously we have been invited to a local wedding and to have tea with a family. The local culture is Muslim and as such adhering to customs such as covering up is advised.

**Background** – The trip has a strong background in academic science. Data collected in Senegal has been used for 3 PhD’s (so far!) as well as for an industrial placement year project. Previous participants include current undergraduates, recent graduates and employed ecologists and conservationists.

**Sightings** – We have an average bird list of 146 species for our 2 week trips which include Flamingos, Black stork, Ospreys, Pied Kingfisher and the beautiful Green Bee-eaters. In addition we see **Green Monkeys, Warthogs, Crocodiles, Monitor Lizard, Jackals**. We take a boat trip half way through and the sights are incredible you are surrounded by thousands of ducks, geese and other waders. Wild horses live in the middle of the reserve.

## Itinerary

Event	Date
Meet and fly to Senegal	Day 1
Travel to Djoudj and acclimatise	Day 2
Day 1 in Djoudj (Explore)	Day 3
Projects	Day 4 - 8
Rest + Boat trip	Day 9
Day 8 – 11 Projects	Day 10-12
Pack and Travel to Dakar	Day 13
Fly to London, Travel to Cardiff, Say farewell and depart	Day 14



Google maps

**Accommodation** – Once arrived in Dakar we are taken to a lovely little hotel about 10mins from the airport. This is the last time you will have internet during the trip so is an excellent time to make your friends jealous and your family happy to know you've arrived safely. The accommodation in Djoudj is a lovely and well maintained hotel just inside the park boundaries run by a Lebanese/Senegalese owner. He is very welcoming and helpful. The rooms are all air-conditioned with mosquito nets and a shower room with separate WC. Travel – All flights and transfers are included in the price. We meet prior to flying and travel together. From departure at Heathrow to arrival in Dakar is approximately 12 hours. After a night in the hotel in Dakar we hire a minibus to take us, through the different terrain, to the north and to Djoudj. In Djoudj we will travel between sites on foot except for during the boat trip.

Cost - £1650 - £1800