

Role Description

Designation:	Wildlife Ecologist – North-west [WE-NW]
Reporting to:	Regional Ecologist – North-west [RE-NW]
Supervising:	AWC north-west Field Ecologists, interns, volunteers, contractors
Based at:	Derby or Broome WA, as agreed

Organisational context:

Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC) is the largest private (non-profit) owner of land for conservation in Australia, protecting wildlife and their habitats at 30 sanctuaries and partnership areas, covering a total of more than 6.8 million ha across Australia. In addition, AWC is contributing to conservation management of 6.1 million ha of land managed by our pastoral partners. With a focus on practical land management, informed by world-class science, AWC is implementing a dynamic new model for conservation.

AWC's mission - to deliver effective conservation for all native animal species and their habitats - is achieved by:

- **Operations** - delivering effective large-scale land management including fire management, feral animal control, weed control and infrastructure management.
- **Science** - delivering a nationally-coherent program of ecological surveys with a focus on monitoring key conservation assets and threats, conducting applied research relevant to wildlife conservation, implementing conservation programs including reintroductions, and providing advice to management.
- **Fundraising** - mobilising finance (primarily, tax deductible donations) from the general public and philanthropists including through effective communication of AWC conservation programs.

Three of AWC's sanctuaries are in the Kimberley region: Mornington, Marion Downs, and Charnley River – Artesian Range, along with three partnerships, the Dambimangari, Wilinggin, and Yulmbu Aboriginal Corporations. AWC also implements conservation management on Yampi Sound Training Area under contract with the Commonwealth Department of Defence. In total, these sanctuaries and partnerships cover a combined area of over 4.3 million ha and protect numerous threatened habitats and species.

Reporting to the Regional Ecologist – North-west, the Wildlife Ecologist will be part of a team of ecologists responsible for implementing AWC's science program in the Kimberley, WA. Key duties of the position include:

- Designing, conducting and evaluating monitoring surveys.
- Undertaking and collaborating in research addressing major knowledge gaps in conservation, taking advantage of the opportunities presented by AWC's scale and our integration of science and land management.
- Managing a small team of AWC ecologists, interns and volunteers in the field to implement AWC's science program.
- Developing and maintaining a professional and collaborative working relationships with Wilinggin Aboriginal Corporation staff and rangers.
- Working in an integrated way Traditional Owners and Ranger Groups as required to scope, plan and implement AWC's science program on the Wilinggin Partnership Area.
- Working with AWC land managers to deliver effective conservation. As part of AWC's approach to conservation, the science team helps design, implement (as required) and report on strategies for the effective management of fire, feral animals, weeds and other threats

- Communicating AWC's science program to our partners, Traditional Owners, the scientific community and to the public through publications, reports, presentations, participation in workshops, etc.
- Assisting with AWC's communication and fundraising activities.

The successful candidate will have:

- a PhD in ecology and relevant experience
- ideally, a track record in conservation ecology
- leadership, team-building and communication skills
- the capacity to work with a wide range of stakeholders including other scientists, land managers, Indigenous groups, neighbours, government agencies and volunteers
- an ability to get jobs done on time and within budget, and
- capacity to live and work in a remote area.

The position requires expertise in implementing a conservation science program; good personnel management, communication and liaison skills; and a well-developed capacity for project management and reporting. The appointee must be motivated to work in the private nature conservation sector and be willing to help develop and promote AWC's conservation model.

AWC's Kimberley properties are located in remote locations. The Wildlife Ecologist will be based in regional towns of Derby or Broome, as agreed, with work on sites in the Kimberley as required. The job requires extensive field work and a balance of office work.

Key relationships:

- The position reports to the Regional Ecologist North-west, and ultimately AWC's Chief Science Officer.
- The position is part of a team of AWC ecologists in the Kimberley, including Wildlife Ecologists, Senior Field Ecologists and Field Ecologists, as well as Interns, partners Biodiversity Rangers, Rangers and Traditional Owners.
- The position will supervise a small team of AWC ecologists, interns and volunteers, and potentially contractors, in the field.
- The position will be expected to build and maintain professional and collaborative working relationships with Wilinggin Aboriginal Corporation staff and rangers to implement AWC's science program on AWC sanctuaries and partnership sites in the Kimberley.
- The position will be expected to build and maintain professional and collaborative working relationships with North-west Operations staff. Within AWC, the Science and Operations teams work in an integrated manner to design and deliver effective conservation land management and to measure and report ecological health.
- The position will be required to assist AWC's Development team conduct supporter events, and to provide information and content to assist AWC's public education efforts.

Values of AWC:

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:

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

- **Sustainable** – delivering long-term financial and ecological viability

Critical Competencies:

1. **Getting things done:** you need very well-developed planning and organisational skills, including the ability to prioritise and execute a range of tasks in an efficient manner.
2. **Leadership:** you need strong leadership and team-building skills, including the ability to manage and coordinate remote teams of staff, interns, volunteers and potentially contractors, as well as to work effectively with Indigenous partners.
3. **Collaboration:** you need good relationship-building and collaborative skills, including the ability to develop and maintain relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders, including colleagues, Indigenous groups, the broader scientific community, and other conservation and land management organisations.
4. **Ecological understanding:** you will have a well-developed knowledge of the nature and functioning of the Australian biota; and major threats to native wildlife and their habitats and how these threats can be mitigated. You will have experience working with land managers to design and/ or implement strategies for fire, feral and weed management.
5. **Ecological survey:** you will have strong field survey skills, in animal trapping, identification and handling, the use of camera traps, acoustic monitors and telemetry; as well as other fauna and flora survey skills.
6. **Ecological research:** you will have good knowledge of experimental design in ecology and the statistical analysis of ecological data, and experience in the use of computer software packages including analytical, graphing, word processing, spreadsheet/ database and GIS software.
7. **Science communication:** you will have a well-developed capacity to draft 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.
11. **Living in the bush:** You need to have the ability to work in an isolated small team environment. Ideally, you would have previous experience of working and living in a rural area, preferably remote.

Qualifications:

A PhD in ecology or a related discipline (or a postgraduate degree and experience in the conservation sector, along with demonstrated capacity to write reports and scientific papers).

Experience:

Experience in conservation ecology is essential.

Licenses & Certificates:

You will need to be able to drive a manual 4WD vehicle in outback conditions to perform this role.

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 and mentally capable of performing these activities in the locations required 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. Ecohealth monitoring and evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a program of ecological surveys which inform or give effect to ecological health monitoring and evaluation plans for AWC sanctuaries and partnership sites in north-west Australia, consistent with AWC’s national framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 and relevant permits ○ As required, contribute to the collection of biological data, samples and specimens ○ Ensure all relevant data are recorded, managed and stored securely. • Analyse and evaluate data and prepare survey reports, ecological health reports and scorecards. • Contribute to the review of ecological health monitoring plans as required.
3. Research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in the development and implement research projects on AWC sanctuaries and partnership sites in north-west Australia, 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, consistent with AWC’s framework and approval process. • Assist external researchers and students undertaking collaborative research on AWC sanctuaries and partnership sites in north-west Australia. • Assist in the administration of all research projects including approvals, storage and management of data, reporting and publications. • Take a lead role in/ collaborate with other AWC ecologists and external researchers, as relevant, in analysing data and writing up reports and scientific publications on research projects.
4. Conservation and land management

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the design of strategies for fire management, feral animal control, weed control and other land management activities on AWC’s sanctuaries and partnership sites in north-west Australia. • Contribute to the development and review of annual work plans to implement these strategies. • Report on the outcomes of management activities. • Assist in the implementation of conservation and land management projects, as relevant.
5. Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide positive leadership and a positive role model for staff, interns and volunteers. • Promote AWC culture (effective delivery of evidence-based conservation) in the science team and across the organisation and relevant partnerships. • Develop constructive relationships with internal and external stakeholders. • Assist with the professional development of junior staff through mentoring and coaching.
6. Personnel management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage a team of AWC ecologists, interns and volunteers in the field. • Co-ordinate, engage and supervise other staff, interns, volunteers, Rangers, Traditional Owners and contractors. Ensure all relevant AWC policies are complied with in relation to the engagement of staff or contractors, including safety, recruitment, purchasing and other relevant policies. • Contribute to the management of interns and volunteers assisting in the science program at AWC’s north-west sanctuaries and partnership sites, ensuring integration with AWC’s national programs. In particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Help select appropriate people as volunteers and interns; ○ Provide volunteers with information and agreements before travelling to sanctuaries (e.g. on conditions, the tasks they will be asked to perform, etc); ○ Induct and manage interns and volunteers adequately; and ○ Help evaluate and report on the intern program.
7. Planning and budgeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the preparation of operational plans and budgets for science activities in north-west Australia. • Ensure AWC obligations under partnership agreements and contractual arrangements are met. • Implement science activities set out in operational plans (including all deliverables specified by contract/ funding agreements). • Ensure activities are implemented in accordance with requirements of AWC policies and permits. • Contribute to quarterly and annual reporting against the plans and budgets, and provide additional progress reports, as requested. • Seek approval for material variations from the plans.
8. Indigenous, community and stakeholder engagement

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain productive working relationships with stakeholders including Traditional Owners and Ranger Groups, neighbouring landholders, government agencies, other conservation groups, research collaborators and NGOs in the Kimberley. • Represent AWC in interactions with stakeholders.
9. Financial management and reporting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the recording and submission of information relating to wildlife, ecosystems and AWC's science program activities in north-west Australia. • Compile and submit information and images for use in AWC communications products. • Contribute to the preparation and submission of weekly reports. • Represent AWC at various scientific and public events in accordance with AWC policies and requirements.
11. Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in the implementation of development (fundraising) programs and events. • Draft applications for funding, and prepare reports.
12. Management of risks, health and safety
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 Manager, are implemented and complied with • In particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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.
13. Other tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the management of assets used by AWC's North-west team.

- Assist in obtaining, managing and reporting permits required by government authorities.
- Conduct other tasks to ensure the effective conservation of AWC sanctuaries and partnership sites.
- Comply with all AWC policies and procedures.

Appendix – AWC Wildlife Ecologist – key deliverables of role.

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Deliverable	Actions required
Leadership	<p>WE to participate in regular regional science team meetings.</p> <p>WE to hold one-on-one meetings (online, or in person, as feasible) with members of the regional science team who report to their position (e.g., nominated Field Ecologists) on a regular basis, and to be reasonably available for ad-hoc meetings/ phone calls at the request of those staff members, with the WE to provide a timely response and schedule a meeting, depending on urgency/ seriousness of the matter.</p> <p>WE to mentor junior staff in the region.</p> <p>WE to contribute their expertise in conservation science and related fields to advance AWC’s mission, including responding in a timely manner to requests for information and guidance from the Regional Ecologist, Chief Science Officer, and other parts of the organisation as relevant</p>
Stakeholder relationships	<p>WE to meet with/ establish communications with relevant stakeholders involved in properties for which they are responsible, e.g. Ranger Coordinators in relation to Indigenous partnerships</p> <p>WE to represent AWC’s position in professional interactions with stakeholders</p>
Ecohealth	<p>Under the guidance of the RE and AWC’s National Science Team, WE to develop Ecohealth Plans for properties for which they are responsible, and to oversee preparation of annual Ecohealth reports and scorecards for those properties</p>
Research	<p>Under the guidance of the RE, WE to contribute to the development of a research strategy for the properties for which they are responsible, ensuring consistency with the overarching AWC strategy</p> <p>WE to develop specific projects to give effect to the research strategy, in collaboration with stakeholders, other AWC ecologists and external researchers as relevant.</p> <p>WE to implement / facilitate the implementation of approved research projects.</p> <p>WE to publish/ facilitate the publication of research conducted on properties for which they are responsible, consistent with AWC protocols.</p>
Conservation and land management	<p>Under the guidance of the RE, WE to contribute to drafting conservation land management strategies (e.g. weeds, pest animals, fire) for properties for which they are responsible</p> <p>WE to contribute to development of annual conservation land management work plans (eg burn plans) for properties for which they are responsible, and to the reporting of outcomes</p>
Workplans and budgets	<p>Under the guidance of the RE, WE to draft workplans and budgets for properties for which they are responsible</p> <p>WE to contribute to quarterly reporting to the CSO on progress in implementing relevant science workplans and programs</p>