



Animal Manager Position, Vietnam

Animals Asia are recruiting an experienced animal manager to be based in Vietnam and to work in partnership with the Elephant Conservation Centre and Hanoi Zoo to provide animal management advice and staff training to optimize the welfare of animals at both facilities.

Elephant Conservation Centre (ECC)

The ECC is a government-supported organization tasked with preventing the extinction of the Asian elephant in Vietnam and providing care for the captive population (currently used within tourism). The ECC have been commissioned by the central government to build an elephant facility in Buon Don, Dak Lak Province to house former 'tourism' elephants. ECC currently manage two young bull elephants, both of which were wild born individuals that due to human activities have been separated from their herds and are now in need of care. Construction of this facility has not yet begun. The facility is being designed as a 'Protected Contact' facility.

The animal manager will provide support to the ECC elephant carers and veterinary staff, deliver training in the care of captive elephants to meet their needs, and provide advice on management and operational protocols, to ensure a high standard of welfare for the elephants and safety for staff and visitors.

Elephants coming to the facility will do so with diverse histories; some may be injured or orphaned wild elephants, others retired from the tourist industry. The aim of the facility is to provide excellent care for this diverse group of elephants and manage them where possible as a herd to encourage natural socialization and species appropriate behaviours. The animal manager will help to identify the needs of each elephant upon arrival and implement management plans and safe working practices accordingly.

The ECC are tasked with breeding the elephants at the facility, and the animal manager will provide advice and support to ensure that the welfare of the individual animals is the highest priority within the reproductive programme.

The facility is being configured in such a way that future integration with adjacent wild populations is also a possibility. At times this role may contribute to the wider programme of management that includes the protection activities of the wild population.

Hanoi Zoo

Hanoi zoo is situated in the heart of the city. It has limited space but is home to approximately 800 animals including tigers, lions, gibbons, macaques, hippos, a variety of bird species and Asian elephants.

Since 2014, enrichment, education and management programmes have been active within the zoo, supported by Animals Asia and Wild Welfare. Thus far, these programmes have been reliant on voluntary support by international zoo experts.

The animal manager will work with the animal carers, veterinary staff and international advisers, deliver training in the care of captive animals, and provide advice on management and operational protocols.

The zoo receives an annual enrichment budget from Yorkshire Wildlife Park Foundation. The animal manager will identify effective use of the enrichment funds, develop and oversee necessary staff training, and ensure enrichment schedules are implemented. The animal manager will also manage other volunteer staff that can work at the zoo from time to time.

Key duties - ECC

Support the day-to-day activities of the elephant carers and veterinary staff, to ensure that the welfare of the elephants at the facility is optimised, and provide appropriate training and development of management and operational protocols.

Key Responsibilities

- Provide advice and support to the elephant care team to ensure a high level of care is provided for the elephants daily
- Provide advice and support to the veterinary team to ensure appropriate preventative and curative treatment is provided.
- Establish standard operating procedures to underpin day to day operations in line with the facility's mission, vision and strategic objectives.
- Train ECC staff on elephant care and facility management.
- Co-ordinate with ECC international partners on the development of the facility and care of the elephants in line with the facility's mission, vision and strategic objectives.
- Provide animal care advice for captive (tourist) elephants external to the facility.
- Provide project management support to the capital build of the ECC facility

Key duties - Hanoi Zoo

Provide support to the veterinary and animal management teams to implement practices which improve animal welfare, co-ordinate the ongoing enrichment programme, and work with the senior management team to help develop the zoos master plan and collection plan. Develop and oversee necessary staff training, as well as manage other volunteer staff that can work at the zoo from time to time.

Key Responsibilities

- Provide advice and support to the animal management team to ensure a high level of care is provided daily.
- Provide advice and support to the veterinary team to ensure appropriate preventative and curative treatment is provided.
- Oversee the enrichment programme and ensure effective evaluation and monitoring
- Provide advice and support to help the zoo develop zoo policies and guidelines pertaining to animal welfare best practice, including good record keeping, euthanasia, quarantine and veterinary care
- Liaise with both local and international partners to ensure effective management of the facility in line with the facility's mission, vision and strategic objectives.

Key Skills

- A minimum of 5 years' experience in animal management within a captive facility (preferably with elephants in Protected Contact)
- Self motivated and independent with ability to work under difficult conditions
- Strong organizational skills in both operational and administrative areas
- Good communication skills with a calm and approachable manner
- Experience in training staff in animal care (preferably with elephants in Protected Contact)
- Willingness to learn Vietnamese (a translator will also be provided)
- Physically fit for the required tasks including daily manual handling

- Knowledge and experience of establishing, maintaining and ensuring compliance with standardized operating procedures
- Knowledge and experience in risk assessment within a zoological setting (preferably with elephants in Protected Contact)
- Experience in leading a team

Additional responsibilities

- Provide animal management support to other facilities within Asia under the guidance of Animal Asia and our international partner organisations

This is a unique opportunity to work in Vietnam and significantly contribute to a programme that aims to be a leading tool in saving Vietnam's elephant population for future generations, and developing high standards of care for captive wild animals formerly used within the tourism industry.

The position will be based in Buon Ma Thout (Central Highlands of Vietnam) with frequent travel to Hanoi. Some overseas travel will be required.

Salary – US\$35,000 plus US\$5,000 living expenses (*local travel costs to and from the ECC centre, plus international travel costs to relocate to Vietnam and one return flight to country of origin will be covered*)

This is a 12-month post (initially), extension of this post is funding dependent

Additional information

The animal manager must support the guiding principles of Animals Asia and the Vietnam Elephant Initiative.

Animals Asia position on the use of elephants in tourism

- Animals Asia does not support the use of elephants in performances/shows which involve animals performing unnatural behaviours
- Animals Asia does not support the use of elephants for direct contact experiences with the public (riding/bathing/photos with elephants)
- Animals Asia does not support the use of free-contact management
- Animals Asia supports protected contact management systems where elephants can be chain free and in appropriate social groups

Vietnam Elephant Initiative (VEI)

VEI is an initiative founded by a coalition of four institutions; Animals Asia, Wild Welfare, Elephant Care International and North Carolina Zoo Society. The VEI is committed to supporting the Elephant Conservation Centre in Dak Lak, to protect a sustainable wild population of elephants in Vietnam, provide high standards of care for captive elephants and end the use of elephants for tourism, circuses and shows.

VEI position statement on the use of elephants in tourism

'VEI believes that the use of elephants in tourism is an unacceptable practice based on current knowledge of elephant behavioural and physical needs. VEI supports the development of a sanctuary for the captive elephant population in Vietnam, and this sanctuary provides an opportunity for tourists to observe elephants socialising with other elephants'

For further details and/or to send an application letter and CV please write to David Neale at dneale@animalsasia.org

Closing date for applications is 31st March 2017