

Living Collection Keeper

Directorate: Operations

Location: London

Reporting to: Grounds & Living Collection Manager

Grade: 4

Main function of post: To assist in the management of the living collection at the WWT London Wetland Centre, maintaining high standards of care and husbandry and under the direction of the Grounds & Living Collection Manager.

To assist with the effective running and maintenance of all aspects of the grounds to a high standard of presentation and safety.

Supervisory responsibilities: Volunteers, work placements and corporate work groups.

Responsibilities of the post

1. To monitor the animals within the living collection carefully for behavioural, reproductive and medical problems and ensure prompt action is taken to alleviate them and administer medication as prescribed.
2. To ensure the accommodation for animals is maintained to a high standard for the safety, health and well-being of the animals and for attractive exhibition to the public, and to contribute ideas towards improving enclosures.
3. To prepare and distribute food to the animals, following the prescribed diets and to have a good understanding of animal nutrition, diets and feed presentation.
4. To ensure waste is managed and disposed of correctly and in timely fashion, and ensure pest control measures are deployed effectively, identifying where pest control is required.
5. To provide environmental enrichment to animals within care where appropriate and prepare schedules.
6. To participate in animal training exercises where appropriate, demonstrating confidence in delivering existing and training new trained behaviours.

7. To ensure correct import, export and quarantine procedures are observed, and to strictly adhere to biosecurity and quarantine measures.
8. To perform capture and restraint of animals with minimal supervision, for enclosure movement, veterinary examination or export from the collection, while minimising stress.
9. To be familiar with correct techniques, such as ringing and id chip implants, used to identify animals within the department.
10. To follow correct animal rearing protocols, following instruction from senior staff.
11. To provide accurate daily records of animal movements, births, deaths, transactions, reproduction and behaviour to ensure a full set of data is available for each animal to facilitate future management and research.
12. To be up to date on and demonstrate confidence in ability (with minimal supervision) to cover for different animal routines to prevent any breakdown in procedures due to days off, illness, or holiday leave of other staff members in the department.
13. To supervise and help train new staff, students and volunteers assisting in the animal collection, supporting their development, and ensuring their safety and that of the animals whilst on section.
14. To deliver talks, presentations and behind-the-scenes experiences to visitors, VIPS and other parties as requested and to ensure a positive visitor experience, engaging with and answering questions from visitors as required, during the normal course of duties.
15. To supervise cooperate groups and volunteers whilst making sure that their experience at WWT London is both positive and rewarding.
16. To adhere to and have good knowledge of prescribed safety and emergency procedures to ensure the safety of animals, fellow staff and the visiting public.
17. To attend and contribute to departmental and general meetings.
18. To provide additional animal care and support zoo activities beyond the normal routine as required.
19. To take part in education, media and marketing initiatives as requested.
20. To undertake general vegetation maintenance, such as pruning, strimming, mowing, weed control, watering, reed cutting, hedge cutting (including coppicing and pollarding), throughout all areas of the grounds and living collection.
21. To take receipt of, check and put away animal feed deliveries, highlighting any quality issues, shortages and SIEs immediately. Operating strict stock rotation, storage and usage of dry, chilled, live and frozen foods.
22. To assist with the maintenance of ponds, lakes and channels to ensure water bodies remain clean and free-flowing - undertaking rodding, clearing bridge grills and sluices, anti-erosion repairs

23. To assist with the maintenance and repair of timber bridges, fences and weld mesh grills.
24. To ensure zoonotic and hygiene controls are in line with WWT policy in all matters concerned with the welfare and safety of the animal collection, staff, volunteers and visitors. Duties to include daily path, handrail and picnic table cleaning, and litter picking.
25. To undertake pest recording, prevention and control in line with WWT's integrated pest management strategy (PMF), along with the maintenance and integrity of the perimeter fence, ensuring that it is electrified, secure and in good repair at all times
26. To undertake evening lock-up warden duties on a rota basis
27. To operate and maintain all machinery, equipment and tools competently and safely, adhering to health and safety regulations and WWT's health and safety policy, codes of practice and SOPs at all times, including the completion of risk assessments as appropriate
28. To support London Wetland Centre's ongoing monitoring and recording of wild flora and fauna on site, reporting any sightings to the Biodiversity Officer
29. To ensure personal compliance with WWT's corporate identity - wearing the correct uniform and name badge, ensuring any written communication, online media and printed material meets the required standards, and presenting a professional image of the organisation to the visiting public, volunteers and other staff at all times
30. To positively promote WWT and its work to all visitors, and helping to ensure the safety, welfare and enjoyment of the visiting public

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

Date raised: July 2018

Amended: October 2025

Person Specification

1. Qualifications

Essential:

- Educated to GCSE standard or equivalent, including English and Maths
- Full current driving license
- Recognised NVQ L3 qualification or above in Animal Management

Desirable:

- NPTC L2 Chainsaw (maintenance, cross-cutting, felling up to 380mm)
- LANTRA or NPTC safe use certificates in tractor operations, hedge-trimmers, ride-on mowers, pedestrian mowers
- NPTC L2 Certificate in safe use of Pesticides – PA1, PA6, PA6AW
- LANTRA award in safe use of Trimmer & Brush cutter

2. Experience

Essential:

- Previous experience working in a zoo, wildlife park or similar with a diverse range of taxa.
- A precise and consistent approach to animal keeping with the highest animal welfare standards in mind.
- A positive approach to learning new husbandry and care techniques for a range of taxa.
- Ability to use basic grounds-keeping equipment e.g. pedestrian mower, grass trimmer
- Understanding of Health and Safety at work
- Good level of IT skills, including Microsoft Office

Desirable:

- Delivery of talks to the visiting public

3. Managerial & Supervisory

Essential:

- Allocate duties to and supervise the work of volunteers, and occasional corporate work groups

Type of staff	Number managed	Number supervised
Employed Staff	0	0
Volunteers / Casual Workers / Corporate work groups / Work Placements	0	Weekly up to 10, occasional groups of 1-25
Contractors	0	0

Desirable:

- Knowledge of inducting volunteers and conducting individual feedback meetings

4. Responsibility

Essential:

- Ability to take responsibility for tools, machinery and equipment and their safe and secure storage
- Ability to work unsupervised on a variety of tasks, follow instructions and work plans
- Ability to promptly and appropriately escalate issues and concerns

Levels of Responsibility:

Type of Responsibility	Level (£'s)
Expenditure (exc. payroll)	£0
Cash Handling	£0
Assets (required for job, exc. buildings)	£50k
Visitors (per annum)	180,000

5. Creative Ability

Essential:

- Able to originate ideas on animal enclosure management and maintenance
- Ability to work flexibly, adapt to change and to tight timescales when required

Desirable:

- Natural empathy with plants/plant ID skills

6. Contact

Essential:

- Ability to engage with and interact with the visiting public by providing information and assistance as appropriate
- Centre staff (all departments), casual staff, volunteers and corporate work groups, WWT HQ staff

Desirable:

- Contractors, suppliers
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General Notes

Whilst this post is based at WWT London, some travel may be necessary therefore a current driving licence is essential as is willingness to travel to other WWT Wetland Centres.

The work is often of a physical nature requiring a degree of fitness. It will routinely involve bending, lifting, kneeling, and working in water.

Occasional short stays away from home whilst working or attending meetings at other WWT centres may be required.