

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: Animal Care - Volunteer Care & Animal Husbandry Assistant**

At WWT we shape unforgettable experiences. We believe the best way for people to understand and connect to wetlands is to experience them, so we bring awe-inspiring nature up close and let it do the talking.

We are involved in maintaining and developing exhibits within the site at Washington to enhance the visitor experience. This involves caring for our large collection of rare and endangered species of waterfowl from around the world as well as wetland mammals.

The role would suit someone looking to gain or build upon animal care experience, or willing to get stuck into outdoors work with animals. We have one of the largest waterfowl collections in the North East, with over 40 species, 15 of which are of Conservation Concern, including the current flock of 56 breeding Chilean Flamingos and a pair of Asian Short-clawed Otters. Previous volunteers have gone on to work in animal conservation work around the world.

With a wealth of experience and proven track record in scientific research, we create and conserve wetlands and save species. We provide wetland conservation solutions that work in today’s society, sustaining both wildlife and people.

Volunteers play a crucial role in saving wetlands for wildlife and people.

**This role involves:**

* Daily feed preparation, routines and creating animal enrichment.
* Assisting in day-to-day cleaning and maintenance to ensure high standards of welfare for our animals.
* Weeding in exhibits.
* Help with cutting back vegetation and vegetation management in and around exhibits to make attractive and to meet welfare standards.
* Pond maintenance.
* Conduct public feed talks for the Otters and Flamingos alongside occasional guided tours and public engagement.
* Maintaining and improving exhibit fence lines.
* Assisting with animal handling and annual health checks.
* During breeding season; checking nestboxes, incubators and assisting in the animal rearing facilities.
* Occasional tasks may include: building nestboxes, feeders and animal shelters, constructing enclosures and ponds, or assisting with large collection team projects.
* A variety of seasonal duties including putting out and bringing in nestboxes, winter shelter preparation and bedding changing.
* Small amount of record keeping and animal health and welfare reporting.

**This role will suit you if:**

* You have good people skills, ideally including confidence public speaking
* Are able to lift heavy loads, and have a reasonable level of physical fitness. This is a very practical role, which involves working outside in all weather.
* Some practical experience in animal care would be desirable
* You are able to follow instructions and safely complete activities alone or as part of a team
* Driving licence is desirable
* Have a passion for wetlands and wetland species.
* You need to be over 18 years old for this role.

**Practicalities**

**Where will you be based?** Washington Wetland Centre Grounds

**Who will you volunteer with?** Grounds and collection team at Washington. The role is managed by the Collection Manager.

**Time commitment?** 1 or more days per week for these days (Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, Sunday) 8:30am – 5:30pm

With a commitment to a minimum of a 6-month period in order to get the most benefit from your volunteering experience.

We want your volunteering to be a positive and fun experience. You’ll get a warm welcome, including information on training, equipment and other information you need. This will include risk assessments based on your role and any particular support you need.

Volunteers receiveaccess to our sites, and discounts in our shops and cafes. Some roles include a uniform or require the use of equipment or protective clothing.

If you are based at a particular site or office location, you’ll need to be able to get yourself there and back. The centre is signposted and there are good public transport and cycle paths to the centre. Information on locations can be found on our [website](https://www.wwt.org.uk/wetland-centres). We regret that we are not in a position to reimburse expenses incurred for travel to the site.

We will keep you up to date with what’s happening across WWT and the difference you will be helping to make happen.

**Interested?**

If you are interested in this role, please complete an application form so that we can talk it through further with you.If you are interested in volunteering for WWT but don't wish to apply online, please email volunteering@wwt.org.uk or leave a message at 01453 891 231 with your name and number.