

Veterinary Officer (Conservation)

Grade: 9

Directorate: Conservation

Location: Slimbridge

Reporting to: Head of Conservation Action

Main function of post: To provide veterinary advice and support for WWT's conservation breeding and translocation projects, and for wildlife health monitoring and research. To additionally provide veterinary cover to WWT's Living Collections.

Supervisory responsibilities: Students, volunteers and casual workers.

Main duties of the post

1. To provide ongoing clinical care and pathology for captive Spoon-billed Sandpiper, Baer's Pochard, and Black-tailed Godwits in the Slimbridge conservation breeding facility.
2. To develop and / or implement disease risk assessments (DRAs), and health surveillance, provide research support and clinical care and pathology for WWT's in situ Conservation Breeding projects including:
 - a. Curlew headstarting.
 - b. The LIFE-funded Black-tailed Godwit headstarting project.
 - c. Madagascar Pochard reintroduction.
 - d. The Great Crane Project.
 - e. The new planned project on Common Scoter headstarting.
3. To conduct post mortem examinations of wild birds as part of WWT's ongoing wildlife health monitoring.
4. To provide veterinary support for WWT's avian influenza surveillance and AI centre contingency planning; the Defra GB Wildlife Disease Surveillance partnership, and selected research and health management projects as outlined in the WWT Programme Plans (e.g. Sarcocystis).
5. To provide on call veterinary cover, as appropriate, for WWT's Living Collections.
6. To be responsible for reporting on veterinary aspects of relevant projects (e.g. input to annual conservation breeding reports, Defra GB Wildlife Disease Surveillance Partnership).
7. To communicate with external stakeholders to manage veterinary activities, maintain good relationships and demonstrate the professionalism of WWT's Conservation Action Team.
8. To network with external veterinarians, aviculturalists and other conservation practitioners, including our partners, to promote our conservation medicine and veterinary capabilities and the sharing of best practice.

9. To recognise the importance of team motivation and dedication to the success of Conservation Action projects often undertaken in challenging circumstances, pro-actively working to ensure positive team dynamics, whether in a leadership or supporting role.
10. To work alongside volunteers encouraging, developing and supporting them in their work for WWT, ensuring that they have a positive volunteering experience.
11. To be responsible for working within the WWT health and safety policy and guidelines ensuring that the health, safety and wellbeing of yourself and others is an integral part of how you work.
12. To be responsible for engaging with the WWT Sustainability Statement, being aware of negative environmental impacts and incorporating sustainable ways of working within your role.
13. To interact with our visitors and supporters in a positive way, shaping unforgettable experiences and helping them understand and connect to wetlands

In addition to the duties and responsibilities listed, the post holder is required to perform any other reasonable duties that may be assigned by the supervisor shown above, from time to time.

Date raised: November 2016

Amended: December 2019

Person Specification

1. Qualifications

Essential:

- Qualified Veterinary Surgeon registered to work in UK.
- Degree in Veterinary Medicine.
- Member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.
- Current driving licence.

Desirable:

- Higher Degree in conservation biology or wildlife health.

2. Experience

Essential:

- Experience as a practicing vet with specific experience of avian and mammalian health issues.
- Laboratory animal health diagnostic skills including pathology gained in a working environment.
- Practical fieldwork skills and experience.
- Report and scientific paper writing.
- Computer literacy – ability to work with MS office and specialist packages.
- Experience in time management and well-developed prioritisation skills.
- Experience of working in multi-disciplinary teams.

Desirable

- Experience of writing and implementing disease risk analysis for conservation translocations.
- Avian pathology experience.
- Knowledge of Balai, Zoo Licensing and other relevant animal health legislation.
- Up to date knowledge of national and international conservation issues.
- Experience of project and personnel management and administration.
- Publications record.

3. Managerial & Supervisory

Essential:

- Ability to manage and motivate groups of staff and/or volunteers and allocate tasks and duties as required.
- Ability to work with a variety of stakeholders, including contractors, external advisors, students, and partners.

Type of staff	Number managed	Number supervised
Employed Staff	0	0
Volunteers / Casual Workers	0	Up to 5
Contractors	0	0

4. Responsibility

Essential:

- Health care of captive animals (of great conservation importance, high asset and image value).
- Ability to work on his/her own initiative.

Levels of Responsibility:

Type of Responsibility	Level (£'s)
Expenditure (sign off level)	Up to £10K
Project Size (normally managed)	Medium/large
Cash Handling	£0
Assets (required for job, exc. buildings)	£50,000
Visitors (per annum)	0

5. Creative Ability

Essential:

- Creative thinker who researches, develops and implements innovative methods and ideas depending on situation.
- Ability to apply specialist knowledge to different situations.
- Ability to make decisions in pressured situations.

6. Contact

Essential:

- Ability to communicate with staff at all levels in the organisation and across all centres.
- Ability to work well with entire WWT Health Team.
- Excellent communication and media skills.
- Good networking abilities.
- Ability to communicate effectively with scientists, other veterinary officers and government officials.

Desirable:

- An established network of national and international animal health contacts, both governmental and non-governmental.
 - Ability to give informing and engaging talks/presentations to a variety of different audiences, e.g. peers, project partners, scientists, the zoo community, and the general public.
 - Ability to communicate with the media in a variety of situations.
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