

# Ashia Cheetah Sanctuary ups conservation efforts with education-based volunteering programme

Ashia Cheetah Sanctuary and Awareness Centre outside Paarl, in the Western Cape is now offering volunteers the opportunity to participate in its conservation programme.



Image source: [Gallo/Getty](#)

Ashia's Breeding, Wilding and Release Project, financed and managed by Ashia and Kuzuko Lodge, went into operation in September 2018 with the release of a captive born female cheetah on Kuzuko, a 15,000ha private game reserve in the Eastern Cape.

Since then, more captive-born cats have been translocated to Kuzuko to undergo their wilding and fitness programme in specially designed wilding sections prior to their final release on other reserves. Two litters of cubs have already been born into the protected wild on the reserve from previously hand-raised females. Once grown up, having been raised by their mothers, they will also be released on other reserves.

"Our conservation efforts primarily focus on the wilding and introduction of captive-bred cheetahs into the protected wild. The ultimate purpose is to strengthen the gene pool and to secure a viable cheetah metapopulation in South Africa, in order to prevent the further decline of cheetah numbers in the wild," says Chantal Rischard, founder and co-owner of Ashia.

## What the volunteer programme entails

Volunteers will first work alongside sanctuary staff in Paarl to get the necessary experience and training for their volunteering time in the field of South African game reserves.

Depending on the stage of the yearly release efforts, they will either assist in accompanying the cheetahs to the reserve, help with their settling in boma period, or later, monitor and record their movements, behaviour as well as hunting and breeding successes.

Additionally, they will support the game reserve's predator team with boma, fence and general reserve maintenance or bush clearing. During educational sessions at Paarl and the reserve, volunteers will gain a deeper insight into Cheetah Conservation and other wildlife.

**Interested volunteers** should be available for a minimum three to four-week period, which will include at least a week in a game reserve. As such volunteering could require a lot of driving; interested parties should therefore ideally hold an international driver's license.

For those with less time available, Ashia offers additional flexible volunteering programmes at the sanctuary in Paarl (near Cape Town), ranging in time from two weeks to several months.

[More details on the Ashia Cheetah Sanctuary and Awareness Centre website.](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>