

Wildlife Ecologist (North-east)

Permanent, full-time

Cairns, QLD

Help deliver effective conservation in north-east Australia

Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC) is the largest private (non-profit) owner of land for conservation in Australia, protecting endangered wildlife at 30 sanctuaries in which we own or manage in partnership, covering a total of more than 6.5 million hectares in iconic regions such as the Kimberley, Cape York, the Top End and Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre. 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.

In north-east Australia, AWC manages seven wildlife sanctuaries in Queensland and the Northern Territory:

- Bowra, in south-west Qld,
- Curramore, in south-east Qld,
- Mount Zero-Taravale, in north-east Qld,
- Brooklyn, in north-east Qld,
- Piccaninny Plains, on Cape York Peninsula,
- Pungalina-Seven Emu, in the Gulf of Carpentaria, NT, and
- Wongalara, in the top end of the NT.

In addition, AWC implements conservation management on Bullo River Station, NT, under agreement with the pastoral lessee, and currently implements a conservation science program in Wet Tropics national parks, Qld.

Key duties:

Reporting to the Regional Ecologist – North-east, the Wildlife Ecologist will be part of a team of ecologists responsible for implementing AWC's science program in Queensland and the savannas of the Northern Territory. Key duties of the position include:

- Designing and conducting inventory and monitoring surveys.
- Undertaking, or 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.

- 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
- Working with Traditional Owners and Ranger Groups as required to scope, plan and implement surveys
- 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 and, ideally, quantitative skills
- 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 work in remote areas.

The position has become available due to an internal transfer. The successful candidate will be based at AWC's Cairns office, north Queensland. The role requires frequent travel to AWC properties, with extended periods in the field and a balance of office work.

AWC is a leading employer of conservation ecologists. Our mission is the effective conservation of Australia's wildlife and their habitats. In our work, we are guided by a suite of values including being accountable, informed, respectful, dedicated, innovative and sustainable.

Enquiries:

Dr Alexander Watson, Regional Ecologist – North east | Alexander.Watson@australianwildlife.org

Applications via: australianwildlife.org/work-with-awc/careers/

To submit an application, visit our careers page (linked above), select the relevant job vacancy, click 'APPLY' and follow the prompts.

Your application must include CV and covering letter, briefly addressing the critical competencies listed in the detailed job description on our website or the attachment.

Closing date for applications: Friday 14 May 2021

Please note:

1. Applicants must be an Australian citizen/permanent resident or have a suitable visa in place that allows ongoing full-time work in Australia, in order to apply for this position. Sponsorship is not available.
2. If you apply for this role, AWC will include you in its ongoing updates and communications about its events, activities and fundraising initiatives. You may opt out of these communications at any time.
3. Any application submitted to AWC will be handled in accordance with our Privacy Policy, available at www.australianwildlife.org/privacy. By providing us with your contact details, your consent to receive communications and direct educational material will remain current until you advise us otherwise

To learn more about AWC's sanctuaries, please visit our website: australianwildlife.org/sanctuaries/

Role Description

Designation:	Wildlife Ecologist – North-east [WE-NE]
Reporting to:	Regional Ecologist – North-east [RE-NE]
Supervising:	As delegated, AWC ecologists, interns, volunteers, contractors
Based at:	Cairns, North Queensland

Organisational context:

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In addition, AWC implements conservation management on Bullo River Station, NT, under agreement with the pastoral lessee, and implements a conservation science program in Wet Tropics national parks, Qld.

The Wildlife Ecologist will work as a part of a team of ecologists responsible for implementing AWC's science program in Queensland and the savannas of the Northern Territory. Responsibilities may change over time, as delegated by the Regional Ecologist North-east.

Key duties of the position include:

- Scoping, implementing and reporting on AWC's science programs in the North-west, including:
 - Monitoring ecological health
 - Undertaking, or 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 team of AWC ecologists, interns, and volunteers in the field
- 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
- Working with Traditional Owners and Ranger Groups as required to scope, plan and implement surveys
- 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 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.

Many of AWC’s properties are located in remote locations. The Wildlife Ecologist will be based at AWC’s Cairns office, with substantial periods of field work on AWC properties.

Key relationships:

- The position reports to the Regional Ecologist-North-east, and ultimately to AWC’s Chief Science Officer.
- The position is part of a team of AWC ecologists in the North-east.
- As delegated by the Regional Ecologist North-east, the position will supervise AWC ecologists, interns, volunteers, and potentially contractors, in the field.
- 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 SFE-NE will be expected to work closely with AWC sanctuary managers in the north-east and to develop good working relationships with AWC operations staff generally.
- The SFE-NE will work with AWC’s Development and Communications teams to facilitate supporter events and conduct public education.

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:** robust planning and organisational skills, including the ability to prioritise and execute a range of tasks in an efficient manner.
2. **Leadership:** 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:** good relationship-building and collaborative skills, including the ability to develop and maintain relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders, including colleagues, land managers, Indigenous groups, the broader scientific community, and other conservation and land management organisations.
4. **Ecological understanding:** 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.
5. **Ecological survey:** strong field survey skills and experience 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:** 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:** 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:** 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:** 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.

In exceptional circumstances, consideration will be given to a candidate with a postgraduate degree, substantial experience in conservation ecology, and demonstrated capacity to write reports and scientific papers.

Licenses & Certificates:

Essential: valid manual driver's licence.

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. Monitoring ecological health
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement a program of ecological surveys which inform or give effect to ecological health monitoring plans for AWC sanctuaries and partnership sites in north-east 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 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">• As delegated by the Regional Ecologist North-east, implement research projects on AWC sanctuaries and partnership sites in north-east 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-east 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. Reintroductions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assist the Regional Ecologist - North east in planning, implementing and monitoring the reintroduction of locally extinct mammals to AWC sanctuaries as relevant, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Sourcing animals for reintroduction○ Conducting the translocation and release of animals○ Undertaking post-release monitoring and research○ Developing strategies for the release of mammals outside feral-free areas.• Assist the Regional Ecologist - North east in obtaining all approvals and help manage regulatory reporting• Work effectively with other AWC staff, government agencies, Recovery Teams and other stakeholders involved in reintroductions
5. 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-east 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.
<p>6. Leadership</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote AWC values in the science team in the north-east and in your dealings across the organization and with stakeholders • Develop constructive relationships with the AWC operations team in the north-east, seeking to develop and maintain a ‘One-AWC’ approach, resolving constructively any issues that may arise • Be a positive role model for staff, interns and volunteers, and assist with the professional development of junior staff through mentoring and coaching.
<p>7. Personnel management</p>
<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, Indigenous Rangers and 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-east 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.
<p>8. Planning and budgeting</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the preparation of plans and budgets for science activities in AWC sanctuaries and partnership sites in north-east Australia • Ensure AWC obligations under any partnership agreements and contractual arrangements are met • Implement science activities set out in approved plans (including all deliverables specified by contract/ funding agreements) • Seek approval for material variations from the plans • Deliver activities in a cost-effective manner and in accordance with AWC policies and procedures. • Contribute to quarterly and annual reporting against the plans and budgets, and provide additional progress reports, as requested.
<p>9. Indigenous, community and stakeholder engagement</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain productive working relationships with partner organisations and other stakeholders, including Indigenous groups, neighbouring landholders, government agencies, conservation groups and recovery teams

- Work with Indigenous groups, as relevant, in conducting science activities. Act with respect towards Indigenous people and their culture.
- Represent AWC's interests in interactions with stakeholders.

10. Communications and development

- Contribute to the recording and submission of information relating to wildlife, ecosystems and AWC's science program activities in north-east 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.
- 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 National Operations Manager 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 North-east science 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.