

People, Ponds and Water Project

Regional Project Officer

Position

Contract: Full-time 33 month contract.

There is likely to be a considerable element of travel, and weekend work from late spring through the summer months, running volunteer training courses.

Location: 4 regional posts: the exact location may partly depend on the home location of successful candidates, but broadly the posts will be spread across: Northern England, East England, West England and Wales. Some positions (including the Northern and Welsh Officers) will be based in the appropriate regional offices of a partner organisation (e.g. Natural England, Natural Resources Wales).

Salary: £25,000 - £28,000 p/a depending on experience.

Reporting to: National Co-ordinator.

Responsible for managing: PondNet and Flagship Pond volunteers.

Background

Freshwater Habitats Trust is a friendly, well respected conservation charity that works to protect UK and European freshwater wildlife through practical, evidence-based and effective nature conservation projects.

Starting in January 2015 we are undertaking a major three-year project, '*People, Ponds and Water*' funded by HLF. The project, which covers England and Wales, will work with people to make a national difference to freshwater biodiversity protection by:

- Supporting local people to manage the most important ponds and pond landscapes in England and Wales,
- Creating a new national freshwater network to collect essential monitoring information on important ponds and endangered freshwater species,
- Raising awareness of the critical importance of clean water for protecting all freshwater biodiversity by enabling people to use quick kits to survey nutrient levels across all waterbody types.

Overall aim

The post holder's role is to manage and deliver two elements of People, Ponds and Water: Flagship Ponds and PondNet within their region, working with volunteers to ensure the timely completion of project targets.

Key responsibilities

Flagship Ponds

The post holder will:

- Liaise with Flagship Pond managers / owners.
- Meet with (and where necessary develop) community Flagship Groups at each site.
- Draw up detailed management goals and plans for the site with volunteer groups/ landowners/managers.
- Establish and train 'early warning' volunteers at each site.
- Train local volunteers in monitoring and reporting.
- Establish links to experts. Provide feedback from project work including to local and regional biodiversity networks and other partners (e.g. Regional Biodiversity Forums, Local Biodiversity Action Plans).

Authorise budgets for capital spending at Flagship sites up to £2000.

PondNet

The post holder will:

- Seek landowner access permissions for PondNet monitoring sites.
- Develop and maintain relationships with (volunteer-based) freshwater and other NGOs to promote involvement in the project.
- Liaise with Local Record centres, local wildlife trusts and other partners and optimise the inclusion of existing recording networks and volunteers
- Publicise the project regionally in association with partners and Freshwater Habitats Trust communications manager.
- Interact with and support volunteers in your region.
- Arrange and undertake volunteer training including arranging venues and expert trainers
- Undertake mentoring of volunteers.
- Arrange experts mentoring, especially for key volunteers.
- Maintain records of volunteers and volunteer time.
- Feedback to the National Co-ordinator, including improvements to PondNet materials.

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.
- Support the project's publicity, fundraising and policy work.
- Undertake other duties as the senior management team may from time to time require
- Provide regular reports on the work for internal use and quarterly HLF reporting.

Qualifications

- Minimum academic qualification: Good degree (2:1), 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 2-years relevant practical experience in freshwater ecology/ conservation
- Good freshwater plant and/or invertebrate identification skills.
- At least 1 years' 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.