Keeper

Dartmoor Zoo is seeking an experienced Zoo Keeper with a proven track record of delivering high standards of animal care in a professional zoo setting. Applicants must have significant, hands-on experience as a keeper, strong practical husbandry skills and a demonstrable commitment to animal welfare and professional best practice. This is not an entry-level or trainee position. You will bring the experience and confidence to contribute effectively to the daily care of our diverse collection and work collaboratively within our keeper team.



Background

Dartmoor Zoo is set in 33 acres of beautiful wooded countryside on the edge of Dartmoor, in a small village called Sparkwell, just 20 minutes from the city of Plymouth. Plymouth itself has excellent travel links to the rest of the country and is known as Britain's Ocean City.

Dartmoor Zoo is on a journey! We are currently redesigning the zoo by developing a comprehensive new Master Plan and Collection Plan to completely overhaul our collection, exhibits and visitor facilities. This will be a long journey with work being completed in several stages over the next decade. This is an exciting time to join the team!

The Charity, Dartmoor Zoological Society, operates Dartmoor Zoo. Our vision is to protect threatened species and enable people to help wildlife thrive. We aim to promote the conservation, care and breeding of wildlife and endangered species, encouraging and developing public interest in and awareness of the importance of ensuring the survival of species and the diversity of life.

Benefits



Critically Endangered Amur Leopard

- Permanent contract
- Salary £26,000 per annum
- Full time (37.5 hours per week). Part-time considered.
- 30 days annual leave (including bank holidays)
- Enhanced sick absence, maternity, paternity and adoption leave
- Free parking
- Discounts in restaurant and shop
- Free Dartmoor Zoo tickets for friends and family
- Free entry to BIAZA Zoos
- Assistance in finding accommodation if you need to relocate.

Key responsibilities

- Deliver high-quality daily animal husbandry, including cleaning, feeding, diet preparation, observations, and enclosure maintenance.
- Monitor animal health and behaviour, escalating welfare concerns appropriately.
- Maintain accurate records relating to health, feeding, enrichment, water quality, and enclosure checks.
- Deliver and review species-appropriate enrichment and contribute new enrichment ideas.
- Support animal training programmes and assist with handling, restraint, and capture procedures.
- Prepare and administer veterinary treatments under veterinary direction.
- Maintain hygiene and biosecurity standards in all areas.
- Identify enclosure defects and carry out basic maintenance where authorised.
- Work fully in line with SOPs, risk assessments, emergency procedures, and UK zoo legislation.
- Provide day-to-day guidance to volunteers an placements, acting as a positive role model.
- Engage confidently and professionally with visitors and during experiences, answering questions and representing the Zoo positively.
- Communicate clearly and collaboratively within the Keeper Team and across all departments.
- Maintain exemplary standards of cleanliness across all animal areas.
- Proactively develop skills and knowledge through training and continuous professional development.

About You

We are looking for someone who has:

- Significant professional experience as an animal keeper within a licensed zoo, wildlife park, or similar setting.
- A relevant qualification in animal management, zoology or a closely related discipline, or demonstrable equivalent professional experience.
- Experience working across multiple exotic taxa within a complex collection.
- Strong practical knowledge of husbandry, welfare assessment, and species-specific behaviour.
- Experience identifying welfare issues and implementing effective interventions.
- Confidence delivering enrichment, training involvement, and assisting in capture procedures.
- Ability to administer medications safely and maintain correct records.
- Good understanding of zoo legislation, licensing, and inspection processes.
- Demonstrable leadership capability, including mentoring and supporting the development of trainees or volunteers.
- Strong communication skills and the ability to collaborate across departments.
- Physical fitness to work outdoors in all weather, plus flexibility to work weekends/bank holidays.
- Eligibility to work in the UK.

Personal Attributes:

- Calm, decisive, and adaptable, especially under pressure.
- Organised, observant, and able to prioritise effectively.
- Professional, discreet, and committed to high standards.

To Apply



- Visit: www.dartmoorzoo.org.uk/job-vacancies
- Fill in the application form from the website
- Email completed applications to: clare.lee@dartmoorzoo.co.uk
- Deadline: noon 16th November 2026