



Seabird Assistant – Job Description

Salary: c. £26,500 pro rata

Hours: full-time, 37.5 hours per week, based in Scilly

Contract: mid April – early August

Job Purpose: Helping with our annual seabird and shorebird surveys around Scilly

Responsible to: Operations Manager

Working relationships: Seabird Officer and Conservation Officer

Responsible for: Supporting other staff in the collection of data on breeding seabird and shorebird populations around Scilly

Background

We are looking for a hard-working, enthusiastic person to join our small seabird monitoring team for the main seabird survey season this summer. This work is funded by Defra / RSWT as baseline monitoring as part of the development of the exciting Isles of Scilly Seabird Recovery Project, which looks to eradicate rats from the off-isles in the archipelago, to transform prospects for breeding seabirds in the Isles of Scilly.

The Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust is the only charity managing land for wildlife in Scilly. We are responsible for about half of the land area of the Isles of Scilly, managing it for rare species and habitats, for its archaeological interest, and to provide access, enjoyment and understanding for local people and visitors.

The breeding populations of seabirds found across Scilly are a key feature of Scilly's natural history. Monitoring and conserving them is one of the top priorities for IoSWT. Reports from previous seabird surveys, as well as information on our breeding species can be found at <https://www.ios-wildlifetrust.org.uk/seabird-recovery-project-reports>. As our seabird monitoring program is currently expanding, we are looking to hire an additional staff member for a full-time role for the main part of the 2026 seabird breeding season to add to our existing two person seabird monitoring team.

In addition to this, for the last two years we have been surveying our regionally important breeding Ringed Plover population. The additional staff member would also support our Conservation Officer in the delivery of this survey and linked conservation work with the local community and visitors. Details of this project can be found here: <https://www.ios-wildlifetrust.org.uk/ringed-plover-project-reports>.

About you

You will be hard-working and enthusiastic about the wildlife of the Isles of Scilly. Ideally you will already have good knowledge of ecology and identification of the breeding seabird species found on Scilly, but if you have a demonstrable interest in natural history and conservation and are willing to learn, this job could still be right for you.

You will need to be flexible and willing to work around rapidly changing work plans, likely with some work during weekends / unsociable hours as survey plans regularly change on short notice according to the conditions on the ground. You will need to be fit and steady on your feet, and comfortable with working long days outdoors on rough terrain as well as making small boat landings on uninhabited islands.

Experience with GIS mapping software, data entry systems and trail camera usage would be an advantage. Having demonstrable willingness and ability to remain organised and methodical in fast-changing circumstances is essential.

You will also be a good team player and comfortable with speaking to a wide range of different people – the reputation of the Trust relies heavily on our field staff maintaining good relations with the residents, visitors and professional partners.

Outline of key responsibilities

- Support the Seabird Officer and Conservation Officer in preparing for the 2026 field season.
- Support collection of data for the Trust's annual seabird survey and nesting Ringed Plover surveys.
- Undertake boat and land-based breeding bird surveys around a number of the Isles of Scilly, with the correct and legible recording of data on appropriate forms and maps. Assist in improving the data collection systems and trialling novel survey methodologies to be used during breeding seabird surveys.
- Work with a range of external research partners and volunteers to support their fieldwork on Scilly.
- Understand systems, follow instructions and take personal responsibility for health & safety, working as required as part of the team, within the IoSWT systems.
- Contribute to IoSWT's public engagement work by engaging with members of the public on issues including responsible dog walking and avoidance of disturbance to nesting birds.
- Be willing to undertake other tasks as reasonably required.

Like all Trust staff, the postholder must:

- Champion inclusion and diversity.
- Promote the Trust, recruiting local Members, and Friends of Scilly Wildlife.
- Be willing to undertake other tasks and work flexible hours as reasonably required.

All staff are ambassadors for the organisation both internally and externally and are expected to always act in a professional manner. They are required to abide by organisational rules, policies and procedures as laid down in the staff handbook, adopt environmentally friendly working practices, maintain high personal standards of efficiency and customer care and foster a 'can do' culture based on ownership, initiative, teamwork and exchange of information.

We want our people to be as diverse as nature, so we particularly encourage applications from people who are underrepresented within our sector, including people from minority ethnic backgrounds and people with disabilities. We are committed to creating a movement that recognises and truly values individual

differences and identities. Please let us know if you require any adjustments to make our recruitment process more accessible.

Person Specification

Essential

- Demonstrable interest in natural history and wildlife conservation including that of UK seabirds & shorebirds.
- Ability to make accurate, legible field records and transcribe / enter them as required by Seabird and Conservation Officers.
- Ability to communicate effectively and positively with members of the public, including around sensitive issues such as dog walking.
- Physically fit, able to get in and out of small boats on beach and rock landings, and able to traverse rough terrain while carrying kit.
- Willingness to work outdoors for long hours in variable weather conditions.
- Familiarity with safe working methods, and able to act responsibly to ensure the safety of oneself and others.
- Good communication skills and ability to contribute well to a team under difficult conditions, and also being able to show initiative and undertake lone-working when required in line with the Trust's health and safety policy and procedures.
- Flexibility, a strong work ethic, commitment to the environment and wildlife conservation, and to the values of Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust.
- Already have accommodation on Scilly, or a willingness to camp.

Desirable

- Ability to identify UK seabirds & shorebirds and knowledge of seabird & shorebird ecology.
- Experience operating trail cameras.
- Experience of using GIS mapping software in a fieldwork setting.
- Experience in designing and developing novel fieldwork/ monitoring projects.
- Knowledge of Scilly and its environment and natural history.
- Experience of volunteer management & leadership.
- Degree in ecology, conservation or related subject.
- Driving license.
- First Aid at work certificate.