

Role profile

Job title: Animal Keeper

Reports to: Relevant Team/ Line Manager

Date prepared: May 2022

Purpose

With direction from your Team Leader and Senior Keeper, perform all assigned duties to ensure the smooth running of the allocated animal section/project, aiming to optimise the quality of animal welfare and to deliver or support delivery of an innovative and creative programme of live animal interactive activities to engage and excite visitors in support of RZSS' vision and mission.

Scope

- Working predominantly in one site (RZSS Edinburgh Zoo or RZSS Highland Wildlife Park)
- Where appropriate, will assist in supervising interns

Responsibilities

- Help to ensure animal welfare, husbandry and management is of the highest standard, taking into account relevant legislation and best practice animal management.
- Follows animal working procedures.
- Contribute to enclosure design, maintenance, enrichment and enclosure furnishing to ensure it meets all the needs of the animal and is presentable to the public, e.g. positive visitor engagement and suggest ideas for development to team manager.
- Engage with and support visitors, ensuring your message is consistent with team objectives and in line with RZSS' mission and vision whilst providing first-class customer care and service, e.g. answering visitor queries and undertaking public talks, tours and Keeper for a Day experiences.
- Collate and record detailed and accurate animal records via daily record sheets, directly onto ZIMS or using other relevant recording methods in relation to the good management of the animal collection to ensure accurate data preservation (e.g. weights, behaviours, health, births, deaths, training, enrichment and treatments).
- Proactively ensure your knowledge of RZSS, our conservation work and species within the collection is up to date, e.g. attending team meetings, accessing team brief.
- Support delivery of all aspects of an agreed range of the Animal Engagement and Interaction Programme, e.g. Keeper experience, animal shows and encounters, daily talks and events, and contribute to its further development.
- Work with departments across RZSS, as appropriate to your level of responsibility, to ensure you and the team are informed of any potential impacts to animal welfare or visitor experience, e.g., P&E department regarding maintenance activity
- When required work with colleagues to train the animals to cooperate in their own care and where appropriate to have them display natural behaviours to engage our visitors with our mission and vision.

- Ensure activities deliver best value for money, ensuring the visit is positively memorable, an excellent customer experience for the visitor and therefore contributes to maximising income generation.
- Ensure best practice followed for activities requiring cash handling.
- May drive or work off site, e.g. getting browse from off-site locations and assisting with external animal transfers.
- Work towards successfully achieving competence in the European Professional Zookeepers Qualification Framework (zookeepers.eu/framework/) via qualification or training and experience.
- Ensure compliance with RZSS's policies, procedures and guidelines, together with all relevant regulatory and statutory requirements.
- Engage with the Society's appraisal system, and demonstrate commitment to our values, behaviours and your continuous personal development.
- Perform other reasonable duties and/or projects as directed by your manager.

Knowledge, skills and experience

Knowledge	Essential	Desirable
Good level of education at standard grade or equivalent qualifications (including English, Mathematics and Sciences)	✓	
Degree level qualification in animal/zoology related subject		✓
Willingness to undertake further professional development meeting the requirements of the European Professional Zookeepers Qualification Framework (zookeepers.eu/framework/)	✓	
Full UK driving licence (essential requirement for HWP)		✓
Knowledge and understanding of Zoological legislation and best practice		✓

Skills	Essential	Desirable
A range of animal management skills		✓
Competent in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Outlook)	✓	
First-class customer service, e.g. interpersonal skills and ability to engage with the public	✓	
Confident presentations skills, e.g. about animals, their welfare and care		✓

Experience	Essential	Desirable
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Can demonstrate an interest in animals with some practical experience in a zoo or animal-related environment	✓	
An awareness of current conservation science, zoo biology and animal welfare ethics.		✓
Basic experience of practically managing one or more exotic animal taxonomic groups		✓

Behavioural competencies

Competency	Level	Essential	Desirable
Delivering Services & Experience	Perform your role to the best of your ability with enthusiasm and a positive approach	✓	
Team Working	Be collaborative and seek to find a positive outcome for the team and for RZSS	✓	
Developing Talent	Take responsibility for your performance and career development	✓	
Communicating	Comfortable initiating dialogue with people; communicate with care to ensure your message is understood	✓	
Gathering Information	Gather and analyse information relevant to the tasks in your role	✓	
Thinking Big Picture	Think about RZSS' mission and its implication upon your work	✓	
Delivering Services & Experience	Perform your role to the best of your ability with enthusiasm and a positive approach	✓	

Role dimensions

Planning and Organising

- Planning horizon is daily and works to a set routine with clearly defined priorities and deadlines, e.g. must be highly time conscious to meet deadlines for set visitor activities throughout the day and little scope to change.
- Within the scope of their training and experience, may be able to plan and suggest ideas for animal enrichment, additional maintenance tasks and basic food preparation tasks.

- Works with minimal, indirect supervision.
- Performs routine activities (talks and presentations) in a structured environment

Communication and relationships

- Is able to effectively communicate with Society staff at a similar level, across several departments, and also with visitors and external contacts.
- Communication is indirect (email, phone and radio) and direct (face-to-face, talks, presentations) to share information and provide updates.
- Effectiveness in role is largely achieved by advising line managers daily of relevant information, e.g. animal observations, enclosure faults, support with difficult visitors, visitors in out-of-bounds areas, and engaging visitors daily with our conservation messaging.
- Communicates soundly and can present complex information to a non-technical audience, e.g. sharing RZSS commitment to conservation and enthuse others about the work of the Society. Care must be taken to ensure that information is conveyed in a clear and simple format to engage audiences of varying size, e.g. minors, juniors and adults.

Problem-solving and decision making

- Works to clearly defined processes and expected to adhere to operating procedures.
- Examples of routine problems that may deal with and expected to solve might include:
- identifying and reporting animal health and management issues (injured animal) - post holder expected to take immediate action to separate animal if appropriate and provide follow up care required under supervision.
- enclosure maintenance issues (damaged perimeter fence) - post holder expected to report to senior section staff and check all animals are in the enclosure if safe to do so. Make a 'priority' emergency call on the radio if animals are missing. Shut animals away from damaged area if there is a risk of escape. Effect temporary solution where possible. Report as a maintenance issue to the relevant department.
- Requires assistance when dealing with unexpected problems and knows when to escalate problems, e.g. complex customer complaint or assessing weather conditions and adjusting daily routines with regards to animal welfare.

Other information

I have discussed and agreed this updated role profile with my manager

Name:

Signature:

Date: