

WHV – The Historic Town of Gedi and Coastal Forests of Kenya

The Historic Town of Gedi / Coastal Forests (Arabuko-Sokoke Forest and Shimba Hills National Reserve), Kenya

PROJECT DATES

Cultural and natural properties inscribed on the Tentative List
(2010, 2023)

01 - 30 September 2024

THE SITE - Gedi dates back from the 15th century, and through careful preservation most of the original foundations can still be seen today. The historic town presents us with evidence of the development of an architectural complex consisting of mosques, palaces, and living quarters that were protected with two stone walls around it making it a unique landscape at this period in history.

The Arabuko Sokoke forest provides a significant natural habitat for the conservation of rare and endangered species, including the Golden-rumped Elephant shrew and Ader's Duiker, the forest being where the only populations of these two species occur. This forest also serves as an important bird area in that it supports populations of the Clarke's Weaver bird (vulnerable) and the Sokoke Scops Owl (endangered) that are restricted to this forest.

OBJECTIVES - The project aims at connecting the preservation and promotion efforts of two sites whose historic and contemporary interdependence reflects the importance of cultural and natural heritage in the coastal region of the country.

ACTIVITIES - The volunteers will have the opportunity to develop skills in cultural heritage conservation, archaeological fieldwork, interpretation, education, community engagement, leadership, project management, cultural awareness, and sustainable tourism practices, all of which contribute to the preservation and promotion of Gedi's cultural heritage. The project also aims to engage archaeologists, local community members, educators, students, tourists, government agencies, and youth organizations in hands-on activities that foster a sense of ownership and pride, ensuring the long-term sustainability of Gedi's cultural heritage. In Arabuko-Sokoke the project will focus on restoring and maintaining the natural habitats within these reserves. This could involve reforestation efforts, preventing habitat degradation, and ensuring the availability of suitable environments for various species.

PARTNERS - National Museums of Kenya, Kenya Wildlife Service, Coastal Forest Conservation Unit(CFCU), Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, Gedi Ruins Museum Committee, Kenya Association of Tour Operators (KATO), Kenya Coast Tourism Association (KCTA), Gedi Community Development Committee, Arabuko Sokoke Forest Guides and Scouts, Eco-Tourism Operator -Nature Adventures Ltd.

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