

Job Description - Assistant Species Recovery Officer - White Tailed Eagle (PB6a)

Job summary

Forestry England manages England's beautiful, diverse and productive publicly owned woods and forests. We are the largest provider of home-grown sustainably produced timber in England, shaping the land we manage and building the future for wildlife, for people and for the climate. As part of our national Growing the Future strategy and Biodiversity Plan we are looking to restore fully-functioning ecosystems.

Forestry England's Biodiversity Plan sets out a bold ambition of nature recovery in the Nation's Forests. Working across five principal focus areas, Forestry England aims to restore resilient biodiversity in the nation's forests, delivering our vision to ensure that these forests provide the most valuable places for wildlife to thrive and expand in England.

Established in 2022, Forestry England's Forest Wilding Programme brings together two of these focus areas as part of a coordinated effort to deliver a step-change in nature recovery. Our species recovery work focuses on the reintroduction of key influential species, with more than 30 projects nationwide to re-establish populations of beaver, wildcat, pine marten, white-tailed eagle, golden eagle and wood ants. Alongside this nationwide effort, we have established Wild Areas on over 14,000ha of the nation's forests, bringing innovative approaches together with a sound evidence base to recover and enhance nature through restoring natural processes.

The White-tailed Eagle project commenced in 2019, and is led in partnership with the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation, looking to re-establish this species on the south coast of England following an absence of 240 years. Our Assistant Species Recovery Officer will use their broad range of skills and ongoing training to directly support the project, working closely with an established team. The work is varied and would suit a person who is self-motivated, well organised and able to demonstrate initiative to undertake tasks in a safe and efficient manner.

The Assistant Species Recovery Officer role will be based in Somerset from our Cockercombe office, working both within Forestry England land and in the wider countryside. The post holder will work across southern England, and their primary task will be monitoring the birds that have already released from the Isle of Wight as well as those that have fledged from nests now established across southern England. The Assistant Species Recovery Officer will be assisting the Project Officer in all areas of their work, from engagement with groups and stakeholders about the project, to potentially being involved in releases in the future (subject to appropriate licencing).

This is a unique opportunity to join our dedicated Land Management Team in the West England Forest District, responsible for the sustainable management of over 36,500ha of the public forest estate in the West and South-West of England. The West District extends from the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the majestic oak and beech woods of Savernake Forest in Wiltshire, and to Idless Woods near Truro in Cornwall. The District is managed from the District Office at Coleford, in the Forest of Dean, supported by local delivery teams in the forest beats and recreation hubs.

Key responsibilities & accountabilities

Key work areas

The post holder may be expected to focus on the following key work areas.

- The post holder will help to deliver the reintroduction process including feeding of the birds and monitoring pre and post release with the South Forest District Project Officer on the south coast of England.
- Support the project with field monitoring of white-tailed eagles, under guidance from the Project Officer.
- They will support the Project Officer with information dissemination via a community events, guided walks and talks.
- Liaise with stakeholders to ensure the success of the project.

And any other tasks, reasonably requested by their line manager.

The post holder will be initially local to our reporting office in Cockercombe but expected to travel across the south of England to support the project.

Skills, knowledge & experience

Essential professional and technical experience

- A good understanding of raptor ecology.
- Experience or knowledge of monitoring birds in the field.
- Ability to work independently and in a team while maintaining good relationships and knowledge exchange with wider teams.
- Competent in IT including core Microsoft Office applications.
- A good understanding of Health & Safety in the workplace.

Desirable professional and technical experience

- Direct experience working in similar species reintroduction projects.
- Experience with stakeholder and community engagement

Behaviours

Seeing the Big Picture

- Focus on the overall goal and intent of what you are trying to achieve, not just the task.
- Ability to communicate the wider context of the project to others.

Making Effective Decisions

- Speak with the relevant people in order to obtain the most accurate information and get advice when unsure of how to proceed.

Communicating and influencing

- Actively listens, allowing others to fully express their opinion.
- Be an effective representative of the team

Working Together

- Build, maintain and improve relationships with different stakeholders at the relevant level to understand differing views and issues.

Qualifications

Essential

- Qualification in ecology or similar discipline and/or experience in conservation and/or land management
- A full driving licence