Biosecurity Advisor – Turks & Caicos Islands

Want to help protect some of the most threatened reptiles on the planet and safeguard unique pockets of paradise?

Keen to mentor and build the capacity of others? Would you be happy to be based in the Turks & Caicos Islands for two years? If so, this could be the job for you.

We are looking for an enthusiastic, passionate person to drive forwards a collaborative multi-sector partnership in the Turks & Caicos Islands, a UK Overseas Territory in the Caribbean. You will oversee and deliver conservation action to protect some of the most pristine patches of natural habitat left in the Caribbean - the homes of the Critically Endangered Turks & Caicos rock iguana.

This exciting role is funded through the Darwin Plus Initiative project: ‘Strengthening biosecurity to protect Turks & Caicos’ Iguana Islands’. The successful candidate will be based with our partner organisation, the Turks & Caicos National Trust.

Invasive non-native species are one of the greatest threats to biodiversity in the UK Overseas Territories; and biosecurity controls that minimise the risk of new arrivals are the most effective way of reducing this threat. Focussing on protecting the Turks & Caicos rock iguana, you will be working to mitigate the impact of invasive non-native vertebrates and uncontrolled tourism across 11 islands; spanning three national parks and three privately-owned islands. With a background in invasive non-native species management, you will strengthen biosecurity capacity across the Turks & Caicos Islands through developing and delivering a biosecurity training programme, recruiting and training a volunteer network whilst ensuring regular biosecurity checks are completed, new arrivals are responded to, and the resulting data are well managed.

As a natural communicator and problem-solver, you will find the challenge of establishing the first attempt at holistic management for invasive vertebrates for the region an exciting and rewarding role.

**Job Overview**

The Biosecurity Officer will be responsible for the delivery of the Darwin project including the biosecurity activities outlined in the Biosecurity Plans for Big Ambergris Cay and the 10-island Pine Cay complex and other biosecurity measures as required. The ideal candidate will be a confident individual who is passionate about keeping iguana islands free from invasive non-native species, to protect the Turks & Caicos Island's unique wildlife and to support the Island’s development into a model example of a Caribbean eco-tourism destination.

The candidate should have a strong background in invasive species management, have experience in wildlife monitoring, be a strong communicator, have an ability to coordinate with a wide range of stakeholders, and must be comfortable with making and delivering challenging decisions.
Responsibilities & duties

- Responsible for the coordination of the Darwin project activities in the Turks & Caicos Islands.
- Responsible for leading biosecurity training and developing a biosecurity training schedule for project partners.
- Responsible for setting up and maintaining a team of trained staff members that would be able to assist with responding to incursions (new arrivals of invasive species).
- Regular communication with all key stakeholders to ensure that protocols and procedures are being followed (e.g. hotel staff, waste management staff, contractors, barge operators, suppliers, TCI Government etc.).
- At least monthly, complete a full check of all the permanent rodent monitoring stations across Pine, Water and Little Water Cays and input the data into a database.
- Every other month, complete biosecurity checks across Donna, Mangrove, Fort George, Grouper, Lizard and Bird Cays.
- On barge arrivals, support partners to inspect and replenish biosecurity stations on the barge, inspect the cargo and determine what needs to go into quarantine.
- On plane arrivals, support partners to inspect the cargo and ensure any high-risk items are put into quarantine.
- In collaboration with Turks and Caicos National Trust and the Iguana Islands Partnership, install biosecurity monitoring stations on Little Ambergris Cay.
- Responsible for initiating rapid responses to signs of invasive predators arriving on the 10-island Pine Cay complex.
- Provide advice to developers on minimising habitat impacts during development, including advising on landscaping and monitoring imports of ornamental plants (known to be a high-risk pathway for the introduction of invasive plants, invertebrates, reptiles and small mammals).

Covid-19 travel restrictions

Currently it is not possible to travel to the Turks & Caicos Islands given the current travel restrictions in response to the global Covid-19 pandemic. RSPB are continually reviewing the UK Government guidance and updating our policies appropriately. We currently envisage the candidate to be in post from January/February 2021. If the successful candidate is not currently based in the Turks & Caicos Islands, and travel is deemed not possible at that time, the role will be remotely based with the plan to repatriate for the remainder of the employment term as soon as possible following UK Government, Turks & Caicos Islands Government and RSPB guidance.

If required, RSPB will cover the cost of your relocation to the Turks & Caicos Islands (international flight costs).
Who we are and what we do

The RSPB exists to give nature a home. We help our birds, other wildlife and natural places survive and thrive.

On our doorstep are woods and farmland, moors and marshes, cliffs and mountains. They are home to an astonishing array of precious but threatened wildlife. Every species is unique, but they are all connected to one another. And every one of them needs a home to survive.

Sadly, many of our best loved and most iconic species can’t find a welcome home here any more. It’s our job to change this. A country that’s not home to skylarks and puffins, red squirrels and hedgehogs is not a country any of us want to live in.

To protect our threatened birds and other wildlife, we need to protect the places where they live. If we are taking care of nature, we are taking care of ourselves and future generations.

The RSPB in a nutshell

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB):

- Was formed in 1889 to counter the barbaric trade in bird plumes for women’s hats
- Has since grown into a world-leading wildlife conservation organization and now speak out for all birds and wildlife, tackling the problems which threaten our environment
- Has over a million members, including more than 200,000 youth members
- Has more than 2,000 active staff members and almost 18,000 volunteers, who donate more than a million hours of their time – that’s the equivalent of 600 full-time staff
- Has a NET income available for charitable purposes of £89.3 million
- Has more than 200 nature reserves covering 143,7800 hectares and home to 80% of our rarest or most threatened bird species
- Has a UK headquarters, three national offices and eight regional offices
- Has a network of over 150 local groups and more than 150 youth groups
- Has an impressive global reach, with active projects and capacity building programmes in 26 countries and 10 UK Overseas Territories
- Is the UK partner and leading player, in Birdlife International
- Has the largest charity mail order operation in the UK, and also has the UK’s most successful charity credit card

Volunteers

Volunteers founded the RSPB 125 years ago and remain a vitally important part of the organization today; there are approximately nine volunteers for every paid member of staff. Our volunteers bring a unique range of skills and qualities to the RSPB, help stretch our scarce resources and keep us in touch with grass roots.
Our Strategy, Mission and Cultural Values

Our Strategy

Our vision: a world richer in nature
Imagine this. Wild birds and other wildlife will no longer be declining. Nature is restored, enriching and sustaining the lives of people as a result. Such a world would guarantee that future generations have clean air and water, a stable climate, abundant and diverse wildlife, and a robust, diverse and sustainable economy.

Our long-term purpose: saving nature
We believe that:
- There is a moral imperative to save nature
- Nature is crucial for peoples quality of life and the planet’s life support systems
- Birds are an integral part of the web of life
- We are well placed to stand up for birds and all nature
- The challenge is great, we must work with others to succeed
- We need growing popular support

Our Mission

By 2020...
Our work is both urgent and important and we need to act now to make a difference. The world’s governments have committed to halting biodiversity loss by 2020 and we will challenge them, as well as businesses, civil society and ourselves, to take the steps necessary to reach this goal, and then go further.

Our Cultural Values

Our cultural values are the way we work with each other and partners:

Bold
We speak out honestly for what we believe in, aiming higher and pushing further for growth. We seek to provide innovative, fun and sociable ways for people to get involved

Focused
We identify where birds and wildlife are most under threat, then act decisively and with commitment to save them and deliver tangible results

Supportive
We support each other and our sector partners in order to flourish, and make sure our supporters receive reward and recognition for their contribution

Together
We work together for the biggest possible impact across the RSPB and with partners across the UK and globally

May 2017
What we offer

The RSPB offer some great benefits to reward and support you while working with us.

Pay
We offer a competitive salary to attract and retain great people.

Flexible Working
We pride ourselves on being a flexible and supportive employer. We realise that our staff have demands on their time outside of work, and are open to requests to work flexibly. There are a range of options to support you such as flexitime, TOIL and parental leave. Depending on the circumstances, up to five paid days a year is offered for unexpected family emergencies, elective medical procedures and compassionate leave.

Annual leave
Our leave year runs from 1 April to 31 March. When you start you will receive 26 days’ holiday, excluding public holidays (four days are taken during the RSPB’s Christmas shutdown). This will increase to 28 days after three years' continuous service and 30 days after seven years' continuous service. Leave will be pro-rata for part time staff and where you start part way through the year.

Life Assurance
All employees age 18 or over and under 75 are automatically covered for death in service benefit. A lump sum of five times basic salary at the date of the employee’s death is paid to their beneficiaries or estate.

Maternity, paternity and adoption leave
To support your family life we have enhanced our legal obligations towards employees. We offer up to 12 weeks full salary to employees going on maternity or adoption leave, and up to two weeks on full salary to employees taking paternity leave.

Sickness Pay
If you become ill, you are supported by our enhanced Occupational Sick Pay Scheme. Your entitlement is determined by length of service, but can be up to a maximum of 36 weeks for full-time staff. We also work closely with one of the UK’s leading occupational health providers, to help you in returning to work.

Employee Assistance Scheme
All RSPB employees have free access to an Employee Assistance Programme. This service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Staff Association
All employees are eligible to join our staff association. The RSPB set up the Staff Association to independently protect and promote the interests of staff. It is officially recognised by the Management Board and Council and is consulted on many key decisions. The Staff Association also negotiate member discounts on a wide variety of goods and services.

Learning and Development
The RSPB is committed to supporting all RSPB employees with quality learning and development opportunities. We offer a wide range of learning and development opportunities including our induction process, on-going training and e-learning. We prioritise leadership and management which is key to people motivation and success. Our recent leadership programmes have received the Institute of Leadership and Management accreditation. The Learning and Development team’s focus and aim is to help both you and the organisation to succeed.
Volunteering
All employees are entitled to one extra day of paid leave each year to spend volunteering. This can be for any charity or voluntary organisation - not just the RSPB.

Sabbaticals
After five years’ continuous service, and each five years thereafter, all employees are entitled to a 4 week sabbatical. This is a chance to take time out of your busy day-to-day job to do research, volunteer, learn a new skill or travel. Sabbaticals should have specific goals and objectives designed to benefit both you and the RSPB.

Green loans
Employees can apply for an interest-free loan to buy a bicycle or a season ticket.

RSPB Nature Reserves and RSPB retail
Employees can visit any RSPB reserve free and can receive up to 20% off retail items in the RSPB’s shops.

Relocation
We are able to offer a limited amount of financial help towards relocation costs for employees, depending on the circumstances. We need the right people in the right place so offer financial help towards relocation costs for employees, depending on the circumstances. Whether you are a home owner or renting, we may be able to offer you assistance.

How we expect you to work
The RSPB has seven key competencies that are important to our organisation’s success. We expect all employees to demonstrate the following behaviours in everything that they do:

Direction:
You ensure you have a clear direction and sense of common purpose that guides what you do and how you approach your work.

Energy:
You bring energy and urgency to the RSPB to motivate people to do the best they can.

Capability:
You build your own and other people’s capabilities, directly and indirectly.

Relationships:
You communicate effectively and build productive internal and external relationships

Change:
You support continuous improvement and change and constantly look for way to do things better.

Advocacy:
You act as an advocate for the RSPB.

Performance:
You get things done achieve ambitious goals and the RSPB’s aims.
Environmental Statement

We have a role to play in protecting our environment by being as ‘green’ as possible. As a conservation organisation, we know a healthy environment is critical for nature and that we need to lead by example. Through our environmental management system (EMAS), we have an Environmental Policy, objectives and targets which prioritises where we can do most. All staff members are asked to respect and adhere to our green principles.

Equality and Diversity at the RSPB

The RSPB is part of a global network that incorporates a diversity of traditions and cultures, and which represents different inheritances, backgrounds, influences, perspectives and experiences. A better understanding of people’s differences will help us to appreciate and value everyone’s contribution, and recognise that we are all an integral and invaluable part of the RSPB.

Everyone has the right to be treated with consideration and respect. The RSPB is committed to achieving a truly inclusive environment for all, by developing better working relationships that release the full potential, creativity and productivity of each individual, and an atmosphere where everyone can learn, work and live free from prejudice, discrimination, harassment and violence.

The RSPB aims to ensure that all staff, volunteers, partners, clients, contractors, members and the general public are treated fairly. Unless it can be shown to be justified, this will be regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, marital or civil partnership status, race (including colour, nationality, ethnicity, or national origin), disability, medical status, age, religion or belief, political opinion, social or economic status, or ex-offender status.

Employment Checks

All offers of employment are made subject to the following criteria:

Proof of eligibility to work in the UK, Satisfactory Employment Health Check, Two references satisfactory to the RSPB and where required a Satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau Check.

Applications from candidates from outside of the UK

We are proud to have people of different nationalities helping us to save nature.

However, for all UK-based roles, you need to have the right to work in the UK in the role you are applying for.

To see if you need a VISA, visit www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa.

For roles based outside of the UK, different requirements may apply – please check to avoid disappointment.