

Information for volunteers at the Heligoland field station of the Institute of Avian Research „Vogelwarte Helgoland“

A minimum age of 18 years is required to work at the Heligoland field station. Send your application to the following address:

helgoland@ifv-vogelwarte.de

Applications should include a cover letter and a resume, ideally combined in one pdf-document. For months January to June please apply latest 31.7. of the year before. For months July to December please hand in your documents until 28.2. of the same year. Latest four weeks past the deadline, placements will be decided upon and we will inform you about the outcome of your application in due time. Applications remain possible even beyond the given deadlines, however, there is a lesser chance of receiving a placement. Volunteers are welcome all year round, the most attractive times of the year being March to May and September to November (bird migration) as well as June to mid-July (guillemot and gull ringing).

In order to make your time on Heligoland worthwhile for you as well as for the field station, a minimum length of stay of four weeks is required. The maximum length of stay is three months. Unfortunately, it is not possible for us to remunerate your work materially or financially. There is no overnight accommodation for private guests at our institute.

For volunteers, accommodation at the field station (twin rooms) is free of charge. Bed linen and towels are provided. You can do your laundry for a small fee (0.75 € per wash load) and therefore do not need to bring your entire wardrobe, even if you stay for an extended period. Food is paid for by a shared kitchen wallet, into which each volunteer pays 3,00 €/day (Sat/Sun 3.50 €/day) – don't forget to take some change for drinks etc. Kitchen duty is carried out alternately by one person each day and involves shopping, preparing meals (for up to 15 people) and keeping the kitchen clean.

Working hours: Mon. - Fri. 8am -12pm and 3pm -6pm
Sat. 8am -12pm
Sat. / Sun. Assistance with trapping as needed

During the week, the working day starts at 8am with the bird log and the distribution of the day's tasks. From Monday to Friday, the staff meeting is held at 3pm (with coffee and tea).

Birds are caught in the trapping garden every day (also on Saturdays and Sundays), once every hour. There always have to be enough people available for the trapping activities on the weekend as well. Recreational plans, e.g. as compensation for weekend work, can be agreed upon at the latest the same morning, during the distribution of the day's tasks.

As a volunteer, you will participate in the entire ongoing work of the field station. This includes trapping birds, garden and repair work, bird censuses, data entry, office work and cleaning common living areas. If desired, volunteers can also get involved with the guided tours of the trapping garden for groups of tourists, school and university students.

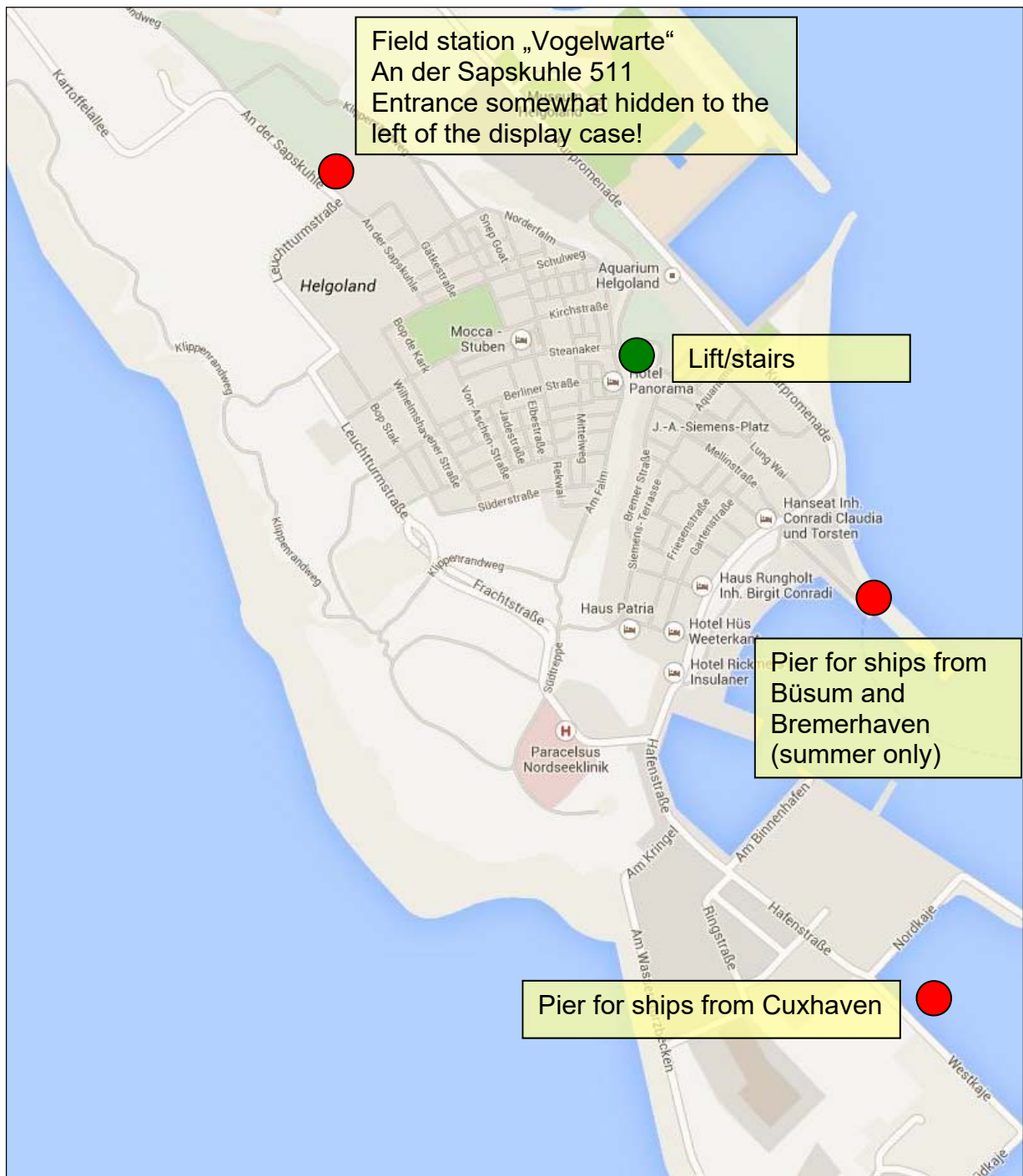
Since volunteering at the field station involves a significant amount of fieldwork, you will definitely need warm and rainproof clothing as well as sturdy shoes. Rubber boots are not required but slippers are useful. If you can, bring binoculars and a bird identification book, (we recommend "Collins Bird Guide" by Lars Svensson, HarperCollins publishers). Bring a spotting scope with you if you have one. Birdwatching experience is helpful but not a prerequisite for an internship. Internet can be accessed via wifi, LAN cable or at the field station's computers.

In summer, ships regularly sail to Heligoland from Cuxhaven, Bremerhaven and Büsum, in winter from Cuxhaven only. Please inform yourself about the timetable in advance (among others at Heligoland's tourist information "Helgoland Touristik GmbH", www.helgoland.de). Timetables and information regarding weather-related ship cancellations are available on the shipping line's website (www.cassen-eils.de). Usually, ships often do not sail when waves are more than 2 m high. For wind and wave height forecast, see www.windfinder.com/forecast/helgoland#.

Travel expenses of volunteers staying for at least four weeks can be reimbursed. Only costs within Germany and on presentation of the original receipts are reimbursable, booking confirmations being insufficient. Always use the cheapest means of transport including any discounts (e.g. Bahncard, budget prices etc). One ship return ticket is cheaper than two one-way tickets - you can also leave the return date open if you don't know it yet. Catamaran tickets aren't usually refunded and have to be justified individually. Only the cheapest connection is refunded: if necessary, overprice is deducted.

For further information, please contact us at +49 4725 64020 or at helgoland@ifv-vogelwarte.de. We are looking forward to working with you!

The "Vogelwarte Helgoland" field station.



When arriving at the central pier, it is best to take the lift/stairs to reach “Vogelwarte Helgoland” field station, situated on the upper part of the island. When you arrive in the southern harbour, you can also take the direct (but steep) path along the Nordseeklinik (hospital) to reach the field station.