

Summary

The position requires an experienced, dedicated individual who will take direction from the Director of Animal Care and Veterinary Services in carrying out the operations of the mammal, reptile, and avian areas of Dartmoor Zoo. This includes all aspects of animal husbandry, exhibit maintenance and holding area management. The role will include development of the mammal, reptile, and bird training program. The position will also be responsible for maintaining organised written records pertaining to health, feeding, water quality and behavioural observations.

You will be an advisor and mentor to staff on all aspects of husbandry procedures and protocols. This includes training staff and supervising volunteers, placements, and project teams, as assigned. You will act as a leader and role model for other staff mentors.

Role

Position: Permanent

Hours: Full-time (37.5 hours per week) on a rota basis

Wage: from £25,000 per year

Duties and Responsibilities

As a member of the animal care team, you will:

- lead by example by being patient, kind, humble, respectful, selfless, forgiving, honest and committed when interacting with one another and guests.
- show kindness, consideration and empathy for animals, always looking for ways to improve on their care and welfare and to ensure that set standards are met.
- serve as the designated team lead as required by Director of Animal Care & Veterinary Services.
- act as a resource and mentor for Entry Level Keepers, Keeper 1's, Keeper 2's, Keeper 3's and Senior Keepers.
- monitor all individuals in the collection daily, reporting any abnormalities to the Director.
- provide for the needs of all animals in the bird, mammal, and reptile collection by performing habitat and off-show cleaning and maintenance, diet preparation, feeding, training and enrichment.
- prepare and continually enhance animal areas for aesthetic, reproductive, behaviour, and animal safety (i.e., perching material, nest boxes, "furniture", live or artificial plants, etc).

- assist the Director in setting and maintaining high standards of animal husbandry and welfare.
- assist the veterinarian team in the diagnosis, treatment, and extended care of sick or injured animals, or hand-rearing animals, including the administration of medication, physical therapy, and daily care including normal feeding and cleaning routines.
- maintain accurate records pertinent to animal history, health, medical procedures, breeding, diet, water quality analysis, training activities and behaviour and utilise record information for management activities.
- capture, or assist in the capture, and restraint of any zoo animal for the purposes of diagnosis of illness, administration of medication, confinement for transportation, or the movement of animals between enclosures.
- work with Education and Research team in the implementation of education and research programs involving the animal collection.
- if needed, engage with the public to prevent undue harassment or injury to animals and to ensure the safety of the public, answering questions from the public about the animals.
- assist the Director in preparing staff rotas and holiday calendars.
- guide, monitor and train less knowledgeable employees, through: scheduling and assigning work; reviewing and checking work; giving guidance on work processes; recommending areas for employee skills improvement; and providing input to employee performance evaluation process.
- assist the Director to review and manage staff performance and development as needed.
- instigate and manage disciplinary procedures as required by the Director with support from Head of Compliance and Resources.
- attend formal and informal training as required, and assist the Director in identifying additional training for professional development.
- maintain and develop excellent knowledge of species-specific enrichment and training protocols.
- maintain and develop knowledge of research and conservation initiatives in other zoological facilities.
- assist the Director in ensuring safe working procedures and staff training are correctly documented, audited and updated as necessary.
- continually monitor, evaluate and advise the Director of working practices to ensure they are safe for personnel and animals alike.
- comply with all health and safety requirements as per Dartmoor Zoo's health and safety manual, security directives, policies and standard operating procedures.
- participate in and help prepare for zoo license inspections and other audits as required.
- assist the Director in maintaining departmental policies and learn and maintain other relevant zoo policies.
- contribute to systems (such as species planning and ethics).
- work closely with the Director to develop a collection plan that meets the Charity's objectives.
- plan for and prepare regular welfare audits along with the Director.
- plan for and attend regular firearms training, and participate in escape drills as needed.
- respond to and assist the Director, or the designated Duty Head of Department, in guiding the resolution of emergency situations within the zoo.
- undertake regular one to one update meetings with the Director.
- prepare for and attend regular department meetings and undertake agreed actions.
- deputise for the Director in the Heads of Department meetings when required.
- report, prioritise and arrange maintenance of exhibits as necessary.

- assist the Director in reviewing, planning, and executing enclosure design alterations and assist with new builds.
- assist in supporting pest control efforts by informing appropriate staff of any areas of concern.
- present daily shows and presentations for the public as needed.
- participate in Dartmoor Zoo related education, public relations and membership programs including facility tours and lectures as needed.
- at the direction of the Director, interact with and respond to public/media requests for information.
- maintain discretion with confidential information.
- perform other related duties as assigned.

The Perfect Fit

To be successful in this role, you must have:

- a Bachelor's Degree in biology or a related field (or 3 to 4 years of full-time mammal or avian experience in a zoo or aquarium), with specific knowledge of animal husbandry and behavioural conditioning.
- 8 years minimum (or 11 to 12+ years without a degree) experience of working with animals in a zoo or aquarium setting. Emphasis should be on animal care, training, enrichment, exhibit and holding area maintenance. (Domestic pets do not count).
- 4+ years of managing and supervising a team.
- demonstrable discipline and have a history of a consistently high degree of work quality.
- good written and oral communication skills.
- knowledge and experience of ZIMS and Microsoft Office software.
- intermediate knowledge of zoonotic diseases and their treatment as well as knowledge of medications and terminology.
- a valid driving licence with a good driving record.
- the ability to work a flexible schedule which will include weekends and/or evenings and holidays.
- the ability to travel when necessary.
- the ability to respond to emergencies on an on-call basis.
- good health and be capable of performing strenuous and/or heavy physical labour, and be able to work in all weather conditions.
- COVID vaccinations (to reduce the risks to our vulnerable animals).

It would also help if you have:

- experience in the maintenance of aquariums, aquatic life support systems, and use of water quality testing equipment.
- a First Aid certificate.
- a firearms licence.

Apply

Applications: via application form only (visit www.dartmoorzoo.org.uk/job-vacancies)

Application deadline: 21st August 2022

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