



Job Description

Job Title:	Senior Keeper
Department:	Living Collections
Responsible to:	Head Keeper/Assistant Head Keeper
Head of Department:	Head of Living Collections

Job Description

Key Purpose of the Job

To operationally manage animals and support staff and on occasion being the senior animal manager on site in the absence of the Head and Assistant Head keepers. To support the HK and AHK with delegated duties as required, in particular as an on the ground supervisor and mentor for staff.

Responsibility for Resources

People

No individual line management responsibilities but will be required to supervise, mentor and oversee the work of Qualified, Trainee, Seasonal and Volunteer Keepers. Feedback on performance and guide less experienced staff on all areas of animal management. Take responsibility for the day to day running of the living collection team in the absence of the HK and AHK and as appropriate.

Other

- Plant, machinery, equipment, materials and products
 - Everyday access and responsibility regarding the safe use of appropriate machinery and section equipment. Ensuring that safe working protocols are adhered to.

- Financial resources
 - No budgetary responsibility.

- Confidentiality
 - Responsibility for confidential knowledge about employees, animal moves and animal welfare.
- Animals
 - Responsibility for the day to day management of animals, for developing husbandry to include enrichment and husbandry training programs.

Main duties and key responsibilities

- Be able to mentor and train junior members of a team, to instruct and oversee best practice within the section. To support the Head Keeper and AHK in ensuring agreed standards of work are met.
- In the absence of the HK and Assistant HK, recording sickness absence for staff on the section and conducting return to work interviews.
- In conjunction with the HK and Assistant HK, setting and monitoring rotas for the team (taking into consideration annual leave, TOIL and sickness),
- Supervise and train staff in maintaining high standards of hygiene, equipment care and house-keeping as routine part of daily duties.
- Effective supervision of all sections providing clear tasks, adequate supervision and guidance as required.
- Contribute to and drive the development of high standards of husbandry and welfare, developing innovative, enriching and aesthetic enclosures with the team.
- Demonstrate knowledge of husbandry, exhibition, diet and reproduction. Take responsibility for furthering your knowledge by liaising with colleagues, or those with specific knowledge of different species. Demonstrate innovation and initiate new ideas in conjunction with the senior animal team
- To be able to effectively and respectfully communicate to colleagues, visitors and other stake holders. Capable of communicating any significant events to the senior animal team.
- Supporting other Living Collection colleagues, with veterinary, training, behaviour, enrichment and other relevant animal related procedures.
- To identify animal health problems quickly and to be able to carry out agreed veterinary treatments accurately as determined by veterinary staff, administering correct doses and recording appropriately. Good record keeping and follow up observations on treatments and conditions.

- Familiarity, compliance and monitoring with all Health and Safety protocols and documentation. This includes emergency procedures, risk assessment and safe working practices. Ability to instruct others in the above and monitor compliance. Ensuring that personal and team safety is a priority.
- Produce and update written documentation such as health and safety information, including Risk Assessments, dietary records and any other relevant material. Inputting animal records and data onto the ZIMS database etc.
- Supporting and promoting positive visitor experiences by answering questions in a friendly and helpful manner, ensuring that visitors leave with a good impression of the Living Collections team. Demonstrating knowledge of the role of a modern zoo in terms of conservation, research and education.
- As agreed with the senior animal team, supporting broader Trust events such as late evening/ weekend functions, animal encounters, keeper for a day etc.
- To contribute to research, present papers and represent the work of Wildwood to the wider zoo community at conferences.
- Collaborate and encourage collaboration with other departments, particularly the conservation and ranger teams where joint projects will require a collaborative, one plan approach.

Building relationships

- To be able to effectively and respectfully communicate to staff of all levels regardless of their position.
- Actively engage in discussion and express your ideas and thoughts in weekly team meetings that can develop the sections goals.
- Familiarity with other Wildwood departments and an awareness of department protocol when needing to contact other teams.
- An understanding and supportive approach to the commercial nature of the Zoological collection whilst maintaining the highest standards of husbandry and welfare to the living collection.
- Some media work may be required which will involve speaking confidently and comprehensively.

Mental Demands

- Accountable for decisions made on section, in the absence of HK and AHK for animal care and staff management.

Flexibility

- Flexibility is needed in animal care emergencies. This may mean long hours are sometimes a necessity and coming into work on days off.
- Willingness to provide assistance for call-outs and emergencies outside of normal working hours (within reason).

Working Conditions

- This post will require extensive outside working with direct exposure to the weather and animals

Expectations of job holder

- To ensure that the policy for equality and diversity is adhered to and promoted in all aspects of the post holder's work.
- To ensure effective quality control and continuous improvement in all aspects of the work and responsibilities attached to this post.
- Demonstrate professionalism towards sensitive and confidential information.
- To comply with and promote Health and Safety policies and procedures and to undertake recommended Health and Safety training as and when necessary.
- To be committed to professional self-development, through engaging with zoological professionals, attending conferences as required and completing training necessary for the job.
- To undertake such other duties as are commensurate with the post.

NB: This job description is designed to outline a range of main duties that may be encountered. It is not designed to be an exhaustive list of tasks and can be varied in consultation with the post holder in order to reflect changes in the job or the organisation

Person Specification**Qualifications & Experience**

- Extensive practical experience of working with a range of animals within a zoological collection.
- Qualified to the Diploma in the Management of Zoo and Aquarium Animals (DMZAA) level or equivalent qualification.
- Able to demonstrate the ability to supervise a team.

Knowledge

- Broad and extensive taxonomic knowledge on a range of species managed within zoological collections. Particular focus on Native and European species is required
- Taxonomic or husbandry specialism desirable, with experience in presenting work at conferences or other forums as required.
- Willingness to work on and learn about evolving husbandry management within zoological collections to include positive re-enforcement training for behavioural management and varied methods of enrichment for a range of species.
- An understanding and supportive approach to the Trusts strategic priorities, it's mission and vision.
- Knowledge of life support systems, temperature ranges and UK requirements for specific species.
- Knowledge and experience in proven techniques and initiating new techniques used to handle specific animals for training, catch ups and veterinary procedures.
- An understanding of health & safety requirements for staff, visitors and animals and able to implement processes and procedures.

Skills & Abilities

- Ability to demonstrate initiative and a pro-active approach to completing tasks beneficial to the section/department.
- Ability to motivate, supervise and mentor a team of keepers, with a variety of specialisms, interests and experience.
- Innovative approach with an ability to put new ideas into practice.
- Strong observational and problem solving skills.
- Ability to manage and prioritise a diverse workload.
- Experience in training and mentoring junior keeping staff, acting as a role model.
- Ability to apply appropriate judgement when discussing WILDWOOD TRUST matters and does not discuss commercially sensitive issues without advice from senior staff.

Interpersonal Skills

- An ability to work as part of a team as well as an individual to complete section tasks, respectively supporting broader decisions
- Strong communication skills and the ability to communicate positively, clearly and comprehensively with staff more junior and more senior.
- Build positive relationships with staff in other departments.

Other Requirements

- Animal work frequently requires individuals to work outside of normal working hours if for example specific levels of care are required. Therefore a flexible approach in terms of working hours is required.
- Working indoors in artificially high temperature &/or humid conditions.
- This post requires weekend and bank holiday working.
- Ability to travel and attend conferences or other zoos as the position requires, in order to share knowledge, beneficial to the collection.
- An ability to talk confidently and professionally to visitors or present 'keeper talks' or 'keeper for a day experiences' to groups of visitors.
- This role may, on occasion, require the post holder to work from the other zoo (Kent or Devon) to which the post holder is based.
- A full driving license is required.

Applications

- The post is advertised as full-time.
- Appointment will be subject to a six-month probationary period.
- No person shall be treated less favourably than another on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, marital status, race, ethnicity or national origin, religion, colour, age or disability. As an equal opportunities employer, applicants for staff vacancies shall be short-listed for interview and appointed purely on the grounds of their suitability for the post as laid out in the advertised job description.
- Wildwood operates a no-smoking policy in the park and in its offices.

Applicants should send a covering letter and curriculum vitae to the Human Resources Manager, Marianne Benson at jobs@wildwoodtrust.org.

Closing date for applications is 8th March 2019.

