

Lüderitz Blue School Post Graduate Residential Programme

Overview: This programme invites post graduate students with an interest in environmental science to join us in Lüderitz's unique environment, to participate in our field studies and to support the extracurricular education of our pupils within the school. This programme is designed for graduate students to join us from between 3 and 6 months.

Outcomes for Graduate students:

- Contribute to field studies and gain understanding of ongoing fieldwork within the Lüderitz setting.
- Develop an understanding of the succulent karoo, local coastal and marine environments and their ecology.
- Support Lüderitz Blue School with delivering their varied and exciting curriculum, including their diverse extracurricular programme.
- Experience the amazing country of Namibia.

Field work: Catalogue the flora and fauna that we have in Lüderitz and contribute to our

species database. This involves plenty of time in the local environment, sometimes in difficult to reach locations working in small groups or alone. Skills in plant, vertebrate and invertebrate identification is desirable as well as making field notes and photographic records.

Where applicable, population sampling techniques are used to estimate population sizes of different species, this is monitored over time to detect changes.

Part of this research incorporates a systematic environmental DNA sampling scheme to help support our understanding of the diversity of species in the area.



Fig 1: Map of research area around Lüderitz.

Further Research: Students will be working on valuable research that can inform the local and international community about the status of the ecosystem. These can range from fish stocks, bird population studies, aquaculture and plant biodiversity etc. We welcome students to bring their own ideas and topics to research in addition to the cataloguing programme run by the school. For those that have a specific fieldwork based interest we try to accommodate and make arrangements for these where practicable.

School Contributions: Our school provides a rich and diverse range of educational experiences for our learners with a specific focus on environmental literacy. The ever-popular Oceans Day programme takes place on a weekly basis and is a chance for pupils to learn more about oceans and environments, offering opportunities to travel from the school site for an afternoon's excursion. We ask that visiting students participate in these and some of the other extracurricular programmes we have with the aim of sharing their knowledge and supporting the learning of our pupils. Examples of these activities may include: visiting a ghost town, camping at an abandoned whaling station as well as a variety of water-based sports.

Lüderitz and the surrounding environment: Lüderitz is a special place nestled between two national parks the Namib Naukluft National Park and the Tsau//Khaeb (Sperrgebiet) National Park which are themselves an extension of Namibia's famous Skeleton Coast.



Fig 2: Location of Lüderitz within Namibia

Due to the challenges with accessibility, the empty desert landscape and strict access control the local ecosystems offer some of the most pristine terrestrial and coastal environments on Earth.

From Lüderitz, there is access to rocky coastline, sandy coves, tidal salt flats and rocky desert. Out of town there is a virtually unique succulent karoo, supporting a high diversity of succulent desert adapted plants, many of which are endemic and estimates suggest that 90% of the invertebrates in this area are unknown to science!

Facilities: Students are usually accommodated together in one of the school owned buildings within Lüderitz. Work space for students will be located in the same building or elsewhere in the school premises.

How to Get There: From the UK, flights can be taken to Namibia's International Airport (Windhoek Hosea Kutako) via Frankfurt or Addis Ababa. From Windhoek there is the occasional small aircraft flying straight to Lüderitz's own airport. Alternatively, a long but straight forward and picturesque drive can be taken in a hire car, there is also some public shuttle services available.

Cost: £850 per month. This fee covers all accommodation, domestic bills and food costs during your stay in Lüderitz. Support with visa processing, all field activities, any relevant training and graduate students participating in field trips arranged by the school.

What is not included: International flights to Namibia, initial travel to Lüderitz, personal travel within Namibia, medical insurance, vaccinations, personal research equipment etc.

What to do next: If this programme is something that is of interest to you or you have any further questions we can help with, please do reach out via email to the programme's coordinator at info@luderitzblueschool.com and we would be more than happy to discuss any queries you may have.