

Role Description

Designation:	Botanist – National Science Team
Reporting to:	Vegetation Ecologist, National Science Team
Supervising:	As delegated
Based at:	As agreed

Organisational context:

Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC) is a national conservation organisation dedicated to the effective conservation of Australia's native wildlife and their habitats. AWC delivers practical, on-ground conservation across a diverse network of wildlife sanctuaries and partnership landscapes spanning multiple bioregions of Australia. Our work is led by integrated Operations and Science teams, supported by and working with Philanthropy, Communications, Finance, People and Legal functions. Through long-term land stewardship, partnerships with other land managers, and the application of world-class ecological science, AWC delivers measurable conservation outcomes at landscape scale.

With a strong focus on evidence-based land management, adaptive learning and continuous improvement, AWC is advancing a dynamic and nationally significant model for conservation - one that demonstrates what effective conservation looks like when science and practice are tightly integrated.

AWC's science program:

AWC's science program plays a fundamental role in helping AWC meet its mission. The purpose of AWC's science program is to acquire, analyse and disseminate information that facilitates the delivery of effective conservation, with a primary focus on AWC properties and partnership sites. AWC currently employs around 80 professional ecologists to deliver its conservation science program. Key tasks performed by AWC's science team are to:

- Monitor and evaluate the ecological health of AWC properties – AWC is a national leader in reporting conservation outcomes across our network of sites;
- Conduct research on issues relevant to the conservation of wildlife – we currently support a large number of applied and fundamental ecology projects led by AWC staff and collaborators;
- Plan, implement and monitor reintroductions - AWC is a national leader in the reintroduction of threatened mammals to parts of their former range;
- Contribute to the development of conservation and land management strategies, addressing key threats to wildlife; and
- Develop and provide advice on conservation issues to AWC's Executive and Board, and to the public.

AWC's science program is delivered in the field through Regional Science teams. Each team is led by an experienced Regional Ecologist, responsible for overseeing implementation of the AWC's science program in the region, while ensuring that the program gives effect to AWC's national frameworks. Regional teams comprise Wildlife and Field Ecologists, who are responsible for implementing the science program (designing surveys, conducting field work, evaluating and reporting outcomes) at AWC properties and partnership sites.

The Regional Science teams are supported by AWC's National Science team (NST), comprising conservation ecologists, spatial analysts and data managers. The NST coordinates national conservation and reintroduction programs, leads national research projects, runs specialist ecological surveys, analyses and maps spatial data, develops data management systems, and provides information to AWC's Executive and other parts of AWC.

National Science team:

AWC's National Science team provides strategic direction and support to AWC's ecologists in the field, as well as information, advice and support to AWC's executive and board.

The role:

The Botanist will contribute to AWC's vegetation monitoring, mapping and research programs. The role primarily involves field work to implement these programs, with associated planning, data management, data analysis and reporting. A secondary component of the role involves the provision of botanical support to AWC ecologists. The role will also contribute intellectually to the development and interpretation of AWC's science program, commensurate with the professional skills associated with an Honours degree or equivalent.

The position will be based at a location to be agreed, with substantial time in the field at AWC properties and partnership sites. These properties are often in remote locations.

Key duties:

Reporting to AWC's Vegetation Ecologist, key duties of the Botanist include:

- Contribute to the implementation of AWC's vegetation monitoring, mapping and research programs, including establishment and survey of long-term vegetation monitoring plots.
- Contribute to vegetation mapping of AWC properties and partnerships through field data collection and interpretation.
- Contribute to data management, analysis and reporting, ensuring a high level of scientific integrity.
- Contribute to the development of national vegetation survey protocols, vegetation mapping methodologies, and research projects.
- Contribute to the development of conservation and land management strategies related to vegetation, in particular weed management.
- Work in an integrated way with other AWC staff, to deliver AWC's mission of effective conservation of Australian wildlife and their habitats.
- Work effectively with key stakeholders, including AWC partners, government agencies, recovery teams, the conservation science sector, Indigenous groups and local communities, in the delivery of AWC's conservation programs.
- Contribute to the communication of AWC's science program to stakeholders, the scientific community and the public.
- Assist with AWC's fundraising activities.

Key relationships:

- The Botanist reports to AWC's Vegetation Ecologist, who reports to the National Science Team Manager and ultimately to AWC's Chief Science Officer.
- The position will work closely with other members of AWC's vegetation team including the Vegetation Ecologist, a Senior Botanist and volunteers/Interns. The position will work with other members of AWC's National Science team including the GIS team, Senior Ecologists and AWC's National Science Manager.
- Day-to-day management for the position may be provided by the Senior Botanist, as delegated by the Vegetation Ecologist. As delegated, the position may supervise other staff, volunteers and Interns within the National Science team.
- The position will work with AWC's regional science teams to advise and assist with the design and implementation of vegetation monitoring, mapping and research programs.
- In AWC, the Science Team works in an integrated manner with the Operations Team to design and deliver effective land management, and to measure and report on ecological health.
- All AWC staff help the Development and Communications teams present our conservation model to the public, as we rely heavily on philanthropic support to fund our work.

AWC values:

AWC's work is directed at achieving our mission – the effective conservation of Australia's wildlife and their habitats – and is guided by the following values. At AWC, we are:

- **Informed** – working together to acquire and apply evidence, knowledge and experience
- **Respectful** – demonstrating care, recognition and integrity
- **Accountable** – taking ownership of our actions and outcomes
- **Dedicated** – committed to delivering effective outcomes, with resilience and tenacity
- **Innovative** – applying creative thinking for effective solutions
- **Sustainable** – delivering long-term financial and ecological viability.

Critical Competencies:

1. **Well-developed knowledge of the conservation of Australian wildlife and ecosystems:** including the nature and functioning of the Australian biota; the fundamentals of landscape ecology and Australian vegetation; and major threats to native wildlife and their habitats and how these threats can be mitigated.
2. **Highly developed botanical field skills:** knowledge of Australian plant families and a natural aptitude for distinguishing between many closely related grasses and small forbs, with the ability to rapidly learn and retain diagnostic field characteristics.
3. **Moderate to high level experience in plant identification of specimens in the office:** demonstrated experience in applying complex plant taxonomic keys to identify specimens accurately, and with the patience and attention to detail to critically evaluate the accuracy of the result using available resources.
4. **Experience in vegetation monitoring research and design and the application of standard survey methods in vegetation survey:** hands on experience in conducting vegetation surveys, and knowledge of vegetation monitoring techniques used by a variety of organisations and researchers in Australia.
5. **Highly developed skills in data management:** including considerable experience in cleaning and checking complex datasets in preparation for statistical analysis. You should have moderate to high-level skills in the use of Excel and QGIS programs (or related).
6. **Experience in statistical analyses** or a natural aptitude and willingness to learn these skills rapidly.
7. **Getting things done:** you need good planning and organisational skills, including an ability to prioritise and deliver a range of tasks in an effective manner.
8. **Good interpersonal skills** are essential, including the ability to work positively and productively as part of a small team in remote locations, with the capacity to manage a small team as required.
9. **Collaboration:** you need good relationship-building skills, including the ability to develop and maintain relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders, including AWC Ecologists, AWC Operations staff, AWC partners, Indigenous groups, neighbouring landholders, and the scientific and conservation communities.
10. **Scientific communication skills** including the capacity to draft scientific reports and contribute to publications, applications and reports, and communicate science and conservation messages to a general audience.
11. **Competence in financial management, paperwork and compliance** including the ability to manage financial spreadsheets and deliver projects in a cost-effective manner.
12. **Resourcefulness:** the ability to improvise and problem-solve, developing practical solutions with the resources at hand.
13. **Living in the bush:** the field component of the role will be conducted in remote locations and will require long-distance travel. Ideally, you will have experience in living and working in the bush, otherwise the interest and capacity to do so.

Qualifications:

- A degree in botany, ecology or a related discipline, with Honours or equivalent experience. The level of appointment will depend on the qualifications and experience of the appointee.

Licenses & Certificates:

- Valid manual driver's licence is essential. For field work on AWC properties, you will need to have experience in driving a 4WD in difficult conditions.
- Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check, or willingness to obtain.

Inherent requirements of the role:

The execution of tasks associated with the position will involve fieldwork in remote locations and can sometimes be away from an established field base, often in isolated locations working with a small group of people. The position requires the ability to efficiently carry out tasks in a team situation under direction, whilst effectively communicating with staff and volunteers of diverse backgrounds. The working environment will be predominantly outdoors and often in the extremes of weather – hot and wet and/or dry. The position can be physically demanding and may require walking and climbing over rough terrain, heavy muscular activity including lifting, carrying, pushing and pulling loads, bending, climbing and driving a variety of vehicles. In addition, the applicant will conduct periods of office work, planning and assisting with many projects. The successful applicant must be physically and mentally capable of performing these activities in the locations required to carry out the inherent role responsibilities.

Responsibilities:

1. Science practice
• Actively protect the integrity of AWC's science program, by adopting, promoting and helping maintain high standards of scientific practice. • Engage with team members through active listening and thoughtful questioning to ensure high fidelity of established complex field methodologies.
2. Leadership
• Promote AWC's mission and values amongst AWC staff, partners and stakeholders • As delegated, supervise volunteers and lead small field teams during vegetation surveys.
3. AWC's vegetation monitoring, mapping and research programs
Contribute to AWC's vegetation monitoring, mapping and research programs, including: • undertake field trip planning, • collecting vegetation data in the field, identifying plants, data entry and/or verification, • drafting survey reports and contributing to publications, • contribute to documentation of vegetation survey protocols, • maintain vegetation datasets, • applying statistical methods to analyse vegetation monitoring datasets, • as delegated, collecting voucher specimens and submission to relevant herbaria.
4. Conservation and land management
• Assist with the development of conservation and land management strategies related to vegetation, in particular weed management

• Assist in the implementation of conservation and land management activities, as relevant.
5. National Science Program
• Acquire an understanding of AWC's Ecohealth monitoring framework, and consider its application to the project(s). • Contribute to other components of the National Science Program as required (monitoring, research, spatial analysis and data management, reintroductions, species conservation planning, threat management, genetics and other specialist ecology).
6. Stakeholders
• Develop and maintain productive working relationships with stakeholders in AWC's conservation projects in the region, including AWC partners, Indigenous interests, government agencies, landowners, recovery teams, conservation organisations and community groups • Represent AWC's interests and promote AWC's mission and values in interactions with stakeholders • Act with respect towards Indigenous cultures and peoples.
7. Project and financial management
• Contribute to the preparation of workplans and budgets • Implement science activities set out in approved workplans. ○ Ensure activities are delivered in a cost-effective manner. ○ Ensure all expenditure is in accordance with AWC procurement policy and procedures. • Prepare reports detailing progress in implementing workplans, at the request of your manager. • Ensure financial records are retained and, as necessary, submitted to AWC finance department.
8. Communication and development
• Represent AWC at scientific and public events in accordance with AWC policies and requirements. • Compile and submit information on AWC's conservation science program including text and images to AWC's communications team for use in a range of materials such as Wildlife Matters, social media posts, e-news, AWC website etc. • Assist in the planning, co-ordination and implementation of Philanthropic (fundraising) programs. • Assist in drafting, submission and management of applications for funding, and prepare reports.
9. Health, Safety, and Environment
• In accordance with the requirements of the Chief Operations Officer and Chief Science Officer, undertake risk assessments and prepare risk management plans for operations at each sanctuary. The risk assessments and management plans must protect the health and safety of everyone on sanctuary including you, other staff, contractors, volunteers and visitors. • Implement and comply with the provisions of the approved risk management plan. • Ensure Safety Management plans and safe work systems, as approved by the Chief Operations Officer, are implemented and complied with; in particular: ○ Ensure that you and all staff, contractors and/or volunteers have adequate training before using plant, equipment, tools and/or vehicles. ○ Ensure emergency procedures are developed and posted in appropriate locations. ○ Ensure you have an up to date first aid competency. ○ Ensure incident and near miss reports are filled out and submitted as per approved AWC policies and procedures, in a timely manner.
10. Undertake other tasks, as required

- Contribute to the management of assets used by AWC's science team
- Conduct other tasks to ensure effective conservation of wildlife and habitats on AWC properties.
- Comply with all AWC policies and procedures.