

Position Description

Designation:	Field Ecologist South-east
Reporting to:	Regional Ecologist South-east Day-to-day supervision provided by Senior Wildlife Ecologist South-east
Supervising:	As delegated, interns and volunteers
Based at:	NSW as agreed

Organisational context:

Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC) conserves native species and their habitats on a national network of wildlife sanctuaries and partnership sites. AWC's mission is delivered in the field by Operations and Science teams, with support from staff working in Development, Communications, Finance, People and Legal. AWC currently implements conservation management on 30 sites extending over 6.8 M ha, and aims to influence conservation outcomes on another 6.1 M ha of pastoral partnership. AWC has offices in Perth, Melbourne, Sydney, Cairns, Broome, Alice Springs, Buronga and Narrabri.

AWC's science program

AWC currently employs over 70 professional ecologists to deliver its conservation science program. 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. Key tasks performed by AWC's science team are to:

- Monitor and evaluate the ecological health of AWC properties – AWC is a leader in reporting conservation outcomes on our national 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 run 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 communicate advice on conservation issues to AWC's Executive and Board, and to the public.

AWC's science program in South-east Australia

Currently, AWC manages four conservation projects in south-east Australia:

- Scotia Wildlife Sanctuary, in semi-arid south-west NSW, which supports one of Australia's largest and longest running fenced feral predator-free 'safe haven' reintroduction programs.
- Waulinbakh Wildlife Sanctuary, north of Newcastle in NSW, which conserves species and ecosystems of the mesic eucalypt forests of the north coast.
- Mallee Cliffs National Park in south-west NSW, and part of the Pilliga forest in northern NSW, which AWC manages under contract to/ in partnership with the NSW Government. At each site, AWC has

been contracted to reintroduce regionally-extinct mammals and deliver applied ecological, conservation and land management programs.

- In addition, AWC has recently partnered with the owners of Wandiyali~Environa Wildlife Sanctuary (Wandiyali), south of Canberra, to develop a reintroduction strategy and conservation plans for a fenced feral predator-free 'safe haven' on the property, which protects grassy box woodland ecosystems.

AWC is actively progressing other acquisitions and partnership opportunities in NSW and Victoria.

The role

The Field Ecologist will play a key role in the implementation of AWC's science program at one or more AWC properties and partnership sites in the region. The role has a substantial field work component, including effectively and safely leading teams in the field and ensuring a high degree of scientific rigour is applied to data collection. Data collation, analysis and associated reporting is also a key component of the role.

The position is based at a location in NSW to be agreed, with substantial time in the field at AWC properties and other sites.

Key duties

Reporting to the Regional Ecologist South-east (day-to-day supervision provided by the Senior Wildlife Ecologist South-east), key duties of the Field Ecologist include:

- As part of a team, contribute to the delivery of the science program at AWC properties in the region. Major tasks in the science program include ecological monitoring, the reintroduction of locally-extinct species, and ecological research.
- Contribute to data management and reporting of AWC's science program in the region, ensuring a high level of scientific integrity.
- Work in an integrated way with AWC operations staff to implement conservation and land management strategies.
- Work effectively with key stakeholders, including AWC partners, government agencies, recovery teams, the conservation science sector, Indigenous groups and local communities to implement AWC's conservation program in the region.
- Contribute to the communication of AWC's science program to the scientific community and to the public as required.
- Assist with AWC's fundraising activities as required.

Key relationships:

- The Field Ecologist is supervised on a day-to-day basis by the Senior Wildlife Ecologist South-east. The position reports to the Regional Ecologist South-east, and ultimately to AWC's Chief Science Officer.
- The Field Ecologist works as part of a team with other AWC ecologists, Interns and volunteers in the region.
- 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:

- **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.

Critical Competencies:

1. **Knowledge of the conservation of Australian wildlife and ecosystems** including the nature and functioning of the Australian biota; and major threats to native wildlife and their habitats and how these threats can be mitigated.
2. **Ecological field and research skills** including knowledge of experimental design and sampling methods; skills in vertebrate ecology, and sound skills in field ecology generally (including animal trapping, identification and handling; camera trapping; and the capacity to conduct other biological surveys – eg, vegetation surveys); skills in collation of ecological data and the use of computer software packages relevant to the position.
3. **Commitment to conservation:** you must have a strong drive to make a positive difference to the conservation of Australian wildlife.
4. **Getting things done:** you need good planning and organisational skills, including a demonstrated ability to prioritise and execute many tasks in an efficient manner.
5. **Leadership:** you need good leadership and team-building skills, including the ability to coordinate a small team of ecologists working in remote areas.
6. **Good interpersonal skills** are essential, including the ability to work harmoniously and productively as part of a small team.
7. **Collaboration:** you need good relationship-building skills, including the ability to develop and maintain relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders, including the broader scientific community, conservation and land management organisations, and Indigenous groups.
8. **Good communication skills** including a capacity to draft scientific reports and publications, contribute to funding applications and reports, and communicate science and conservation messages to a general audience.
9. **Competence in financial management, paperwork and compliance** including the ability to deliver projects in a cost-effective manner.
10. **Resourcefulness:** the ability to improvise and 'problem-solve', developing practical solutions with limited resources.
11. **Willingness to travel** as required to conduct the requirements of the position.

Qualifications:

1. A higher degree (Honours or equivalent) in ecology/conservation biology (or similar) is essential.

Licenses & Certificates:

1. Valid manual Australian driver's licence. You will need to be able to drive a manual 4WD vehicle in difficult conditions. Training in relevant competencies may be required.

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 includes being 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 office work, planning and supervising projects. The successful applicant must be physically and mentally 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. Leadership
• Promote AWC's mission and values amongst AWC staff, partners and stakeholders • Lead small teams of people in the field as required.
3. Ecological health
• Under the direction of the Senior Wildlife Ecologist South-east, implement a program of ecological surveys to give effect to the ecological health monitoring plan: ○ conduct fauna surveys using a range of techniques and methods: e.g., standard observational surveys; live-trapping; camera trapping; telemetry ○ manage the collection of biological samples, herbaria and vegetation data ○ ensure survey work is conducted and data are recorded, managed and stored securely in accordance with AWC policies and relevant permits. • Help draft annual ecological health reports and other reports (e.g., survey reports) as required. • Help ensure all permits and approvals are in place and help manage regulatory reporting
4. Research
• Under the direction of the Senior Wildlife Ecologist South-east, implement approved research projects in accordance with AWC policies and relevant permits. • Assist external research partners undertaking collaborative research, in accordance with Research Strategies and AWC policies. • Contribute to the administration of research projects including the storage and management of data, drafting of project reports and publications.
5. Reintroductions
• Under the direction of the Senior Wildlife Ecologist South-east, implement Translocation Proposals,

including ○ Sourcing animals for reintroduction ○ Conducting the translocation and release of animals ○ Undertaking post-release monitoring and research ○ Contributing to planning for the release of locally extinct mammals outside feral-free areas. • Contribute to obtaining approvals and managing regulatory reporting • Work effectively with NSW government agencies, Recovery Teams and other stakeholders involved in reintroductions.
6. Conservation and land management
• Contribute to the development of strategies for fire management, feral animal control, weed control and other land management activities for AWC properties in the region, in collaboration with AWC's Operations team. • Contribute to the review of annual work plans developed to implement these strategies. • Report on the outcomes of management activities.
7. Risk management
• 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 site. The risk assessments and management plans must protect the health and safety of everyone on site 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 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.
8. Project and financial management and reporting
• Contribute to the preparation of workplans and budgets for AWC's properties in the region. • 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 the AWC finance department.
9. Communication and development
• Represent AWC at scientific and public events in accordance with AWC policies and requirements. • Assist in the planning, co-ordination and implementation of development (fundraising) programs. • Assist in drafting, submission and management of applications for funding, and prepare reports.
10. Volunteer/ Intern programs
• Contribute to the management of volunteers in the science program at AWC properties in the region, ensuring integration with AWC's national volunteer program • In particular, ensure AWC staff: ○ Select appropriate people as volunteers. ○ Provide volunteers with information and agreements before travelling to AWC

Sanctuaries/Project Sites (e.g., related to conditions and tasks they will be asked to perform etc.). ○ Induct and manage volunteers appropriately. • Contribute to the Intern program, including the selection of interns, their engagement and training, and the evaluation and reporting of intern development.
11. Other tasks
• Contribute to the management of assets used by AWC's science team in the region. • Conduct other tasks, as required, to ensure the effective conservation of AWC properties. • Comply with all AWC policies and procedures.