

Regional Project Officer – Maternity Cover

Position

Contract: 10 months full-time. There is likely to be element of evening/weekend work from late spring through the summer months, running volunteer training courses.

Salary: £25,000 - £28,000 p/a.

Location: Oxfordshire

Reporting to: National Co-ordinator.

Responsible for implementing: Saving Oxfordshire's Wetland Wildlife and River Ock Catchment Partnership projects.

Closing date: Friday, 31st May 2019

Background

Freshwater Habitats Trust is a small, friendly and ambitious conservation charity, which works to protect UK and European freshwater wildlife through practical, evidence-based and innovative nature conservation projects. Our organisation is well respected nationally and internationally, working with a national network of UK-based partners, the Wildlife and Countryside Link organisations, and the European Pond Conservation Network.

Saving Oxfordshire's Wetland Wildlife

The Oxford area is a national hotspot for freshwater biodiversity ranking in importance alongside famous areas such as the Norfolk Broads, the Lake District and the New Forest. Unfortunately, for the people of Oxford, it is also an area prone to serious flooding. To help solve this problem the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme is being developed. 'Saving Oxford's Wetland Wildlife' is a Thames Water and Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment funded project which aims to ensure that the full environmental and community benefit of the flood scheme can be realised.

River Ock Catchment Partnership

Freshwater wildlife in the Ock and Thames is under severe pressure from our modern ways: pollution, drainage and climate change mean that plants and animals are still disappearing from this landscape. The problems facing freshwaters in this area are a microcosm of larger threats to the water environment – and show how hard it is to combine our economic lives with the protection of the natural world. The River Ock Catchment Project is led by the Freshwater Habitats Trust working alongside organisations and communities across the area. As well as the Ock itself the area also includes the Thames valley around Oxford with its famous riverside meadows. The work is part of the Defra-supported Catchment-based Approach and has been funded to date mainly by the Environment Agency.

Overall aim

Maternity cover is required to work on these two projects (Saving Oxfordshire's Wetland Wildlife and River Ock Catchment Partnership) with the likelihood of a contract extension to cover on-going project work in the Oxfordshire area.

Key responsibilities

Saving Oxfordshire's Wetland Wildlife

Raise awareness of the Oxford water environment. Working with local and national experts. The post holder will:

- Organise a series of free public talks about Oxford's freshwater heritage and wildlife and the opportunities created by the flood scheme.
- Facilitate regular site visits to some of the best sites in Oxford for freshwater wildlife.
- Attend local events to promote the project and recruit volunteers.
- Create content for social media, partner websites and local media outlets to promote the project and the value of Oxfordshire's Wetland Wildlife.

Monitor wildlife and water quality. We want Oxford residents to help us do baseline monitoring that will underpin the long-term monitoring of the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme. The post holder will work with groups, schools and individuals across Oxford to:

- Train local volunteers in monitoring and reporting.
- Establish links to local and national experts.
- Liaise with Freshwater Habitats Trust senior staff to develop a monitoring strategy.
- Undertake water quality testing and eDNA fish and amphibians monitoring.

Undertake conservation of freshwater habitats and species. The post holder will:

- Liaise with local experts to identify areas for management work.
- Oversee practical volunteer management days, e.g. scrub management/reed cutting.
- Draw up management goals and plans for sites with landowners/managers.
- Authorise budgets for capital spending up to £2,000.
- Develop plans for ex-situ species conservation work with local experts.
- Undertake species translocation and monitoring with volunteer.

River Ock Catchment Partnership

The post holder will:

- Maintain relationships with freshwater organisations and other NGOs to promote involvement in the project.
- Create content for social media, partner websites and local media outlets to promote the project.
- Organise and facilitate Catchment Partnership meetings.

Additional general responsibilities for the post holder

- Participate in regular team meetings and organisation staff meetings.
- Report on progress against targets and maintain financial records as required.
- Work closely and constructively with your manager in all areas of your responsibility.
- Undertake other duties as the senior management team may from time to time require.

Qualifications

- Minimum academic qualification: Good degree (2:2), MSc or doctorate in ecology and conservation, or in a related subject, or at least four years' practical experience employed in the conservation/ecology sector.
- Valid driving licence. Own car an advantage.
- Note that the role is likely to involve contact with children, and a DBS check will be made prior to employment.

Knowledge and experience

- Experience of successfully developing, managing and delivering projects, including managing budgets.
- At least 1-year relevant practical experience in freshwater ecology/ conservation.
- Good freshwater plant and/or invertebrate identification skills.
- At least 1 year's experience supporting / managing volunteers.
- Good knowledge and practical experience of freshwater habitats, including ponds.
- Existing knowledge of freshwater/wetland ecology and experience of practical conservation techniques.
- Computer literate: Word, Excel, (Access, GIS an advantage).
- Experience of training and delivering talks.
- Proven ability to network, build and maintain effective relationships with internal and external partners and stakeholders.

Personal competences

- Good leadership skills in presenting and implementing new ideas and ways of working.
- Excellent interpersonal skills - approachable, professional and courteous.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, including the ability to network at a wide range of levels
- Good level of competence in statistical analysis and IT.
- Good administration and organisational skills.
- Attention to detail and able to deliver on time.
- Prepared to work flexibly and travel extensively as part of the job, including occasional evenings and weekends.
- Ability to work independently and part of a team.

Other requirements

- Valid driving licence.
- Own car an advantage.