

Essex Wildlife Trust

Job Description



Job title: Saltmarsh Recovery Research Manager

Location: Abbots Hall, Great Wigborough.

Reports to: Head of Marine & Coastal Recovery

Contract type: Fixed-term 36-month contract starting in January 2026

Job purpose:

Funded through the prestigious, seascape-scale [Transforming the Thames](#) coastal restoration partnership project, the Saltmarsh Recovery Research Manager will lead the development and drive the delivery of the Trust's extensive saltmarsh recovery programme on Essex's internationally important coast. In implementing a key part of this major evidence-based project, this new role will make a significant contribution to both the on-the-ground conservation impact and a long-term legacy of scientific evidence for *Transforming the Thames* and future projects.

The role has three main aims:

- to restore existing saltmarsh using smaller-scale, experimental active restoration approaches on at least two sites in the internationally important Blackwater and Colne Estuaries, part of the Mid-Essex Coast SPA, Essex Estuaries SAC, and Blackwater, Crouch, Roach and Colne MCZ. The work involves planning, designing, implementing and monitoring the success of a variety of restoration techniques, including possible deployment of beneficial use of dredged sediment (BUDS) and sediment accretion trials. All this requires the ability to design and execute experiments in the intertidal environment, analysing and interpreting data, to present and share with colleagues from the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) and other saltmarsh restoration partners in the Greater Thames project area.
- to develop positive, productive relationships with knowledgeable coastal landowners, and other stakeholders, in order to co-develop a series of additional long-term saltmarsh restoration projects in these estuaries, based around the findings of a recent *APBmer* report, with legacy funding ideally secured within this three-year project.
- to act as the Trust's main advocate for saltmarshes and saltmarsh conservation, including recruiting and training a group of specialised volunteer citizen scientists to support restoration activities and evidence gathering.

You will also work closely with your Marine & Coastal Recovery Team colleagues, and *Transforming the Thames* leads, championing saltmarshes at events and engagements throughout the project.

Key Tasks

- Develop existing and lead on designing experiments for smaller-scale saltmarsh restoration trials in the Blackwater and Colne Estuaries, Essex.
- Lead the on-the-ground delivery of smaller-scale saltmarsh restoration trials.
- Collaborate closely and actively with others in the *Transforming the Thames* partnership.
- Develop and deliver a thorough, before-and after, standardised saltmarsh monitoring programme, including the use of drone surveys and adopting and sharing with partners, appropriate indicators and metrics to evidence the success of the restoration work.
- Secure all necessary licences and permissions, and undertake all necessary habitat and activity assessments, to carry out restoration, research and monitoring activities.
- Procure and maintain the equipment and materials needed.
- Proactively and sensitively build productive working relationships with coastal landowners and stakeholders in the Blackwater and Colne estuaries to identify a legacy of future saltmarsh restoration opportunities.
- Co-develop a pipeline of future saltmarsh restoration projects in the Blackwater and Colne estuaries with coastal landowners, including project design, licencing, costings and identifying and securing funding.
- Recruit and train volunteers and citizen scientists to support active restoration activities.
- Manage project budget and finances of around £100K, ensuring thorough and accurate reporting and claims to the Trust, partners and project funders.
- Identify, and where possible, secure additional match-funding for the *Transforming the Thames* saltmarsh programme.
- Provide reports and updates to *Transforming the Thames* project partners and funders and represent the Trust at partnership meetings, as required.
- Act as the Trust's saltmarsh specialist, being a first point of contact for queries and staying up-to-date with saltmarsh research and policy, restoration activities and *blue carbon*.
- Represent the Trust, the wider Wildlife Trusts and *Transforming the Thames*, and share evidence and results at key meetings and conferences, including the Blackwater Partnership and the UK Blue Carbon Forum.
- Engage, inspire and influence individuals and local groups about saltmarshes, saltmarsh restoration projects (including managed realignments), and the conservation of the Essex Coast and Greater Thames Estuary.
- Be a spokesperson for the Trust's marine and coastal recovery projects and activities and for *Transforming the Thames*, including collaborating with the Trust's Communications Team creating and delivering inspiring, engaging social media, print, radio and TV content.

- 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 Head of Marine & Coastal Recovery.

Person Specification

- Demonstrable experience of designing, planning and delivering coastal habitat restoration projects and fieldwork.
- Practical experience of working on saltmarsh habitats.
- Expert knowledge and understanding of saltmarsh habitats and estuaries.
- Knowledge and understanding of Essex's marine priority habitats and associated species and key marine issues
- Demonstrable experience of securing licences, consents and permissions for restoration activities, as well as experience undertaking relevant habitat impact assessments.
- Demonstrable experience delivering and demonstrating impact of a scientific conservation monitoring programme.
- Demonstrable experience managing practical fieldwork days in the intertidal.
- Demonstrable experience of undertaking risk assessments and managing risk when working on the coast.
- Demonstrable data management and statistical analysis skills using software, such as ArcGIS and R, as well as confidence using *Word*, *Excel* and *Powerpoint*.
- Experience of writing scientific reports and/or project review or funder reports.
- Experience of managing and reporting on project budgets and finances.
- A good track record of identifying and securing funding for conservation projects.
- A confident networker with proven experience of positively working in partnerships and with stakeholders, and with specific demonstrable experience of collaborating with landowners.
- Experience of line management of staff or volunteers and very good interpersonal and communication skills, with demonstrable ability to work as part of a close, multidisciplinary team.
- A confident problem solver with a capacity for innovation and a willingness to take on responsibility, use initiative and be adaptive; and the ability to work both individually and in an internal and external team environment.
- Excellent organisational skills, able to work under pressure and experience in managing multiple projects simultaneously, with delivery on time and within budget to meet deadlines.
- Possess excellent verbal and written communication skills with strong attention to detail and the ability to communicate and influence a range of audiences in person, on social media and via written information.

- Full UK-valid driving licence and use of a vehicle (Trust pool vehicles are available for work related activities).
- Physical ability to access sites and undertake site investigation with equipment.
- A passion for wildlife and conservation and an awareness of the key challenges facing conservation charities and the natural environment.

Other than mandatory training required by the Trust (e.g. H&S Policy), the role requires the following role-specific training: Emergency First Aid, training related to working by water. Full training will be provided where needed.

Additional Information

- The role may entail some evening and weekend working.
- The role involves lone working in a variety of field and weather conditions
- The role requires an enhanced DBS check.
- 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, Great Wigborough, but requires regular travel across the county, with mileage paid for additional travel.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____