

Role Description

Designation:	Field Ecologist – Central South [FE-CS]
Reporting to:	Regional Ecologist – Central South [RE-CS] Day to day supervision by Wildlife Ecologist, Newhaven, or as delegated
Supervising:	Interns, volunteers, contractors
Based at:	Newhaven

Organisational context

AWC is a pragmatic global conservation leader, restoring landscapes and providing hope for Australian wildlife. Guided by science, AWC delivers measurable conservation impacts at scale to secure the future of our most endangered species.

At AWC we are inspired by the unparalleled richness of Australia's wildlife and we are united by our determination to protect its unique animals and landscapes. It is our mission to effectively conserve all Australian wildlife and habitats and our vision is for a world where Australia's biodiversity is valued and effectively conserved by an engaged community.

The delivery of AWC's mission is highly reliant on all AWC working collaboratively with each other as a cohesive, engaged, collaborative, high performing group guided by strong, effective leaders.

AWC values:

AWC's work is guided by the following values. At AWC, we are:

- Accountable – taking ownership of our actions and outcomes
- Informed – working together to acquire and apply evidence, knowledge and experience
- Respectful – demonstrating care, recognition and integrity
- 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.

OneAWC 'a cohesive, engaged, collaborative, high performing group guided by strong, effective leaders. A group of people who all understand AWC's mission, vision and their role in contributing to the achievement of mission and vision, all connected and working towards a common purpose, guided by a set of shared values'. The delivery of AWC's mission is highly reliant on all AWC working collaboratively with each other.

AWC's conservation program in Central South Australia

In Central Australia, AWC manages Newhaven Wildlife Sanctuary and the adjacent Ngalurrjtju Aboriginal Land Trust, the latter in partnership with Traditional Owners. Newhaven is a 262,000 ha pastoral lease north-west of Alice Springs which has been managed for conservation since 2001, initially by Birds Australia, and since 2006 by AWC. A feature of AWC's work in central Australia is the implementation of our conservation model alongside strong engagement with Traditional Owners and Indigenous Rangers. On Newhaven, AWC implements fire, feral animal and weed management, underpinned by a substantial conservation science program. A large (9,450 ha) fenced feral predator-free area has been established on the property. Seven species of locally-extinct mammals have been reintroduced to Newhaven to date, with additional species planned for coming years.

In South Australia, AWC manages Kalamurina, Buckaringa, Dakalanta and Yookamurra Wildlife Sanctuaries, and partners with local landholders and conservation groups to protect threatened species on Western River Refuge, Kangaroo Island. The Yookamurra and Kangaroo Island properties support feral predator free 'safe haven'/ reintroduction projects.

AWC's science program

The primary purpose of AWC's science program is to obtain, analyse and disseminate information that facilitates the delivery of effective conservation. Key tasks performed by AWC's science team are:

- Monitoring and evaluating the ecological health of AWC properties;
- Conducting research on issues relevant to the conservation of wildlife;
- Planning, implementing and monitoring reintroductions, and
- Contributing to the development of conservation and land management strategies.

In addition, members of AWC's science team:

- Work in an integrated way with AWC Operations staff to plan and implement conservation strategies;
- Work effectively with stakeholders including government, Indigenous partners, the local community, the conservation science sector and AWC supporters in implementing/ promoting AWC's program; and
- Assist with AWC's communication and fundraising activities.

Key duties of position

The Field Ecologist role in AWC primarily involves ecological field work and associated tasks (survey logistics, data management), under the direction of a Wildlife Ecologist or other more senior role. The position requires well-developed skills in wildlife survey, animal handling and the conduct of applied ecological research; a capacity to work as part of a team in a remote location; the motivation to work in the private nature conservation sector; and a willingness to help develop and promote AWC's conservation model.

The position generally works as directed, but requires considerable capacity for problem-solving in implementing programs in the field. Responsibilities include:

- preparation for field work – including meeting with manager and team to understand project design and requirements
- as delegated, responsibility for organising field work logistics (gear, food, volunteers, etc)
- conducting field work – this may involve running a small team of other AWC staff, Interns, volunteers, etc, potentially operating independently of direct oversight for days or weeks at a time
- data management (data entry, basic analysis)
- drafting reports
- contributing to design of regional and sanctuary science programs
- providing advice in area of expertise
- providing material (information, images) to AWC communications and development teams
- assisting with supporter events
- procurement at the level of delegation.

Location

The position will be based at Newhaven. The position will also be expected to work across AWC sanctuaries and partnership sites, primarily in Central South Australia, as directed by the Regional Ecologist. The position involves a mix of field work, including in remote locations, and office work.

Key relationships:

- The position reports to the Regional Ecologist Central South, and ultimately to AWC's Chief Science Officer.
- Day-to-day supervision for the position will be provided by the Wildlife Ecologist (Newhaven), or as directed by the Regional Ecologist Central South.
- The position is part of AWC's science team. The position will be required to work collaboratively with other AWC ecologists in the region and elsewhere across Australia.
- 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 ecological health.
- As delegated, the position may have day-to-day responsibility for supervising Interns, AWC volunteers and contractors in the field.
- In AWC, all staff help our Development and Communications team present our conservation model to the public, given that we rely primarily on philanthropic support.

Critical Competencies:

1. **Getting things done:** you need good planning and organisational skills, including an ability to prioritise and execute a tasks in an efficient manner.
2. **Working with people:** you need good interpersonal skills, including the ability to develop and maintain relationships with a wide range of stakeholders. You will need to be able to get on with other people from diverse backgrounds to enable you to live and work in remote locations, and to manage small teams in remote locations, as required.
3. **Good knowledge of the conservation of Australian wildlife and ecosystems** including:
 - a. the nature and functioning of the Australian biota; and
 - b. major threats to wildlife and their habitats and how these threats can be mitigated
4. **Good ecological survey and animal handling skills** including:
 - a. knowledge of ecological survey, monitoring and research methods;
 - b. well-developed skills in animal trapping, identification and handling, and ideally other wildlife survey skills; and
 - c. capacity to conduct other biological surveys (eg, vegetation surveys).
5. **Competence in analysis of ecological data** and the use of computer software at a level commensurate with the position.
6. **Good communication skills** including the capacity to draft scientific reports and to communicate science and conservation messages to a general audience.
7. **Resourcefulness:** the ability to improvise and 'problem-solve', developing practical solutions with limited resources.
8. **Living in the bush:** Previous experience of working and living in a rural area and the ability to work in an isolated small team environment.
9. **Willingness to travel** as required for the position.

Qualifications:

An Honours degree in ecology, conservation or a related field (or a relevant degree and equivalent experience).

Licenses & Certificates:

- A valid manual driver's license with 4WD experience in remote conditions.
- First aid certificate.
- Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check (NCCHC).

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 alone. 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 supervising projects. The successful applicant must be physically capable of performing these activities in the locations required in order 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.
2. Ecohealth monitoring and evaluation
• Implement a program of ecological surveys which give effect to ecological health monitoring plans for AWC sanctuaries in central-south Australia, consistent with AWC's national framework:

○ Conduct wildlife surveys utilising a range of techniques and methods: live-traps; observational surveys; camera traps; acoustic monitors; telemetry; other technologies as developed. ○ Ensure survey work is conducted in accordance with AWC policies relevant permits ○ As required, contribute to the collection of biological data, samples and specimens ○ Ensure all relevant data are recorded, managed and stored securely. ● Help analyse and interpret data ● Prepare survey reports, ecological health reports and scorecards
3. Reintroductions
● Assist in planning, implementing and monitoring the reintroduction of locally extinct mammals to AWC sanctuaries and partnership sites, including: ○ Sourcing animals for reintroduction ○ Conducting the translocation and release of animals ○ Undertaking post-release monitoring and research.
4. Research
● Assist in implementing research projects on AWC sanctuaries and partnership sites in central-south Australia, consistent with AWC's policies and relevant permits. ● Assist external researchers and students undertaking collaborative research on AWC sanctuaries ● Assist in the administration of all research projects including obtaining approvals, storage and management of data, reporting and publications.
5. Conservation and land management
● Contribute to the development of annual work plans to implement conservation and land management activities on AWC's central-south sanctuaries and partnership sites ● Assist in the reporting of the outcomes of management activities. ● Assist in the implementation of conservation and land management projects
6. Leadership
● Manage a small team of ecologists (Interns, volunteers) and other personnel in the field ● Mentor junior staff, interns and students and encourage their professional development. ● Promote AWC's values across the organisation
7. Engagement with Indigenous partners, the community and stakeholders
● Help develop and maintain productive working relationships with key stakeholders including Traditional Owners and Indigenous Ranger Groups, neighbouring landholders, government agencies, other conservation groups and NGO's in the region ● Assist with relevant training opportunities for Indigenous Rangers and Traditional Owners, and attend knowledge-sharing trips and meetings, as required ● Represent AWC's interests in interactions with partners and stakeholders
8. Planning and budgeting
● Assist in the preparation of plans and budgets for science activities in the central-south ● Assist in implementing science activities, ensuring activities are implemented in accordance with requirements of AWC policies and permits. ● Contribute to quarterly and annual reporting
9. Financial management and reporting

- Deliver activities in a cost-effective manner and in accordance with AWC policies and procedures.
- Ensure that all operational expenditure is in accordance with the approved budget; or for expenditure not identified in the budget, a relevant approval in accordance with AWC financial procedures.
- Ensure all required records and paperwork are retained and, as necessary, submitted to the AWC finance department.

10. Communications and Development

- Contribute to the recording and submission of information relating to wildlife, ecosystems and AWC's science program activities in the central-south.
- Help compile and submit information and images for use in AWC communications
- Represent AWC at various scientific and public events in accordance with AWC policies and requirements
- Assist in the implementation of development (fundraising) programs and events.
- Assist in drafting of applications for funding, and help prepare reports.

11. Management of risks, health and safety

- 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 National Operations Manager, 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 staff members have up-to-date first aid certificates.
 - Ensure incident and near miss reports are filled out and submitted as per approved AWC policies and procedures, in a timely manner.

12. Other tasks

- Contribute to the management of assets used by the science team.
- As relevant, assist in obtaining, managing and reporting permits required by government authorities
- Conduct other tasks as required to ensure the effective conservation of AWC sanctuaries and partnership sites
- Comply with all AWC policies and procedures.
- Champion AWC values and ONEAWC initiative.