Shoebill Programme 2026
Activities & Conservation Involvement



BANGWEULU WETLANDS
ZAMBIA



Captive Rearing Facility: Show & Tell

AFTERNOONS FROM 14:00 – ±15:00
CHIKUNI OPEN AIR RONDAVEL

50 US$ PER SESSION
1 - 4 PEOPLE

Join the Shoebill Programme staff for an educational and interactive "Show and Tell" session which allows visitors to learn more about the secretive and fascinating shoebill. Discover the species global status, habitats, behaviours and threats, as well as our unique approach to rearing chicks using puppets.

TERMS & CONDITIONS Bookings must be made in advance. NO access to the Captive Rearing Facility. Bookings will be limited to staff availability.

Captive Rearing Facility: Show & Tell + Boma Tour

AFTERNOONS FROM 14:00 – ±15:00
CHIKUNI OPEN AIR RONDAVEL AND BOMA

75 US$ PER SESSION
1 - 4 PEOPLE

Join the Shoebill Programme staff for a rare chance to view one of our shoebills and learn about our conservation endeavours. Begin with an educational and interactive "Show and Tell", allowing guests to discover more about the species global status, habitats, behaviours and threats, as well as our unique approach to rearing chicks using puppets. Following the session, you will be guided silently into a large enclosure where our captive-reared fledglings learn to fly and hunt their own fish. End with a glimpse of the birds through a small, one-way-viewing window.

TERMS & CONDITIONS Bookings must be made in advance. Time in the boma will be limited to 10 minutes. NO photos allowed. NO access to the Captive Rearing Facility. Bookings are dependent on availability / age of chicks. Bookings will be limited to staff availability.

Shoebill Habitat Birds' Eye View

REMOTE SHOEBILL HABITAT

INCLUDED IN
GUIDED MAKORO EXCURSION
2 - 4 PEOPLE

Observe Shoebills and other swamp life from a unique perspective: above the papyrus on a five-metre tall platform. Bring your binoculars and telephoto lens camera for closer viewing. Shoebill foraging and breeding habitat is remote, so be prepared to travel, including a drive through villages, game drive through miombo woodland and termitaria ecosystems, and ultimately an exciting and serene canoe excursion through shoebill habitat (dependent on location).

TERMS & CONDITIONS Photos allowed. Please keep noise to a minimum. Guides reserve the right to end the viewing experience if any disturbance to wildlife is caused.



Get Involved

Listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List, shoebill numbers are under continuous decline due to their slow breeding habits exacerbated by habitat loss and other modern pressures. Get involved in our one-of-kind project to ensure we don't lose Bangweulu's, and the world's, iconic shoebill.

Adopt-A-Chick

2000 US$ PER CHICK
1 YEAR

Adopt a captive-raised chick and "watch" your shoebill grow and learn to become independent until released into the wild.

- Cost covers sponsorship of one captive-raised chick from the time of collection to the time of release. Future sponsorships can include GPS trackers once released.
- Quarterly shoebill updates sent via email and to include the health of your shoebill, its growth progress as well as photos, and (if released) general movement updates.
- Includes Show and Tell + Boma Tour, and private Captive Rearing Facility Tour booked in advance.

Shoebill Nest Guard Support

300 US$ PER GUARD
1 SEASON

Support one of our Shoebill Nest Guards and learn more about his/her efforts to assist in the survival of the secretive and fascinating shoebill in Bangweulu

- Cost covers the sponsorship of one guard's salary for the season.
- Personalised information on the guard and an update at the end of the season will be given.

Join the Shoebill Programme staff for an educational and interactive "Show and Tell" session which allows visitors to learn more about the secretive and fascinating shoebill. Discover the species global status, habitats, behaviours and threats, as well as our unique approach to rearing chicks using puppets.

Kindly Note

FEES All fees for Shoebill Programme activities go directly towards supporting our conservation work.

SILENCE PLEASE The Shoebill Captive Rearing and Rehabilitation Facility is a secure and quiet space. We kindly request visitors to reduce all noise (no music or excessive sounds) and keep voices to a minimum whisper when entering, exiting, and within the area. This helps reduce stress and habituation for our bird residents. There is a gathering area approved for Shoebill Programme activities where guests can talk freely with Shoebill Programme Staff. Outside this area, visitors who fail to adhere to this request may be asked to leave.

NO ACCESS The Shoebill Captive Rearing and Rehabilitation Facility is strictly off limits to the public. The building is purposefully designed to care for shoebills at every stage of development from eggs to up to 3 months old. Shoebills are secretive and sensitive birds that prefer the seclusion of thick reeds, grass, and papyrus. Excessive noise and disturbance can be stressful for them and also habituate them to people and movement which is counter-productive to their survival in the wild. All birds are destined for release back into the Bangweulu wetlands, and we need to prepare them for that time.

Disease transmission risk is also a major consideration in keeping the facility closed to the public. Shoes or clothing contaminated with biomaterial from domestic birds, wild birds, or other hazards risks the success of our egg incubation efforts.

The boma is an outdoor facility which houses chicks from 3 months of age onwards as they are learning to kill fish and fly. It will be open to the public for guided tours only when booked in advance and when appropriate for the chicks in residence (i.e. when all chicks in the boma are healthy).