

ProjectsAbroad

Issue no. 61 / February 2013



www.projects-abroad.net

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THE HIMALAYAS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF PROJECTS ABROAD NEPAL



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NEPAL CONSERVATION PROJECT

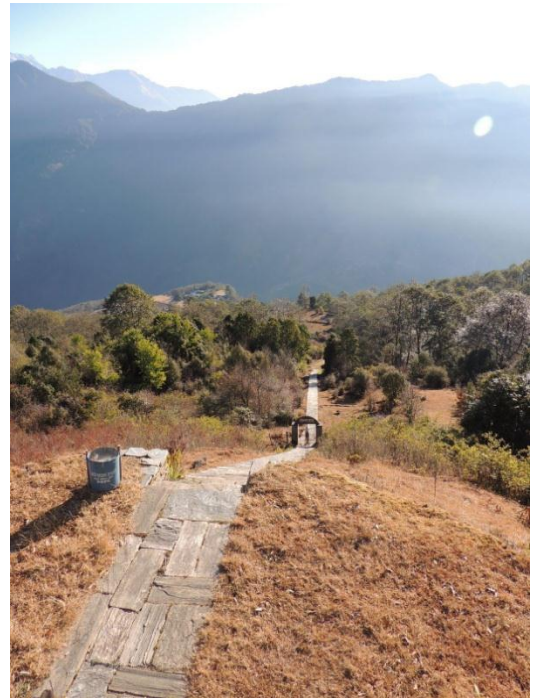
By Elaine Prescott

If you have an interest in conservation and looking for a project with a view – you can't beat our Nepal Conservation project! Based in the small village of Ghandruk, at around 2000m above sea level and in the heart of the Annapurna Conservation Area, if the altitude does not take your breath away, the view certainly will.

As opposed to a National Park, a Conservation Area is a protected area in which people live and it is the local people that are the key to the success of the management of the flora, fauna, and resources as well as the culture of the people living within its boundaries.

As with most Conservation Projects, a lot of the work we are doing in conjunction with the Annapurna Conservation Area Project is based on data collection to help the project management define long term goals for the region. There is currently no research from the area so the work we are doing with bird and mammal inventories will provide much needed insight into the health of the wildlife populations in the area.

Your conservation adventure will start the minute you leave Pokhara, Nepal's second largest city and you are driven in to the foot hills of the mighty Himalayas. You will be dropped in one of the many small villages along the way (which one will depend on the weather and just how far the car can drive!) and then begin your ascent along the cobbled path way to Ghandruk, occasionally being passed by weary trekkers, old Nepali women carrying what looks like very heavy loads of fire wood etc. or a line of donkeys with clanging bells warning you of their imminent arrival! (With no roads in the area, donkeys are the main form of transportation for all goods in the area).



Days on the Conservation Project often start early, and there can surely be no better way to start the day than seeing the first rays of the sun touch the snow-capped mountains – it's a sight that photos really cannot do justice to.

There can be no better feeling than to know that you are doing your bit to help preserve this stunning part of world.

For more information about our Nepal Conservation Project, or other projects in Nepal, please take a look at our website or contact one of our local recruitment offices.

<http://www.projects-abroad.co.uk/volunteer-destinations/nepal/>

STAFF INTRODUCTION – NEW SOCIAL MANAGER: ALEX COURT

Namaste!

I'm really looking forward to engaging with volunteers in Nepal and learning about this amazing country!



Rather than flying straight to Nepal, I took a plane from my native London to Delhi, and then caught trains and buses from there to Kathmandu...I couldn't resist the chance to have an adventure en route to starting this job.

I was born in U.K. but lived six years in Brussels and six years in Canberra, Australia where I finished school. After that, I enrolled in university in Dublin and found I had 11 months to burn. I travelled six weeks in northern India, worked in a pub in England and then moved to the south of France to work in a holiday camp.

I studied Philosophy in Dublin for three years and after finishing my first year, I volunteered for a month in a radio station in Senegal with Projects Abroad. I really enjoyed working with experienced journalists who showed me how to gain access to news conferences and conduct interviews, as well as the technicians who taught me about editing and the process of getting sound transmitted to radios throughout Senegal.

After finishing my studies in Dublin, I travelled around Ghana for a month and then moved to London to do an MA in International Broadcast Journalism. On the last day of my MA I got a job as a TV producer at an American TV network in London and spent the last 18 months working there. It was great, and I learnt a great deal about producing news-focused video for TV and the web. I even got to travel to conferences in Germany, Spain and Ireland and produce video on location.

My feet have been getting rather itchy for travel recently, so when I heard about this job in Nepal I jumped and it and have been excited to get going ever since.

My role at Projects Abroad involves organising events like the monthly social dinner and also weekend trips. I'll be creating this monthly newsletter, blogging about Nepal and taking photos of volunteers in action and posting them online, so be prepared to smile!

DIRTY WEEKEND – PEACE NEPAL ACADEMY

This month's Dirty Weekend activity was giving one of our school placements called Peace Academy a fresh coat of paint. Early Saturday morning I met a surprisingly good sized group of volunteers in Thamel and we boarded our van to the school.

Accompanied by a professional painter with an arsenal of supplies, we were ready for the challenge ahead of us.



Peace was established in Nayabasti to provide education to children in the area from underprivileged families, especially those from the Tamang Tribe.

Although registered as a private school, Peace caters to lower marginalized children, mostly from the labour class or daily wage labourers from remote villages, orphans, and single parent families. The school has been able to give scholarships to a large number of children, ranging from 25% up to full scholarships depending on each child's situation.

Overall it was a very successful day as we had gorgeous weather, a strong team of volunteers with great attitudes, a great traditional Nepali lunch and some adorably cute helpers to keep us entertained as a few students were present and very excited to interact with us.

AFTER 1 YEAR IN NEPAL, IT'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE.

It's so hard to believe that it's already been a year and that my time here is coming to an end. By the time this edition is distributed I will have finished here in Nepal and will be back at home in Atlanta, Georgia in the United States. I will be leaving in a couple of days for Malaysia, then a stop for a few days Indonesia before going home, but also have very fond memories of trips to Thailand and Sri Lanka. I tried to travel around this part of the world and see the different gorgeous beaches, rich cultures and temples/ruins these countries offer this year, as obviously taking a flight from Nepal was a small fraction of the cost of going from back home in the U.S. It's been an amazing time and my passport has quickly gained many stamps and stickers.



Nepal has been awesome overall and the experiences and memories from this year I will carry with me forever. The culture here is so warm and inviting and the country itself of course has some of the world's best trekking and landscapes, and my trek to Everest Base Camp was definitely one of my highlights. Working with Projects Abroad has been a truly life changing experience. If you asked me years ago, if I would ever live and work in a developing country, I couldn't have even imagined it, but now I have a desire to travel more and possibly work/volunteer more abroad. Development work has really opened my eyes to the world and the need that exist in many places. Working with the many different volunteers and placements here in Nepal has been challenging at times, but overall a hugely rewarding opportunity that I wouldn't change. The people of this country and the kids in particular are so full of life, energy and appreciation that it has honestly been a pleasure to help and be involved. The kids most of all here in Nepal have really been the biggest reward as just interacting with them seems to have an impact and they value even the chance to have a conversation. I can say I will definitely come back here to visit in the future to reunite with some different people and many kids I volunteered with. I developed relationships with many kids here and I'm expected to return in the future and cannot let them down. Also it will give me a chance to trek in some different regions I never made it to and to see the progress of development here in this wonderful country that has, in a way, become a second home.

To everyone here and those that had a role in my being here, thank you! Nepal has been one of the greatest learning experiences and times of growth in my life and I will definitely be seeing you again in the future.

Namaste,
Travis

NEPAL IN PICTURES



Volunteers help children at the Nutritional Rehabilitation Home in Baluwataar



A volunteer teacher at the Clark Memorial Himalayan School in Bungamati.



Volunteers learn how to plant rice during the monsoon season.



Kathmandu cityscape. Ever-present mountains in background.



The Peace Nepal Academy in Kathmandu gets a fresh lick of paint.