

Role Description

Designation:	Regional Ecologist – North East [RE-NE]
Reporting to:	National Conservation Science Manager [NCSM]
Supervising:	AWC Science team – North East
Based at:	Cairns

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 each AWC property and partnership site.

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.

AWC's science program in North East:

In the North East, AWC currently manages Brooklyn, Mount Zero - Taravale, Curramore, and Bowra wildlife sanctuaries and we partner with the Queensland Department of Environment and Science and landowners Ed and Gabrielle Underwood to manage Richard Underwood Nature Refuge and The Tony & Lisette Lewis Foundation - WildlifeLink to manage The Plains wildlife sanctuary. AWC's work in the region may expand over time. These properties extend over a total area of nearly 300,000 ha. Mt Zero - Taravale wildlife sanctuary supports a nationally-significant reintroduction/ conservation project within a feral predator-free fenced area.

The role:

The Regional Ecologist is a senior position in AWC's science program. Reporting to the National Conservation Manager (NCSM), the Regional Ecologist has primary responsibility for the development, implementation and communication of AWC's science program on AWC properties and partnerships in the North East. The position has responsibility for managing AWC ecologists working in their region. The position requires a high level of expertise in managing a conservation science program, as well as excellent leadership, people management, project management and communication skills. The Regional Ecologist will be expected to contribute to the development of AWC's science program and to progress elements of AWC's science program within their professional expertise.

In delivering their role, the Regional Ecologist will be required to collaborate closely with AWC's National Science Team to develop and implement Ecohealth Monitoring Plans, Population and Conservation Management Plans, Conservation Land Management Strategies, Reintroduction Plans and Translocation Proposals, for properties within their remit. The Regional Ecologist will be required to develop good working professional relationships with their counterparts in AWC's Operations Team, who deliver conservation land management on AWC properties. The position will engage with external stakeholders at the state and regional levels, and represent AWC in conferences, workshops, and other professional and public events.

The Regional Ecologist must be strongly motivated to make a substantial difference in nature conservation, contribute to the development of the private nature conservation sector, and be willing to help develop and promote AWC's conservation model.

Key duties of the position:

- Oversee the development, implementation and reporting of AWC's science program on AWC wildlife sanctuaries and partnerships in the North East, the major components of which are:
 - conducting inventories of new AWC properties and partnerships,
 - monitoring and evaluating the ecological health of AWC properties and partnerships,
 - conducting research addressing major knowledge gaps in conservation,
 - overseeing the conduct of reintroduction programs, as relevant, and
 - working with Operations managers to develop, implement and report on conservation land management strategies that address key threats to wildlife (changed fire regimes, pest animals, weeds) on AWC properties and partnership sites
- Engage with the NCSM in relation to the strategic priorities of AWC's science program, and ensure delivery of these strategies and priorities within the North East. In particular:
 - Develop and implement Ecohealth Monitoring Plans, Population and Conservation Management Plans, and – as relevant - Reintroduction Plans and Translocation Proposals – for properties in the North East, giving effect to AWC's national frameworks, working in collaboration with the National Science Team
 - Develop and implement property-level Conservation Land Management Strategies, working closely with AWC's Operations team, to give effect to AWC national threat management strategies
- Progress elements of AWC's science program within your professional expertise.
- Contribute to assessments of the conservation values of potential new projects, working closely with AWC's National Science Team, as requested by the NCSM

- Promote AWC’s leadership framework, culture, strategies and policies in the team. Provide leadership, intellectual support and mentoring to staff in your team. Manage the regional ecology team:
 - oversee and coordinate the scoping, budgeting and delivery of key tasks performed by your team, and the management of work duties and workloads.
 - manage staff recruitment and development;
 - identify personnel issues, conflicts and breaches of policy, and as delegated by the NCSM, manage such issues, conflicts and breaches of policy.
- Develop and maintain productive working relationships with:
 - Other members of the science team
 - Relevant staff in AWC Operations team, in particular the Regional Operations Manager
- Provide information and advice related to AWC’s science program to AWC staff and external stakeholders
- Contribute to AWC communications products, as delegated by the NCSM.
- Represent AWC in conferences, workshops, conservation working groups, and other professional and public events.
- Engage with stakeholders at state and regional levels.
- Assist with AWC’s fundraising activities.

AWC manages properties across Australia, with offices in Perth, Melbourne, Sydney, Cairns, Broome, Alice Springs, Buronga and Narrabri. Many AWC wildlife sanctuaries are in remote locations. The Regional Ecologist will be based in Cairns, with regular visits to AWC properties, partnership sites and other locations in the North East as required. The job primarily involves office work, with a balance of field work.

Key relationships:

- The position reports to the NCSM, and ultimately to AWC’s Chief Science Officer. Reporting lines may change over time.
- The Regional Ecologist manages a team of ecologists working in the North East.
- The Regional Ecologist will be expected to build professional working relationships with AWC’s Operations staff, particularly the Regional Operations Manager, Senior Operations managers, Sanctuary Managers, and managers of partnership properties. Within AWC, the Operations and Science teams work in an integrated manner to design and deliver effective land management and to measure and report ecological health.
- The Regional Ecologist will be expected to develop good working relationships with AWC’s other senior ecologists, including other Regional Ecologists and the National Science Team Manager, as well as with AWC’s Executive and head office staff.
- The Regional Ecologist will play an important role in developing and maintaining relationships with AWC’s partner organisations in the North East, including pastoral partners, government agencies, stakeholders in the conservation, academic and local communities, and Indigenous groups.
- The position will assist AWC’s Philanthropy team conduct supporter events, and provide information and content to AWC’s Communications team to assist AWC’s public education efforts.

Critical Competencies:

1. **A demonstrated commitment to wildlife conservation**, evidenced through work, education and other relevant activities.
2. **Advanced knowledge of the conservation of Australian wildlife and ecosystems** including the nature and functioning of the Australian biota, major threats to wildlife and their habitats and how these threats can be mitigated. Ideally, you will have experience working with land managers to design conservation management programs.
3. **Excellent ecological field and research skills** including advanced knowledge of the ecological literature; advanced knowledge of experimental design and sampling methods; substantial experience in applied

vertebrate ecology and field ecology; advanced skills in statistical analysis of ecological data and the use of computer software packages relevant to the position.

4. **Leadership:** you need strong leadership and team-building skills, including the ability to promote AWC mission, strategies and policies amongst AWC staff. You need to be competent in managing staff to ensure your team delivers key tasks and maintains AWC culture.
5. **Collaboration:** you need good relationship-building and collaborative skills to perform your role as part of a team of conservation ecologists. You must be willing to contribute your expertise, and learn from the skills and ideas of your colleagues. You must be willing to engage with the experience and world-view of a diverse range of stakeholders involved in conservation management including AWC Operations managers and other staff, AWC partners, Traditional Owners and the broader community.
6. **Getting things done:** you need strong planning and organisational skills, including a demonstrated ability to prioritise and execute many tasks in an efficient manner.
7. **Scientific communication skills:** you will have a well-developed capacity to write and review scientific reports and publications, compose funding applications and reports, and communicate science and conservation messages to a general audience.
8. **Financial management, paperwork and compliance:** you will have the ability to deliver projects in a cost-effective manner and to manage financial resources, and to ensure contracted obligations are met, commensurate with the requirements of the position.
9. **Resourcefulness:** you will have the ability to improvise and 'problem-solve', developing practical solutions with limited resources.
10. **Travel and time in the field:** you must be willing to travel away from base and conduct field work to meet the requirements of the position.

AWC values

AWC's work is guided by the following values. In pursuing our mission, 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.

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

Qualifications:

A PhD in ecology, conservation science, or a related discipline.

Experience:

Extensive experience in applied ecology, conservation or related work following the completion of a PhD is essential.

Licenses & Certificates:

A valid manual driver's license is essential. You will need to be competent in driving a 4WD in field conditions. Training in relevant competencies may be required.

Inherent requirements of the role:

The execution of tasks associated with this role will primarily be in an office environment, however it may involve travel to remote sites, including away from an established field base, where you may spend time camping in very remote locations in order to support the delivery of AWC activities. AWC sanctuaries are spread across Australia,

with working environments often in the extremes of weather. The position may require occasional physically demanding work including lifting and carrying, pushing and pulling loads, bending, climbing, and driving a variety of vehicles. The successful applicant must be physically capable of performing these activities in order to carry out the inherent role responsibilities.

Responsibilities:

1. Science practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively protect the integrity of AWC’s science program, by adopting, promoting and helping maintain high standards of scientific practice.
2. Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the development of AWC’s science program and policies Assist the NCSM in providing advice and reporting to the CSO on the science program Promote AWC’s leadership framework, culture, strategies and policies in the team. Provide leadership, intellectual support and mentoring for AWC ecologists reporting to you, and junior staff more broadly, and encourage their professional development.
3. Science Program
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with the NCSM in relation to the strategies and priorities of AWC’s science program, and ensure delivery of these strategies and priorities in the North East Ensure the science components of AWC projects are on-track against workplans and contracted deliverables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the NCSM informed of progress of the science program Seek approval from the NCSM for material variations from approved workplans and contractual requirements Oversee planning, delivery and reporting of the science program by AWC ecologists and, as relevant, contractors at AWC sites Manage staffing and resourcing required for delivery of the science program, ensuring effective planning and prioritisation of workplans and activities Liaise with project partners at the relevant project manager level, ensuring effective integration of AWC’s planning and reporting processes with those of partner organisations Ensure activities are implemented in accordance with requirements of the policies and protocols of AWC and partner organisations Progress elements of AWC’s science program within your professional expertise.
4. Management of personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee the recruitment and supervision of AWC staff, volunteers and contractors in the North East Engage with the NCSM to ensure staffing within the North East is relevant to the work Manage the team of ecologists working within the North East, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> oversee the scoping and delivery of key tasks performed by your team, and the management of work duties and workloads Manage the allocation of staff resources to projects in the North East to meet operational requirements. Hold regular team meetings and one-on-one meetings with direct reports Identify and manage personnel issues, conflicts and breaches of policy related to your staff in the North East, in consultation with the NCSM and AWC’s People team
5. Stakeholder

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain productive working relationships with stakeholders in AWC’s conservation projects, including pastoral partners, government agencies, landowners, recovery teams, conservation organisations, community groups, and Indigenous interests • Represent AWC’s interests in interactions with stakeholders
6. Ecological health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee the development and review of Ecohealth Plans for AWC properties and partnership sites • Oversee implementation of a program of ecological surveys which give effect to the Ecohealth Plans • Oversee the recording and submission of data (information, images, etc.) from the science program consistent with requirements of AWC’s and partners’ data management systems • Oversee the preparation of Annual Reports and Scorecards on ecological health.
7. Research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee the development, implementation and reporting of Research Projects for AWC’s sites in the region, giving effect to AWC’s National Research Strategy, addressing key knowledge gaps related to the ecology and management of threatened species, the impact of threatening processes, and other matters relevant to AWC’s mission and contracts with project partners. • Develop and manage collaborations with external researchers and organisations conducting work on AWC sites. • Oversee the provision of supervisory support to students conducting research, as relevant • Oversee the administration of AWC and external research projects, consistent with AWC’s policies • Ensure all approvals are in place and manage regulatory reporting • Oversee the publication of research conducted in the region in accordance with AWC policy and protocols
8. Conservation and land management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the development of conservation and land management strategies on AWC properties • Oversee the contribution of AWC’s science team to the development of conservation and land management strategies on AWC properties in the North East. Ensure the science team works in an integrated way with AWC’s operations team, and with partner organisations as relevant. • Review annual work plans developed to implement these strategies. • Oversee collection of data and reporting by the science team on the outcomes of management activities, through measurement of ecological health on partnership sites. • Oversee the contribution of the science team to the implementation of conservation and land management activities, as relevant.
9. Communications and development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide input to/ review of AWC communications products • Support the NCSM in responding to information requests from the Board and Executive • Compile information from the North East for reporting, via the NCSM, to the CEO and Board • Represent AWC in conferences, workshops, conservation working groups, and other professional and public events. • Engage with AWC supporters on issues related to the science program, including attending/ presenting at online and face-to-face meetings and supporter events • Assist in drafting of applications for funding, and prepare reports for funders.
10. Budget and financial management

- Oversee the development and management of budgets for the North East, to give effect to approved workplans;
- Deliver activities in a cost-effective manner.
- Authorise expenditure as per AWC's procurement policy. Ensure that all expenditure is in accordance with:
 - approved budgets; 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.

11. Health, safety and environment

- In accordance with the requirements of the Chief Operations Officer and the Chief Science Officer, undertake risk assessments and prepare risk management plans. The risk assessments and management plans must protect the health and safety of everyone conducting AWC activities and/or on AWC sanctuaries 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 relevant 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. Volunteer and intern programs

- Oversee management of Interns and volunteers assisting in the science program in the North East, ensuring integration with AWC's national volunteer program.
- In particular, ensure AWC staff:
 - Select appropriate people as volunteers and Interns;
 - Provide volunteers with information and agreements before travelling to sanctuaries (e.g. on living conditions and the tasks they will be asked to perform); and
 - Induct and manage volunteers adequately
- Evaluate and report on the Intern program

13. Undertake other tasks, as required

- Oversee the management of assets used by AWC's science team in the North East
- Oversee the acquisition, management and reporting of permits, annual returns and other required reports to government authorities, to facilitate the conduct of the regional science program.
- Conduct other tasks to ensure effective conservation of wildlife and habitats on AWC properties.
- Comply with all AWC policies and procedures.

