Organiser:
Seabird Monitoring Programme
British Trust for Ornithology
‘A WORLD INSPIRED BY BIRDS AND INFORMED BY SCIENCE’

BTO harnesses the skills and passion of birdwatchers to advance our understanding of ornithology and produce impartial science, communicated so that it can be of benefit to everyone.

OUR GOALS
BTO increases knowledge of birds and other wildlife, and their relationships with the environment and people, by:

- Enabling more people to learn about birds and science and grow through participation in environmental discovery.
- Delivering impartial, impactful and relevant science.
- Inspiring and empowering people with an understanding of birds and the importance of knowledge.

OUR PRIORITIES
We will reach our goals by:

- Providing more and better opportunities for people to contribute to our work.
- Monitoring the status of species, researching their ecology and understanding how they respond to change.
- Communicating great stories that bring to life the long-term data, information and knowledge that we hold.

OUR IMPACT
Our surveys, monitoring schemes and research programmes are designed by expert scientists to answer some of the most pressing questions affecting birds and their habitats. Because of our independence we are able to share our data, expertise and knowledge to inform decision-makers, educate the public and support conservation action. Our long-term datasets provide a measure of change and enable us to look for impacts and test solutions. Our vibrant volunteer network makes us highly effective and ensures that our work reflects the interests of those for whom birds and wildlife are important.

OUR FOUNDATIONS AND VALUES
The success of BTO is based on firm foundations that include: motivated and skilled staff and volunteers; a strong reputation; a robust business model and effective governance systems and processes.

We are:

- Inclusive and supportive
- Impartial
- Passionate
- Collaborative and open to new ideas

BTO is a Registered Charity Number 216652 (England & Wales), SC039193 (Scotland).
ABOUT THE ROLE
The Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP) is a scheme which mobilises volunteer birdwatchers to monitor breeding seabirds throughout Britain and Ireland on an annual basis, to provide data for the conservation of their populations. In addition, the SMP collates and analyses data gathered by both volunteer and professional surveyors employed by a range of organisations, including at a range of Key Sites. In the UK, the scheme is funded by BTO, JNCC and RSPB and supported by a wider Advisory Group, and is co-ordinated by the BTO.

The position of Seabird Monitoring Programme Organiser is part of the BTO’s Surveys Team. The post-holder will be responsible for the successful running of the BTO/JNCC/RSPB Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP), reporting to the Head of Surveys (Dawn Balmer), and working closely with the Head of Wetland & Marine Research Team (Dr Niall Burton) and Principal Ecologist - Seabirds (Dr Liz Humphreys). They will deliver key outputs of this survey, including summaries of results, the annual report and updating web pages. The work involves overseeing the SMP counter network, supervising development of the SMP online data entry portal, using the BTO’s supporter database ‘Civi’ and working with the Regional Network (c.120 volunteers).

Results from the SMP are used in a variety of national and international initiatives including conservation status assessments, indicators, modelling the impacts of anthropogenic influences such as climate change, pressures from fisheries, and renewable developments. The ability to interact with a wide range of stakeholders, partnership organisations and give presentations to audiences including scientists, policy-makers, volunteers and the media is required. The successful candidate will be familiar with seabird identification, survey methodology and their breeding distributions. They are also expected to be well-organised, competent in computing, particularly database management and Excel, good at problem-solving, and would be expected to contribute to the wider work of the BTO as required.

WHAT YOU WILL DELIVER
• To successfully co-ordinate the annual activities of the Seabird Monitoring Programme in partnership with JNCC, RSPB, and supporting organisations.
• To oversee and grow the activities of c. 300 volunteer and professional fieldworkers directly (e.g. via email), to ensure the required data are submitted in a timely way. Verification of records will be undertaken to maintain data integrity by running computer checking programs, and organising the input and storage of data. In addition this requires cooperation with the BTO Regional Network, BTO staff, partner organisations and the general public.
• To be responsible, jointly with the Information Systems team, for the maintenance and development of the SMP Online application and the SMP components of the online Oracle database, ensuring the integrity of user and survey data.
• To be responsible for annual SMP reporting which includes data preparation, timing of annual data
ABOUT THE ROLE

analysis, writing, production and dissemination to volunteers, survey partners, stakeholders and online reporting. The report’s content includes official statistics and requires close liaison with staff at JNCC and RSPB, as well as BTO colleagues to ensure precise delivery and publication timing.

• To maintain and develop the SMP web pages to provide information, instructions, results and interpretation of research outputs for a broader audience.

• To take responsibility for communicating SMP progress and results to the media and wider public through press releases, semi-popular articles in journals/newsletters and social media, and interviews on television, radio or newspaper. Input to the State of the UK’s Birds.

• To contribute to the development of the SMP work plans to increase operational efficiency and develop scheme coverage and effectiveness, in collaboration with the Head of Surveys, the SMP’s funding partners (JNCC and RSPB) and the SMP Advisory Group.

• To provide a main point of contact for the SMP, for volunteers, colleagues and other conservation organisations.

• To liaise with research staff and external conservation agencies on matters concerning SMP methodology, the use of SMP data and their interpretation.

• Respond to and prepare data and reports in response to Data Requests.

• To promote the SMP through talks at scientific conferences and bird club meetings or events, and by organising and conducting training workshops. Required to use own initiative in this work, occasionally undertaken in the evening or at weekends.

• To contribute to the development of other research at the BTO and in response to external queries by providing advice on census techniques, survey design and the use of volunteers.

• To undertake additional analyses, query and undertake analyses using the SMP database as required and feed into SMP research papers.

• To undertake such other duties as may be required commensurate with the level and purpose of the role.

This is not an exhaustive list; the successful applicant will agree objectives with their line manager.

WHAT YOU’LL BRING TO THE ROLE

• A degree in biology, ecology or a related field, or equivalent experience.

• Experience and ability in organising and undertaking bird surveys, or able to demonstrate aptitude for such.

• Experience of managing volunteers.

• Good understanding of the ecology of British and Irish seabirds and conservation issues relating to them.

• The time management skills needed to prioritise multiple work streams and to meet strict deadlines.

• Good communication skills; the ability to lecture to a wide range of audience types, from scientists to the general public, and to be interviewed effectively on TV or radio, including presenting a balanced approach on sensitive topics.

• Excellent organisational and communication skills.
SEABIRD MONITORING PROGRAMME ORGANISER

• A methodical and accurate approach to working with statistical information and data entry, and to maintaining consistency within structured monitoring methods.

• Knowledge of (or aptitude to learn) basic-level use of R, GIS and SQL for data management and manipulation. Understanding of relational databases. Expertise in a range of computer packages including word-processing, spreadsheet, graphic and presentational software. Ability to learn the use of new computer packages as required.

• Ability to work closely with volunteers and enthuse them with appropriate survey methods.

• An adaptable and conscientious attitude, and the ability to work as part of a team or independently.

• Good understanding of broader issues related to data recording (e.g. data confidentiality, ownership).

• A current UK driving licence.

MAKING AN APPLICATION

For further information and to apply visit our website: www.bto.org/vacancies Applications may also be submitted confidentially by email to peopleteam@bto.org.

Closing date for receipt of applications is 1pm on Monday 11 April 2022.

It is anticipated that interviews will be held on Wednesday 20 April 2022.

Interviews will involve preparation of a short promotional article on the Seabird Monitoring Programme (details of which will be provided if invited for an interview, of which applicants will be advised by Wednesday 13 April).

We recognise that candidates from Black, Asian and Minority-Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds are under-represented in our organisation, and that there are often additional barriers present for people from these groups when applying for roles in the charity sector and beyond. We are committed to taking positive action to expand the diversity of our staff team, and if you meet the essential criteria for a role and are from a BAME background, you’ll be guaranteed a first stage interview.

If you have a disability or long-term illness that otherwise prevents you from meeting any of the essential criteria, please contact us to discuss whether a reasonable adjustment could be made. As users of the disability confident scheme, we guarantee to interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for the vacancy.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE ROLE

For further information, please contact Dawn Balmer, Head of Surveys on 01842 750050 during work hours for an informal discussion (dawn.balmer@bto.org) or Liz Humphreys on 01786 458021 (liz.humphreys@bto.org).

SALARY AND BENEFITS

£26,989.20 to £29,988.00 + 11% employer pension contribution. Benefits include: Employee Assistance Programme, discounts on books, flexible working and social events. Full time (37 hours) permanent post based in Thetford (Norfolk) or Stirling (Stirlingshire), with flexibility to work at home part of the time.