

International Project

BELGIUM, environmental and animation project, permanent project.

-SVI- Who are we?

The SVI, founded in 2009, is a non-profit, pluralistic, apolitical, non-religious, Belgian-French-Vietnamese association created by and for volunteers.

We follow volunteers who participate in some 2000 community projects and citizens, many and varied, in nearly 100 countries around the world. This brings us each year to accompany about 900 volunteers!

We offer young people aged 16 to 35, in particular, but not exclusively, the opportunity to work together in socially responsible civic activities by joining voluntary work sites in Belgium or abroad. These collective projects, initiated by local non-profit organizations, are organized collectively and bring together between 5 and 20 young men and women from different geographical and social backgrounds.

We also make it a point of honor to welcome a hundred young foreign volunteers in Belgium or France, on associative projects, to develop the spirit of "living together" and to make them discover and support the sector.

Our goal is to support existing projects and encourage solidarity initiatives around the world, but also, make our projects accessible to the greatest number of young people, whatever their financial resources. Through our local and international activities, we seek to encourage young people to be active in the society in which they live. We help them to become Responsible, Active, Critical and Solidary World Citizens (CRACS).

About our partner:

The little village of Han-sur-Lesse, at the gateway to the Ardennes and one hour by road from Brussels, is home to one of the most famous caves on our continent, the Cave of Han. The Cave of Han is exceptional in terms of the beauty of its concretions and the immensity of its chambers and fashioned by the river Lesse that flows through it from one side to the other. It has welcomed more than 20 million visitors for over 250 years.

On the hill that overhangs the Cave and in the valley abandoned by the Lesse extends a 250-hectare park of unspoilt nature that accommodates the Wildlife Reserve, where you can contemplate the fauna of our regions in their natural environment.

Over 100,000 years ago the Lesse, a river flowing within the confines of the Ardennes, left its natural valley and forced its way into the limestone massif known as the Massif de Boine. It resurfaced 2 km further along, having crossed the massif

from side to side. By crossing the massif, it contributed to the formation of an extraordinary network of underground caves, the Caves of Han.

This phenomenon of the disappearance and re-emergence of a river is unique in Western Europe. The network of caves that has been discovered under the massif is of exceptional beauty. With their three stars in the Michelin Guide, the Caves of Han have been visited for 150 years and have already attracted over 20 million visitors.

The site of the Massif de Boine and of the "chavée", the ancient abandoned valley of the Lesse, has been laid out as a nature reserve for the wild animals of our lands: wolves, lynx, bears, bison, red deer, fallow deer, wild boar, ibex... This 250-hectare site of unspoilt nature allows you to contemplate these animals roaming free or semi-free in a natural setting of exceptional beauty.

Since the Neolithic age, the Han site has been known and venerated and the place of the re-emergence of the Lesse became a cult and pilgrimage site. Very many archaeological objects have been discovered at the bottom of the Lesse and on its banks, probably thrown in as offerings.

An interactive exhibition, the PrehistoHan, will help you relive the "prehistory" of the Caves of Han. In the "Han of Yesteryear" museum, you will relive the daily rural life of the inhabitants of Han of a hundred years ago.

The project:



Volunteers tasks:

The walking route in the Wildlife Reserve is about 2, 5 kilometers long and allows the visitors to cross the upper part of the Reserve. During this walk, panoramas, lookouts and hides give him an opportunity to get as close as possible to nature and the animals. There can be around 500 persons a day on this route, the safari bus will drop them off at the peak of the Massif de Boine and pick them up again at Tivoli, at the end of the walk, to complete the tour by bus in the plain where the animals roam semi-free.

The tasks of the volunteer are:

- To watch over the path, while walking and observing the visitors in order to guide and help them.
- To prevent the visitors from leaving the path and venturing in other parts of the Reserve (there is a danger due to wild animals).
- To ensure that the visitors do not damage equipment or harm the animals and that they do not adopt dangerous behaviors (like to pass their hand through the enclosures), as well as that they do not disturb the path (noises, garbage, etc.).



- To be in charge of activities and give information along the path: to inform the visitors on practical questions (distances, timetable of the safari-bus, localization of the toilets, rain shelters etc.) and to provide further information concerning the animals and the nature to the visitors who wish it (a basic training in that field will be given to the volunteer at his/her arrival).
- To ensure the maintenance of the path: every evening, to empty the garbage cans and the dry toilets; to collect waste; to ensure some maintenance work (ex : painting of furniture)
- Certain days, to organize the picking-up of the visitors by the safari-bus at the end of the path (while being in contact with the central service and the drivers of the safari-bus by phone).
- When there are less visitor the volunteer can carry out other tasks from time to time, for example some maintenance work in the Reserve or to create pedagogic tools.
- Occasionally, participating in the preparation and animation of different events which take place in the Domain.

Working hours:

The working hours are between 10.00 a.m. to 18.00 p.m. with a break for lunch. The volunteer will work 5 days a week, which will generally include Saturday and Sunday.

Supervision:

The volunteer will be supervised by a mentor, Anthony Kohler and will be part of the team of workers and volunteers, experienced people as well as many students working in the domain during holidays.



About accommodation and food:

Accommodation:

The volunteer will be hosted in a volunteering house just in front of the caves reception. You will share a 4 or 6 beds bedroom with all the facilities.

Sheets and washing machine are provided. Wifi is also provided.

Food:

The lunch meal is provided; you will eat in the domain. You're responsible for your breakfast and meal. (5/10€ a day will be enough). All volunteers do the food shopping together. There are 2 fridge inside the house.

Location:

Han-sur-Lesse

Participation fees:

No participation fees

More information:

Interested or want to know more?

Please do not hesitate to contact the incoming coordinator at incoming@servicevolontaire.org or call us +3228886713 ☺