

## Staff Answers Behind the Scenes at Original Volunteers

Mariana Lee talks about her role

Position - Group bookings manager - New Bookings Team



**Mariana Lee**  
Likes films, books, travelling and working with animals especially horse riding, musicals.

Recently I adopted 2 French Lop rabbits who run riot in my garden.

I am currently planning my next trip after Thailand, who knows where I will end up.

[www.originalvolunteers.co.uk](http://www.originalvolunteers.co.uk)

### Did you always work in the travel sector?

It was not something I planned but friends say I'm lucky because I am a bit of a travelholic. They just came together.

### Last trip?

Melbourne, Australia. That was funny because I forgot that Melbourne in November is not often hot after buying all my beachwear. When I got back everyone was expecting this tanned energetic traveller, I was paler than when I left!

### You are on the phone a lot - who do you enjoy speaking to most?

People who are ready to take the next step. I am one of life's planners but when all the research is done you have to just jump on and go!



Above: The Monkey Sanctuary Project in South Africa

Mariana Lee

### How would you describe volunteering?

Getting closer to people and communities. You just can't do that on a traditional package holiday. There are so many variables which can lead to positive outcomes which you don't get if you stay in a hotel and tick to the beach.

### Favourite project?

Thailand - I'm going there this year. I can't wait. And Phuket down the road means a Full Moon party is a must!

### Does anything frustrate you?

When something holds someone back but I know they will be an asset to the project. You can tell sometimes when someone will go and do something special but there is not enough time to get to know them and find out what it is.

### Anything changed?

Yes I think so, there are more people who want something specific like medical experience.

### Does anything excite you?

This will sound silly but I enjoy working - I can't imagine sitting at home, I'll often come in even when I'm under the weather.

### Daily high?

My coffee. The brain just won't work without plenty of the lovely stuff. Tea just does not do it.

### What project would you like to see on the list of available projects?

My friends will say I am more of an animal lover than a people person, so I guess it would have to be an animal one. I think more needs to be done to preserve dying species, I have always had a thing about polar bears and would love to volunteer.



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