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### Living Collection Manager

**Grade:** 7

**Directorate:** Centre Operations

**Location:** WWT Washington Wetland Centre

**Reporting to:** Grounds & Facilities Manager

**Main function of post:** To manage the day-to-day operation of WWT Washington Wetland Centre's captive animal collection to the highest welfare standards and, in cooperation with the Grounds and Facilities Manager, maintain the highest visitor standards throughout the collection area. As part of the site Heads of Department leadership team, you will also play a key role in supporting the site team in delivering an exceptional visitor experience, maintaining safety and resolving operational challenges.

**Supervisory responsibilities:** All Collection staff and volunteers.

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### Responsibilities of the post

1. Ensure animal husbandry and welfare meets the highest standards at all times, in accordance with the Secretary of State's Standards for Modern Zoo Practice, ensuring zoo licence inspection compliance standards are met and that recommendations from regular WWT Vet and Head of Living Collection inspections are implemented within agreed time frames.
2. Ensure the captive animals are presented in an educational and engaging way in accordance with the requirements of the Centre's zoo licence. Also, ensure that collection areas and margins adhere to visitor experience standards at all times through vegetation, interpretation and infrastructure management plans.
3. Ensure accurate record-keeping with regard to the animal collection through both in-house systems and ZIMS, to meet agreed standards.
4. To routinely adhere to all internal standards and zoo licencing requirements, ensuring daily operations, record keeping and procedures are regularly reviewed and amended to provide best practice. Also to prepare for zoo licence inspections including collating/submitting all required documentation evidence both for pre-inspection and on-the-day scrutiny.

5. Ensure all the team are effective in biosecurity/pest and predator control measures within collection areas/functions and that these are undertaken and correctly documented at all times, including applying for and ensuring adherence to licences and their returns.
6. Work closely with the grounds and reserve managers to routinely deliver visitor safety and experience standards as part of a small, operational site team.
7. Manage, instruct and motivate the collection team, including staff, placement students and volunteers to ensure best practice in working together to deliver first class animal husbandry, collection presentation and visitor experiences through a documented program of ongoing CPD with needs identified through individual development plans led by job/role descriptions
8. Communicate effectively with all relevant internal and external departments to build collaborative, values-driven relationships and consensus relating to the management and development of the animal collection and exhibits, including site teams & central animal health team.
9. In collaboration with WWT's Head of Living Collection, undertake the development of the Centre Collection Plan and annual breeding plan. Implement both.
10. Recruit, manage and develop a highly motivated and enthusiastic team of volunteers.
11. Set and have ownership of priorities, produce and maintain appropriate work plans and systems of administration to cover all areas of the collection team's work plan, ensuring baseline activities are prioritised above aspirational to ensure consistency of welfare, presentation and adherence to safety management protocols plus within capacity of department and centre resources.
12. Ensure the animal collection team design and participate enthusiastically in events, daily talks and other visitor engagement activities, whilst working cooperatively with other Centre staff to promote the work of Washington Centre and WWT to members of the press.
13. Ensure best practice health and safety at work systems are in place at all times and a positive health and safety culture is developed and maintained among the collection team and all appropriate paperwork is current and signed-off accordingly; to include biosecurity.
14. To support the site team and goals as part of the leadership team here, role modelling our values and behaviours framework, problem-solving and driving a culture of continuous improvement alongside your peers.
15. To undertake Duty Manager duties for the whole of the site, including opening and closing procedures, first aid duties and incident management as part of a rota system.

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.

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**Date raised:** September 2014

**Amended:** November 2025

# Person Specification

## 1. Qualifications

### ***Essential:***

- Degree or Diploma in relevant subject
- Full current driving licence

### ***Desirable:***

- Certificates in safe storage & use of pesticides and herbicides
- Certificates in the safe use of strimmers/brush cutters
- Emergency First Aid at Work qualification
- Firearms Certificate

## 2. Experience

### ***Essential:***

- Demonstrable experience in a similar role within a large estate, park, zoo or other visitor based animal attraction
- Experience in animal management, including aviculture, incubation and biosecurity
- Experience of playing a key role in rearing sensitive bird species
- Experienced in value driven leadership, demonstrating good management, organisation and development of full-time keepers and volunteers
- Operation of grounds maintenance machinery & equipment
- Use of MS Office software (e.g. Outlook, Word, Excel)
- Understanding of the application of Health & Safety regulations
- Understanding the business needs and so can prioritise own workloads accordingly

### ***Desirable:***

- Experience in use of ZIMS
- Experience of working within a visitor attraction and interacting with the public
- A keen interest and knowledge of wildlife and nature conservation
- Experience of operating under strict biosecurity regulations with a notifiable disease

## 3. Managerial & Supervisory

### ***Essential:***

- Confidence in managing conduct and capabilities within a team in line with company policies and procedures
- Experienced in managing teams of volunteers
- Ability to inspire, motivate and develop a team through creating a positive and open culture
- Good work planning skills
- An ability to work flexibly and on occasion to tight timescales

Type of team member	Number managed (No. of direct reports)	Number supervised
Employed staff	2	0
Volunteers	Up to 5 on any day	0
Casual Workers	Up to 5 on any day	0

## 4. Responsibility

### *Essential:*

- Ability to act independently but also as part of a multi departmental team
- Ability to take ownership of the day-to-day collection department's role and responsibilities
- Ability to identify issues and confidently raise them in a timely manner with the appropriate person
- Ability to maintain confidentiality over sensitive issues
- To ensure work plan priorities are in line with the collection plan and are adhered to.
- Ability to demonstrate professional competence in problem solving and decision-making

### *Levels of Responsibility:*

Type of Responsibility	Level (£)
Expenditure	£500
Cash handling	£0
Assets (required for job, exc buildings)	£13K – vehicles & machinery (shared use)
Visitors (per annum)	70,000

## 5. Creative Ability

### *Essential:*

- A creative 'eye' to manage enclosures to maximum effect for the presentation of the birds/mammals and for public appreciation and engagement
- Ability to use skills and knowledge to update and improve husbandry and maintenance plans
- Ability to devise systems for monitoring and maintaining standards

***Desirable:***

- Practical ability to find solutions to problems including mechanical and maintenance issues
- Experience of designing/developing animal exhibits.

## **6. Contact**

***Essential:***

- Ability to lead and motivate a diverse volunteer and staff work force to allow each individual to flourish
- Professional and confident approach to team work and conflict resolution
- Accustomed to interfacing with the public including engaging and inspiring, handling comments, complaints and incident management
- Ability to confidently engage with and contribute to regular WWT Vet & Head of Living Collection audit processes

***Desirable:***

- Public speaking
- Media training/experience

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## **General Notes**

A current driving licence is essential, as driving onsite vehicles and travel to other WWT locations is a requirement of the post.