



Job Description and Person Specification

Job title: Conservation Ecologist

Location: Abbots Hall Farm

Reports to: Senior Conservation Ecologist

Job Purpose

Essex Wildlife Trust (EWT) is the county's leading conservation charity, committed to protecting wildlife and inspiring a lifelong love of nature. By 2030, we aim to protect and connect 30% of land and sea and inspire 1 in 4 people in Essex to take action for wildlife. We are led by science, using evidence from a range of sources to inform decision making for the protection and restoration of nature in Essex. We are proud to be accredited as [Conservation Evidence Champions](#).

The Conservation Ecologist makes a significant contribution to EWT's evidence work and is responsible for gathering, analysing, collating and communicating ecological evidence to inform conservation management and biodiversity gain on Essex Wildlife Trust's nature reserves and across the wider Essex landscape.

The postholder will be a key member of the Conservation Evidence Team and will work closely with the Senior Conservation Ecologist.

With practical field experience and a good knowledge base in ecological survey techniques and species identification skills across a wide range of taxa, the Conservation Ecologist's work will be diverse and innovative.

Survey work will cover habitat quality and trends in the abundance and distribution of key species and species assemblages. It will also include gathering data to inform the impact of invasive species, predators, deer and recreational pressures on our nature reserves, as well as natural capital assessments.

Working with others in the Conservation Evidence team and partner organisations, the design and implementation of bespoke survey techniques and experimental work to inform important conservation research will be a key part of the role. The use of new technology to capture ecological data will be encouraged, especially where this will enable data to be collected that will influence conservation gain.

The postholder will approach work from an analytical and scientific perspective and will have experience in the use of GIS, data analysis, writing reports and disseminating results.

Being collaborative in their approach and having the ability to communicate to a wide range of audiences, they will work with and train site staff, volunteers and teams across the Trust, and will ensure that ecological evidence is used to inform decision-making.

Across the wider Essex landscape, the Conservation Ecologist will contribute to targeted ecological projects, especially ones that contribute to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and with partners such as the Essex Local Nature Partnership, academic institutions, and other conservation organisations. They will provide expertise to citizen science campaigns and initiatives contributing to landscape-scale targets, including 30 by 30 and the Nature Recovery Network.

Key Tasks

- Working with the Senior Conservation Ecologist to design and conduct an ecological monitoring programme, and in consultation with the Nature Reserve team and volunteer wardens across Essex Wildlife Trust's portfolio of nature reserves, they will collect field data that will inform evidence-based site management.
- Collate, analyse, present and communicate ecological data and other evidence in suitable formats for a wide range of audiences.
- Improve the ecological monitoring skill base of reserve staff and volunteers through support and, where required, training in field survey techniques and species identification.
- Use GIS and ecological survey technology (including drones) to enhance the collection, implementation and communication of ecological data.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues across Essex Wildlife Trust to raise the profile of ecological monitoring and evidence-based site management within the organisation.
- Write survey reports, prepare GIS *storymaps*, contribute to site management plans and work with the Senior Conservation Ecologist to prepare articles and scientific papers.
- Provide advice and guidance to nature reserve managers, rangers and volunteers in the use of evidence to inform practical management to improve site condition.
- Conduct and support field experiments and ecological research on Essex Wildlife Trust's nature reserves and across the wider Essex landscape.
- Contribute to priority conservation projects, initiatives and citizen science campaigns both within Essex Wildlife Trust and with partner organisations.
- Enhance relevant skills and knowledge through personal development and attending relevant training.
- Support and work with the Communications Team to create and deliver inspiring and engaging social media, print, radio and TV content throughout the year.
- Ensure safe working at all times, by compiling and reviewing task risk assessments and following health and safety procedures, including for lone and remote working.
- Work effectively with colleagues across the Trust and demonstrate the values of being Impactful, Collaborative, United and Proactive.
- To carry out any other duties that are within the scope, spirit and purpose of the role and the contract of employment, as requested by the Senior Conservation Ecologist or Head of Conservation Evidence.

Knowledge and Skills

1. Hold a degree in Ecology/Nature Conservation or a similar field or be able to demonstrate equivalent relevant experience.
2. Habitat assessment skills with a good knowledge of lowland grassland, woodland, post-industrial sites, freshwater, saltmarsh and coastal grazing marsh.

3. Knowledge of species survey methodologies and good identification skills across a range of taxa.
4. Excellent bird identification skills and experience of wintering and breeding bird surveys and associated monitoring methodologies
5. Good botanical identification skills, with experience of grassland monitoring techniques.
6. An interest in insect conservation and experience surveying butterflies.
7. Experience of ecological data gathering, analysis, reporting and application of results.
8. Excellent MS Office and IT skills, including experience in the use of GIS for the collection, management and communication of data.
9. Be an analytical and innovative thinker, with experience of experimental and survey design.
10. Ability to share knowledge with others and mentor staff and volunteers in ecological survey techniques and species identification.
11. A broad knowledge of nature conservation legislation including protected sites and protected species legislation, licensing, and mitigation.
12. Experience of working collaboratively and with partners on project work to achieve goals.
13. A capacity to use personal initiative and be adaptable with the ability to work both individually and in a team environment.
14. Have good organisational skills and the ability to handle multiple projects simultaneously whilst meeting deadlines and objectives.
15. Have good verbal and written communication skills with strong attention to detail and the ability to communicate data to a broad range of audiences.
16. Knowledge of H&S legislation relating to nature conservation activities with experience of remote and lone working.

The role requires the following training: Emergency First Aid certification (if not already held). Full training will be provided where needed.

Additional Information

- The role entails some evening, early morning and weekend working.
- The role requires regular lone-working and working outdoors for extended periods of time at relatively remote sites in a wide range of weather conditions.
- The role requires an interest in working for a charity that is determined to protect wildlife for the future and for the people of Essex.
- The role requires the ability to drive, including a full driving licence and use of a vehicle, though pool vehicles may sometimes be available.
- The role is based at Abbots Hall Farm, Great Wigborough, Essex, but requires regular travel across the county and beyond, with mileage paid for additional travel.

Disability Confident Statement

As a Disability Confident employer, we are committed to offering an interview to anyone with a disability that meets all the essential criteria for the post. Please let us know if you require any adjustments to make our recruitment process more accessible.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____