
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY:

Conservation Breeding Unit Horticulturalist

Why do we need you? Why volunteer with us?

We're WWT, the charity for wetlands and wildlife. We're on a mission to restore wetlands because they are a wondrous solution to our world's problems. Together we will unlock their power – and help nature burst back to life. Because when wetlands flourish, all life will flourish.

We lead the way, bring life and inspire connection

We are seeking a part-time volunteer to be based at our Headquarters in Slimbridge, Gloucestershire for at least a 6-month period. This role will be essential to support Conservation Breeding Unit (CBU) over the bird breeding season while core staff members are field based. This voluntary role will play a key part in ensuring the CBU facility is maintained for the welfare of the birds in our care, as well as the creation of facilities for future projects. It will be an opportunity for a volunteer to see 'behind scenes' at CBU, practicing or learning horticultural and DIY skills and working within a small but dedicated team.

Who will be responsible for your role? Conservation Breeding Unit Aviculturist / Vet Support Officer

Where will you be based? WWT Slimbridge Wetland Centre (Conservation Breeding Unit)

How much time will it take? Times to be agreed, ideally 1 – 2 days (Sunday to Thursday) a week for a six month period, starting in April 2024

What will you be doing?

- Using hand tools and lawnmowers to assist with vegetation management within CBU, sometimes involving working within bird pens
- Pond and water channel maintenance, including the weeding, planting and pump cleaning of the aquaponics system
- Assisting with the day-to-day management and building of bird pens in preparation for upcoming projects
- Assisting with simple construction and maintenance work (e.g. re-netting and constructing aviaries)
- There may also be the possibility of assisting the CBU aviculturists with animal management, including feeding
- Assisting with hand-removal of nettles and other weeds both in and outside of bird pens.
- Upholding biosecurity protocols to prevent the spread of zoonotic diseases

Wetlands for the Win! How will you benefit?

Looking for valuable work experience to gain relevant skills or wanting to spend more time outdoors? Or both?

Look no further! Securing a volunteering position with us plays a crucial role in saving wetlands for wildlife and people as well as:

- Volunteer in an inspiring environment and get closer to nature
- Learn new, transferable skills
- Gain valuable work experience, especially in a conservation environment
- Gain a fantastic and inclusive volunteering experience to talk about to a potential employer
- Make a real contribution to the conservation work of WWT
- Gain free entry to all WWT wetland centres throughout the UK on presentation of your WWT name badge
- Have a great discounts in WWT shops and cafes
- Become part of a friendly and dedicated team
- Experience the physical and mental benefits of the outdoors
- Training opportunities provided

This role would be ideal for someone who is looking to spend more time outdoors, who loves working with nature and who enjoys physical work. If you already have horticultural or DIY skills they would be an asset in this position, however relevant training will be provided to anyone looking to gain new skills.

Who are we looking for?

We are looking for a passionate conservationist who loves wetland nature and supports the work of WWT. We are looking for a physically fit, enthusiastic and practical person who enjoys getting their hands dirty and rolling up their sleeves. The role is for someone who likes working outside in wetland environments in any weather. We want someone who doesn't mind doing dirty jobs such as cleaning water pumps and filters, arduous jobs like cutting grass, or precise work involving animal welfare. No formal qualifications are required, however this role would suit someone with experience, or a desire to learn, horticultural and DIY skills.

This role will suit you if you:

- Care about managing small swathes of semi-natural vegetation for the benefit of wildlife
- Care about the husbandry standards of captive animals in conservation breeding projects
- Have a moderate level of fitness
- Are able or want to learn how to use gardening tools and machines
- Can learn new skills and develop existing skills to support the work of conservation aviculturists
- Have some knowledge or experience of gardening or conservation (not essential)
- Have a willing and can-do attitude
- Are proactive and able to complete tasks with a minimum of supervision, or independently under the direction of the conservation breeding team
- Are able to follow instructions and manage time efficiently
- Are able to work in a team of staff and volunteers in conservation breeding, science and other departments

The following would be desirable but not essential:

- Past work/volunteering in nature conservation or similar organisations
- A clean driving licence

General notes:

Road: Slimbridge Wetland Centre is 2 miles off the A38. There is a large car park with ample car parking spaces and there is a bike rack available for staff volunteers. Rail: Cam & Dursley rail station is a 3.5 mile cycle or taxi ride away. Bus: Unfortunately there is no bus service directly to Slimbridge: the nearest services stop is at the A38, 2 miles walk from the Centre.

This position is entirely voluntary and is therefore unpaid. Any offer of a volunteer placement is not intended to create a legally binding contract between us and any agreement may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intends any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future.

How to Apply:

We celebrate inclusivity and diversity amongst our volunteering community and encourage applicants to state any disabilities they have for provided support.

Full details of this and other roles can be found at www.wwt.org.uk/volunteer.

Please state any disabilities in your application form, or contact us at volunteer.slimbridge@wwt.org.uk to state what support you need either in locating the information or filling out the application process so we can cater for your additional needs.

Date reviewed: March 2024

Closing Date: Friday 12th April