

Job Description and Person Specification

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Deadline for applications: 17:00 on Friday 4 August 2023

1 Applying for this post

Please read all 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 Friday 4 August 2023

by email to hr@vwt.org.uk or by post to:

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

Interviews are planned for **17 and 18 August 2023**, and will be held in person at our Bronsil office (or via video conferencing if required). Full details will be confirmed ahead of the interview date. If you do not hear from us by 15 August 2023, please assume that you have not been successful on this occasion.

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

3 Our Conservation Work

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

In 2020 VWT completed the Pine Marten Recovery Project (PMRP), which used translocations of pine martens from Scotland to establish a population in mid-Wales. The PMRP combined conservation biology and social science to successfully re-establish a small carnivore population with the involvement of local communities. 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 Trust to explore the potential for restoring European wildcats to southern Britain – an ambitious project that will only go ahead if the outcome of the social feasibility study is positive. VWT brings its expertise in conducting reintroductions and experience of working with communities and stakeholders to the partnership and has developed this role to conduct a full social feasibility assessment to understand the perspectives of local communities and stakeholders to a wildcat reintroduction – and to identify any concerns or potential conflicts. This work would be undertaken over a two-year period and will provide a clearer understanding of public belief and perceptions around the concept of reintroducing wildcats to Wales. This will, in turn, provide impartial recommendations for the next steps, with local communities engaged and involved in the decision process.

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 stoats and weasels in Britain and Ireland, and European mink, steppe and marbled polecats on the continent. We have longer-term aspirations to carry out conservation work on European mink 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 barbastelles 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 martens both socially and on other species.

4 Job Description

Starting Salary	£19,200-£21,200 for 0.8 FTE (£24,000-£26,500 FTE), for 18 months with the possibility of an extension
Location of Job	Home office based within project area in southwest Wales
Responsible to	Principal Scientist
Job Purpose	To undertake community and stakeholder engagement to understand perceptions of a potential wildcat reintroduction to Wales

Main Duties

- Work with VWT project staff and partners to identify key stakeholder groups with which to consult about a potential wildcat reintroduction
- Engage with local communities and stakeholder groups to explore the social feasibility of restoring wildcats to Wales
- Build relationships with stakeholders to encourage ongoing, longer-term discussion and collaboration
- Input into the production of information, leaflets, digital content and other materials to disseminate to stakeholders
- Work with VWT's Science Team to use appropriate methods and analyses to capture and disseminate the outcomes of the engagement and recommendations for the next steps
- Work with VWT project staff and partners to develop a conflict management and communications plan
- Provide regular updates to the project partners and input to meetings
- Support fundraising activities as required
- Enhance and develop the Trust's reputation for community engagement in conservation

Other Duties

Finance

- To provide information for budget management, adhere to financial authorities and procedures, keep records for expenditure that can be attributed directly to activities
- To liaise with line manager on cash-flow and budget update issues

Office, Training and Personnel

- To attend training courses as required
- To be familiar with and abide by the Trust's policies and procedures

General

- Carry out other duties from time to time as required
- 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. An appraisal process is carried out every six months.

6 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.

7 Outline Conditions

This post is 0.8 FTE, 30 hours per week (four days per week, 9am-5pm with half an hour unpaid lunch break). Days worked to be agreed with the Line Manager – flexible working is permissible and to be discussed with your Line Manager. Due to the nature of the Trust's work, evening or weekend work is sometimes necessary for which time off in lieu is given. Due to the remote nature of the work, the post holder must have access to a car that is insured for business use. Travel costs will be reimbursed according to the Trust's current policy. 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

The VWT offers a workplace pension scheme with Aviva which matches personal contributions of 4% of staff salaries with an additional employer contribution of 7%. This enhanced pension scheme is available after satisfactory completion of a three-month probation period. You may request to be enrolled from day one, but employer contributions will not increase to 7% until the probation period is complete. Life assurance and an Employee Assistance Package is available to all staff after one year's service.

The post holder is entitled to 20 days paid leave (25 days pro rata) per year in addition to pro-rated public holidays.

Value Statement

The Trust expects its staff to carry out their duties in a way which 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.

8 Ideal Candidate Profile

VWT is looking for a candidate with a demonstrable commitment to wildlife conservation who is interested in contributing to the enhancement of conservation science throughout the Trust.

Qualifications

A **degree** (or equivalent) in a relevant field of study, preferably with some postgraduate study or experience in a relevant area.

Experience and Skills Essential

- Excellent oral and written communication skills, including public presentation
- Strong interpersonal skills with a cross-section of people, including landowners, farmers, and the general public
- Experience of stakeholder and community engagement, ideally in a wildlife conservation context
- Familiarity with field conservation work and a keen interest in ecology
- Experience of using main Office 365 applications including Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook
- An awareness of Welsh culture, and a positive attitude to linguistic and cultural diversity (knowledge of Welsh language is desirable)
- Full UK driving licence

Personal Qualities

- A demonstrable commitment to and enthusiasm for wildlife conservation
- Strong interpersonal skills
- To have the personal qualities to become an ambassador for VWT in the target stakeholder groups and build strong professional links with its partners
- Interested in maintaining and enhancing conservation subject knowledge
- An enthusiastic, self-motivated individual with initiative, ambition and drive