

## Job Description and Person Specification

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**Deadline for applications: 17:00 on 27 January 2023**

## 1 Applying for this post

**Please read all of the pack information that follows.**

If you feel you meet the job specification and job requirements, we would love you to apply. Applications must be made using the application form provided. Additional information can be submitted, for example a CV, but the application form must be completed thoroughly and not include 'Refer to CV' as the only answer in the question boxes.

**Deadline for applications is 17:00 on 27 January 2023**

by email to [averil.clother@vwt.org.uk](mailto:averil.clother@vwt.org.uk) or by post to:

**Vincent Wildlife Trust, 3-4 Bronsil Courtyard, Eastnor, Ledbury, HR8 1EP**

First interviews are planned for w/c 6 February 2023 (most likely 9 or 10 Feb) and will be held in person at our Bronsil office (or via video conferencing if required). Second interviews may take place the following week. Full details will be confirmed ahead of the interview date.

## 2 Background to Vincent Wildlife Trust

VWT has been a key player in research-led conservation of a range of threatened mammal species for more than 40 years. We develop and deliver evidence-based conservation interventions to support the recovery of mammal species. We work closely with universities, co-funding and supervising PhD projects, and with partner NGOs, where synergies in our aims allow us to deliver over and above what we could achieve on our own. Our work is published through peer-reviewed scientific journals and our own in-house conservation handbooks and literature.

We have a secure financial base, with a turnover of c.£1 million and funding from grants, donations and investment drawdown. External funding has enabled us to embark on new flagship projects, including the nationally important Pine Marten Recovery Project. VWT has 19 staff who work alongside around 300 volunteers. Our Head Office is near Ledbury in Herefordshire where ten of our team are based. The rest work from home offices in England, Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland.

VWT has strong governance and leadership and a clear direction to increase the impact and geographical scope of its operations through our 2020-30 Ten-Year Strategy.

More detailed information is available on our website: [www.vwt.org.uk](http://www.vwt.org.uk)

### 3 Our Conservation Work

VWT began as an otter conservation organisation in 1975. From the 1980s we diversified to carry out national surveys on water vole, research and surveys on hazel dormice, pine marten and polecat, and support work on butterflies, brown hare and bats. Currently our focus is on threatened smaller carnivores and rare bats.

In 2020 VWT completed the Pine Marten Recovery Project (PMRP), which translocated a small population of pine martens from Scotland to mid-Wales. The PMRP is an exemplar project combining conservation biology and social science elements to successfully re-establish a carnivore population and mitigate potentially conflicting human interest. The Trust has continued its pine marten work, acting as an advisor and providing specialist technical help for further third-party marten translocations. We were commissioned to produce the strategic recovery plan for pine martens in Britain by Natural England and NatureScot, which was published in 2021, and the publication of our own Pine Marten Conservation Handbook is imminent.

We are currently working in partnership with Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust and Wildwood on an ambitious project to reintroduce European wildcat to southern Britain. As well as our experience of conducting reintroductions, VWT brings its expertise in the social science aspect of conservation to the partnership, and we hope to embark on a social feasibility study in the prospective release area in 2023.

A key focus of our work is the development of innovative monitoring techniques so, alongside established methods used for national surveys of polecat for example, we are testing approaches for detecting the presence and population dynamics of small mustelids such as stoat and weasel in Britain and Ireland, and European mink, steppe and marbled polecat on the continent. We have longer-term aspirations to carry out conservation work on European mink in eastern Europe.

Over the past 30 years, VWT has built a strong reputation in the field of bat research and conservation. Our research into the ecology of greater and lesser horseshoe bats in the 1990s has since underpinned conservation efforts for these species, both at a roost level and in the wider landscape. The greater understanding of the roosting requirements of horseshoe bats gained through this research has enabled the Trust to set up a network of bat reserves in Britain and Ireland. These buildings now hold 50% of the British greater horseshoe bat population and a significant proportion of the populations of British and Irish lesser horseshoe bats. The adaptation and enhancement of these reserves has become a benchmark for securing the roosts of these species, not only in Britain and Ireland, but also in a wider European context. Our horseshoe bat reserves are a valuable resource to the Trust, not only as exemplars from which others can learn, but they also allow us to carry out small-scale targeted research projects. We recognise that securing roosts is just one aspect of the broader conservation of horseshoe bats and that wider landscape issues are equally important. The findings of our research on habitat use by these species informs our own landscape-scale habitat enhancement projects and enables us to offer advice to similar projects run by others.

Alongside our work on horseshoe bats, the Trust has also prioritised the rare tree bats. In the late 1990s, we carried out the first radio-tracking study in the UK to research the habitat preferences of Bechstein's bat. This led to the first conservation recommendations for this species, which then formed the basis for further work both by universities and other NGOs. We also carried out the first wide-scale acoustic survey for barbastelle, identifying woodlands being used by maternity colonies of the species. Both of these pieces of work have helped to initiate wider conservation actions for these two species. The Trust continues to target research on Bechstein's bat and barbastelle where it sees evidence gaps in their conservation biology.

Although most of the Trust's work is currently focused on Britain and Ireland, we also work in mainland Europe, with links to research institutions and other mammal NGOs on the continent where our level of engagement varies from simple information exchange, through fact finding visits and two-way study tours, to full research projects. We are researching the ecology of Kolombatović's long-eared bat, a species generally restricted to the coastal areas and islands of the Balkan peninsula. We are also developing novel survey techniques for medium-sized horseshoe bats in eastern Europe.

The Trust often delivers its conservation objectives through its own longer-term studies and projects, but we also seek to address evidence gaps through the support of doctoral and post-doctoral research carried out in partnership with universities in Britain and Ireland. Our level of engagement with these projects ranges from financially supporting aspects of the research to full partnerships where VWT provides 50% funding and our staff co-supervise PhD students. At this time, the Trust has three 50% funded PhD research projects – the first researching landscape-scale conservation of the barbastelle in Britain; another using the Motus system to track fine-scale movements of bats in relation to transport infra-structure; and a third linked to the prospective reintroduction of wildcat to southern Britain. We are supporting further PhDs on polecat genomics and the impacts of pine marten both socially and on other species.

## 4 Job Description

**Grade/Starting Salary** Grade 5 (starting salary in the range of £41K-£43K per annum, depending on experience).

**Location of Job** Home-based but time at the central office will also be required on a regular basis.

**Responsible to** VWT's CEO.

**Responsible for** Conservation Team including four direct reports: Science and Research Programme Manager, Bat Programme Manager and Carnivore Programme Manager (all in UK) and Ireland Mammal Programme Manager. There is also the potential for the joint supervision of PhD students.

**Job Purpose** To lead the development and delivery of VWT's Conservation and Science work in line with the Trust's Ten-Year Strategy.

### Main Duties

- To work with the CEO and other senior managers to lead and inspire the VWT team in the delivery of its organisational goals.
- To report progress and prepare written papers, policies and reports for the CEO and Board of Trustees, and externally when required.
- To provide vision and leadership for the Conservation and Science Team, implementing the Trust's Ten-Year Strategy and directing internal conservation and research plans, and to also mentor and inspire VWT staff through a collaborative management approach.
- To promote and progress from inception to delivery and reporting, the Conservation and Science projects that deliver our Ten-Year Strategy.
- To lead and manage four direct reports: Science and Research Programme Manager, Bat Programme Manager and Carnivore Programme Manager (all in UK), and the Ireland Mammal Programme Manager.
- To lead on the quality of the Trust's science research approach and to ensure that the Trust is at the forefront of new technology and driving innovation for the conservation of mammals, including working in partnership with universities to manage jointly-supervised PhD students.
- To ensure VWT intelligence on mammal conservation issues is current and to manage and protect the Trust's Intellectual Property.
- To champion the Trust's expertise and authority, including the drafting or coordination of position statements and responses to relevant consultations with appropriate audiences.
- To be, or to coordinate, the Trust spokesperson for Conservation Programme matters for the media or at events, and to undertake necessary presentations and speeches that raise the profile of the Trust with national and important audiences.
- To author, or co-author, scientific papers and to write copy for VWT publicity purposes, including articles for the media working closely with the Communications Team.
- To expand the networks and role of the Trust within the Mammal Conservation sector and amongst other target audiences.
- To work with the Finance Manager to prepare and manage an annual budget and to produce timely, accurate financial management information. Oversee budgets of Programme Managers to ensure cohesion across the Conservation Team.
- To work with the Operations Manager to oversee Conservation Team Health and Safety, training and equipment.

## Other Duties

### Office, Training and Personnel

- To attend training courses that further the Trust's and personal development needs.
- To be familiar with and abide by the Trust's policies and procedures.
- To provide training and/or mentoring to staff and volunteers.

### General

- Carry out other duties commensurate to the role as required by the Trust.
- Keep Health and Safety matters as the over-riding determinant at all times and in all circumstances.

## 5 Training and Development

As part of its commitment to investing in its people, VWT trains and supports its staff in the delivery of their duties. Advice will be given in drawing up a personal development plan and all suggestions considered according to resources available and the overriding priorities of the Trust.

## 6 Outline Conditions

This post is full time (37 hours per week). Our normal office hours are 9am to 5pm (Mon-Thurs), 9am to 4.30pm (Fri) with appropriate breaks. Flexible working is permissible in agreement with the Line Manager. Field working hours may require work outside of office hours and should these hours extend beyond normal daily working hours, staff will be expected to take Time Off In Lieu (TOIL). Business travel and overnight stays will be required at times, for which travel and subsistence expenses will apply according to the Trust's current policy.

All staff are required to work within the policies and procedures of the Trust, to work harmoniously with each other and to provide appropriate assistance and advice to colleagues when desirable for the effective undertaking of their respective responsibilities, and to undertake other duties appropriate to the post as delegated by their Line Manager.

A willingness to be flexible about working arrangements and to provide occasional cover for absent staff is desirable in order to maintain organisational effectiveness.

## Benefits Package

VWT offers a qualifying workplace pension scheme with Aviva, which the post holder may request to be enrolled in from day one though employer contributions would not be payable until a three-month probationary period is complete. An enhanced workplace pension scheme, also with Aviva, is available and matches personal contributions of 4% of staff salaries with an additional employer contribution of 7% after a qualifying period of three months.

VWT also provides life assurance with EAP after one year's service. The post holder is entitled to 25 days' paid leave per year in addition to public holidays.

## Value Statement

The Trust expects its staff to carry out their duties in a way that consistently exceeds the regulations and expectations of society at large in matters legal, ethical and environmental. Our aim is to ensure all resources are utilised effectively and efficiently. You will be expected to apply sound value for money principles in undertaking purchasing or supply of goods and services. The Trust will ensure that its staff receive appropriate training and development based on a documented personal annual appraisal.

## 7 Ideal Candidate Profile

VWT is looking for a highly skilled and strategic scientist and leader with strong interpersonal and management skills.

### Qualifications

A **post-graduate degree** (or equivalent) in biological sciences, wildlife conservation or a related discipline, including a relevant management discipline.

### Experience and Skills Essential

- An excellent team leader – experience of motivating and inspiring a team to deliver positive conservation outcomes.
- Successful track record in mammal conservation and scientific research.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills – at all levels with experience of working with the media, members of the public, and positively engaging a variety of stakeholders. These skills should be both oral and written.
- At least three years' experience of successfully managing conservation projects (funding, delivery, budgeting, reporting).
- Experience of successful networking to develop contacts and opportunities for significant benefit to the Trust.
- IT competent.
- Full UK Driving licence.

### Experience and Skills Desirable

- Experience of working in the charity sector.
- Experience of managing multi-partner, multi-funded conservation projects.

## Personal Qualities

- A demonstrable commitment to and enthusiasm for wildlife conservation.
- An outgoing and self-motivated individual with initiative, innovation and drive, and the personal qualities to become an ambassador for VWT.
- A positive 'can do' attitude with excellent problem-solving abilities and a professional, flexible approach.
- Well-organised with good attention to detail, able to plan and prioritise own work and work of the wider team to meet deadlines and complete work to time and budget.
- Committed to self-development, keeping relevant skills and knowledge up to date.

## 8 Equal Opportunities

Vincent Wildlife Trust values diversity and is committed to supporting an inclusive culture. We want our staff to feel comfortable to be themselves. We aim to provide an environment where everyone, regardless of background or characteristics, can develop their full potential.

To help us monitor our recruitment process to ensure they meet our Equal Opportunities Policy, all applicants are requested to download and complete our Diversity Monitoring form. Please return this with your completed Application Form.