Australian Government
Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
Australian Antarctic Division

AUSTRALIAN ANTARCTIC PROGRAM

Expeditioner Band 2.5 (APS 6) – Vertebrate Biologist

Classification	Expeditioner Band 2.5 (APS 6) - $102,380 pa
Total Remuneration	$172,917 pa (When in Antarctica/sub-Antarctic, inclusive of Antarctic Allowances)
Division	Australian Antarctic Division
Branch	Science
Section	Southern Ocean Ecosystem program
Location	Kingston, Tasmania and Antarctic/sub-Antarctic deployment
Employment Status	Non-Ongoing (temporary)
Hours	Full-time (37.5 hours per week)
Security Clearance	Not Required

WHO WE ARE – Australian Antarctic Division (AAD)

The AAD is part of the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW). As primary agency for Australia's Antarctic Program (AAP), the AAD is responsible for achieving the Australian Government's Antarctic goals to:

- maintain the Antarctic Treaty System and enhance Australia's influence within it
- protect the Antarctic environment
- understand the role of Antarctica in the global climate system
- undertake scientific work of practical, economic and national significance.

The JOB

The Vertebrate Biologist will conduct fieldwork as part of a team of two in the Mawson region in the 2026/27 summer field season as part of a long-term seabird research and monitoring program. The work will have a particular emphasis on assessing for signs of highly pathogenic avian influenza and meeting Australia's international monitoring obligations on seabirds.

The Vertebrate Biologist will contribute to implementing the Antarctic seabird field program through:

- preparation, implementation and completion of field season;
- assess for the presence of H5 avian influenza (H5N1) at seabird colonies and in seals;
- broad-scale seabird research and monitoring at remote islands and sites in Antarctica;
- undertaking routine processing of samples and data;
- general support for the Seabird Conservation Team; and
- report writing, data checking and archiving, and data analysis associated with program research objectives.

This position is essential to retain the integrity of research results from previous field activities for the Department and its stakeholders; and maintain Australia's influence and standing as a leading nation within the Scientific Committee of Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR). The seabird research and monitoring program provides ongoing support of Australia's contribution to CCAMLR, is an important scientific expression of our policy on sustainable fisheries in east Antarctica and provides a scientific basis for understanding and minimising impacts on the seabirds from human activities and operations in the Australian Antarctic Territory.

The position will report directly to the Chief Investigator and lead of the Seabird Conservation Team who is responsible for the overall direction of the work. The position will work closely with the team's research scientists, the Field Coordinator, and the Lead Vertebrate Biologist who are also responsible for the day-to-day planning.

The Vertebrate Biologist's role is largely supportive in that they will apply professional knowledge and skills to the collection, processing, collation and review of data within an approved and established research program. The position has a particular emphasis on assessing for signs of highly pathogenic avian influenza and meeting Australia's international monitoring obligations on seabirds. While in Antarctica the position will also be under the direction of the Voyage Leader on the ship and Station Leader while on station.

While the program is well established and considerable infrastructure exists, the Vertebrate Biologist will be required to work, at times, with limited external support or guidance during the field phase of the program, and during a period when the team is isolated on Béchervaise Island.
The Vertebrate Biologist is required to be part of a two-person team during the summer field season in the Mawson region in Antarctica where they will learn the field program from the lead team member.

Key duties will include, but are not limited to:

- Be an effective member of a small field team undertaking the collection of data following established procedures during the field season in Antarctica in support of Australia's contribution to the CCAMLR Ecosystem Monitoring Program (CEMP). The field work includes research at Béchervaise Island near Mawson Station for a period of up to two months as well as research in the broader area and potentially at or around Davis Station *en route* to Mawson.
- Field activities may include: surveys of seabird presence and abundance; attachment and retrieval of instruments to/from skuas, petrels and penguins; monitoring breeding success, survival and diet of penguins and flying seabirds; the use and care of scientific equipment and data management. All activities will rely on assessing for the presence of HPAI initially and prior to commencement of field activities. All activities will require adherence to established field procedures and compliance with multiple permits and AAD standard operating procedures.
- Record and manage detailed and accurate data and notes relating to field activities, samples, and status of field equipment so that they can be incorporated into long term data sets, AQIS import permits, end-of-season reports and scientific publications.
- During the field season and when back at head office, undertake extensive data entry and processing tasks, manage samples and resources and assist in the collation, review and analysis of data as directed. General support and administrative tasks contributing to the various projects that comprise the seabird research program.
- Liaise with station staff for assistance and the use of shared equipment and resources.

- Work closely with staff involved in the program to assist with preparations for the field season at AAD head office, including: field season planning, liaising with AAD staff involved in project support and logistics, purchase and packing of equipment, resource management, and undertaking required training prior to departure for the season

Working as part of a small, high-functioning team, the individual will be proactive, highly organised and flexible with a high level of attention to detail. Fieldwork will be undertaken in isolated conditions, requiring high levels of motivation, independence but also a willingness to take direction, teamwork, good judgement, and robustness in addition to highly developed technical skills. The fieldwork can be physically demanding.

Due to the nature and scope of the program, and the need for continuity in methodology, the Vertebrate Biologist cannot develop their own research project or methods.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR - ESSENTIAL	When you need to provide evidence	
Required Identification/Qualification/License/Ticket	Provide copy with application	obtained prior to job commencement
Qualification – A degree or diploma in a relevant scientific or related discipline for an Australian tertiary institution, or a comparable overseas institution.	✓	
Driver's Licence – A current, unrestricted "C" class (manual) Australian driver's licence.	✓	
Citizenship - In accordance with the PS Act 1999, APS employees are required to be Australian citizens. Persons who are not Australian citizens will generally only be considered where there are no suitable Australian applicants, with next considerations being Australian residents with work rights and New Zealand citizens.	✓	
Valid Passport - The expiry date of the passport (and any relevant visa) must be at least 6 months beyond the planned end date of your intended stay in the Antarctic or sub-Antarctic		✓
Provide First Aid (HLTAID011) must be valid for at least 18 months beyond the date of AAD commencement.		✓
Provide basic emergency life support (HLTAID010) must be valid for at least 18 months beyond the date of AAD commencement.		✓
Provide CPR (HLTAID009) must be valid for at least 6 months beyond the date of AAD commencement		✓

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR:
Knowledge and experience

- Experience in the implementation of established survey methodologies; experience working in close proximity to seabird colonies, handling seabirds and collecting samples.
- Experience preparing for field seasons of long duration and/or in remote locations.
- Demonstrated adaptability and readiness to take on a wide range of tasks at short notice in dynamic field environments.
- Experience taking responsibility for, resources and program outcomes; ability to exercise sound independent judgement in relation to significant issues (e.g. safety, animal ethics, unexpected change).
- Experience working in small teams living and working in remote environments.
- Demonstrated ability to communicate with influence in oral and written form; well-developed communication and interpersonal skills.
- Experience in recording and managing field data in a thorough and organised manner; demonstrated ability to undertake routine, and at times tedious data entry and processing tasks; good organisational and report writing skills with attention to detail.
- Experience with software for data storage and manipulation (e.g. Microsoft Excel, Access, or R) and mapping (e.g. ArcGIS) would be an advantage. Capability in the analysis of ecological, population and/or monitoring data may also be an advantage.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR - Desirable

- Skills in any of the following areas may be an advantage: animal handling, attachment of instruments to animals, population survey methods, data processing.
- A drone pilot licence with experience in surveying wildlife populations may be an advantage. If you hold this licence, you will be required to undergo a Safety Sensitive Aviation Activity (SSAA) screening.

ELIGIBILITY AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Personal Qualities:

During the recruitment selection process, the AAD assesses individual personal qualities required to successfully live and work in an isolated Antarctic/sub-Antarctic community. Successful candidates need to demonstrate the personal qualities detailed here.

Pre-employment check:

Your suitability for employment will be assessed through pre-employment screening including National Police Check, referee checks, pre-employment medical assessment, specified mandatory qualification(s) validation and completion of required probation period.

Work Health and Safety Obligations:

All employees have a duty to take reasonable care of their own health and safety while at work, to ensure their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons in line with any reasonable instruction given to comply with the Work Health and Safety legislation.

RecruitAbility:

Under the APS (Australian Public Service) RecruitAbility scheme you will be invited to participate in further assessment for the vacancy if you choose to apply under the scheme; declare you have a disability; AND meet the minimum requirements for the position.

HOW TO APPLY

Information about how to apply can be found here, including further information about AAD jobs.

Australian Government
Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
Australian Antarctic Division

AUSTRALIAN ANTARCTIC PROGRAM

Expeditioner Band 2.6 (APS 6) – Lead Vertebrate Biologist

Classification	Expeditioner Band 2.6 (APS 6) - $107,593 pa
Total Remuneration	$178,130 pa (When in Antarctica/sub-Antarctic, inclusive of Antarctic Allowances)
Division	Australian Antarctic Division
Branch	Science
Section	Southern Ocean Ecosystems Program
Location	Kingston, Tasmania, and Antarctic/sub-Antarctic deployment
Employment Status	Non-Ongoing (temporary)
Hours	Full-time (37.5 hours per week)
Security Clearance	Not Required

WHO WE ARE – Australian Antarctic Division (AAD)

The AAD is part of the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW). As primary agency for Australia's Antarctic Program (AAP), the AAD is responsible for achieving the Australian Government's Antarctic goals to:

- maintain the Antarctic Treaty System and enhance Australia's influence within it
- protect the Antarctic environment
- understand the role of Antarctica in the global climate system
- undertake scientific work of practical, economic, and national significance.

THE JOB

The Lead Vertebrate Biologist's role is to apply professional knowledge, skills and previous experience to the collection, processing, collation, and review of data within an approved and established research program. The position has a particular emphasis on assessing for signs of highly pathogenic avian influenza (H5N1) and meeting Australia's international monitoring obligations on seabirds. While in Antarctica, the position will also operate under the direction of the Voyage Leader on the ship and Station Leader while on station.

The Lead Vertebrate Biologist will conduct fieldwork, apply professional knowledge and expertise as part of a team of two in the Mawson region in the 2026/27 summer field season as part of a long-term seabird research and monitoring program.

The Lead Vertebrate Biologist will contribute to implementing the Antarctic seabird field program through:

- preparation, implementation, and completion of field season;
- assess for the presence of H5 avian influenza (H5N1) at seabird colonies and in seals;

- broad-scale seabird research and monitoring at remote islands and sites in Antarctica;
- undertaking routine processing of samples and data;
- general support for the Seabird Conservation Team; and
- report writing, data checking and archiving, and data analysis associated with program research objectives.

This position is essential to assess signs of a highly pathogenic avian influenza (H5N1); retain the integrity of research results from previous field activities for the Department and its stakeholders; and maintain Australia's influence and standing as a leading nation within the Scientific Committee of Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR).

The seabird research and monitoring program provides ongoing support of Australia's contribution to CCAMLR, is an important scientific expression of our policy on sustainable fisheries in east Antarctica and provides a scientific basis for understanding and minimising impacts on the seabirds from human activities and operations in the Australian Antarctic Territory.

The position reports directly to the Chief Investigator and lead of the Seabird Conservation Team who is responsible for the overall direction of the work. The position will work closely with the team's research scientists, the Field Coordinator, and the Lead Vertebrate Biologist who are also responsible for the day-to-day planning.

While the program is well established and considerable infrastructure exists, the Lead Vertebrate Biologist will be required to work, at times, with limited external support or guidance during the field phase of the program, and during a period when the team is isolated on Béchervaise Island.

The Lead Vertebrate Biologist is required to be part of a two-person team during the summer field season in the Mawson region in Antarctica.

Key duties will include, but are not limited to:

- Lead a small field team to collect data in the Mawson region of Antarctica during the summer field season following currently established procedures in support of Australia's contribution to the CCAMLR Ecosystem Monitoring Program (CEMP). The fieldwork includes research at Béchervaise Island near Mawson Station for a period of up to two-months as well as research in the broader area and potentially at or around Davis Station *en route* to Mawson. Critical roles will include leading the field team in Antarctica and preparation for the isolation period on the Island.
- An important task for the Lead Vertebrate Biologist will be to train a new field team member on the application of current methods and approaches to provide continuity of the program into the future.
- Undertake and lead scientific activities when in the field. Activities may include penguin and petrel population surveys to look for signs of avian influenza and determine population counts; programming, operation, attachment, and retrieval of instruments to/from skuas, petrels and penguins; monitoring breeding success, survival, and seabird diet; use and care for scientific equipment and data management. These activities will require effective liaison with station staff for assistance and the use of shared equipment and resources and will require adherence to established field procedures and compliance with multiple permits and AAD standard operating procedures.
- Record and manage detailed and accurate data and notes relating to field activities, samples, and status of field equipment so that they can be incorporated into long term data sets, AQIS import permits, end-of-season reports and scientific publications.

- When at head office, the Lead Vertebrate Biologist will assist with preparation and administration before and after the field season. Activities include; field season planning, liaison with AAD staff involved in project support and logistics, purchase and packing of equipment, resource management, undertaking required training prior to departure for the season, report writing, routine processing of camera images, and data archiving.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR - ESSENTIAL

	When you need to provide evidence	
Required Identification/Qualification/Licence/Ticket	Provide copy with application	obtained prior to job commencement
Qualification – A degree or diploma in a relevant scientific or related discipline for an Australian tertiary institution, or a comparable overseas institution.	✓	
Driver's licence – Current, unrestricted "C" class (manual) Australian driver's licence	✓	
Citizenship - In accordance with the PS Act 1999, APS employees are required to be Australian citizens. Persons who are not Australian citizens will generally only be considered where there are no suitable Australian applicants, with next considerations being Australian residents with work rights and New Zealand citizens.	✓	
Valid Passport - The expiry date of the passport (and any relevant visa) must be at least 6 months beyond the planned end date of your intended stay in the Antarctic or sub-Antarctic		✓
Provide First Aid (HLTAID011) must be valid for at least 18 months beyond the date of AAD commencement.		✓
Provide basic emergency life support (HLTAID010) must be valid for at least 18 months beyond the date of AAD commencement.		✓
Provide CPR (HLTAID009) must be valid for at least 6 months beyond the date of AAD commencement		✓

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR:

Knowledge and experience:

- Recent experience in leading and implementing seabird monitoring programs.
- Previous experience using methods and equipment relevant to the Mawson seabird monitoring program, including conducting ground and aerial seabird population surveys; attaching and retrieving instruments to/from penguins and flying seabirds; monitoring breeding success; performing mark-resight studies; collecting samples to assess diet; and

operating and maintaining photographic and other scientific equipment, including image processing.

- Experience working in close proximity to seabird colonies, including the capture and handling of seabirds, and collecting biological samples (blood, faeces, feathers) effectively and ethically for research.
- Ability to prepare and lead a field program with minimal pre-season or on-ground training.
- Demonstrated adaptability and readiness to take on a wide range of tasks at short notice in dynamic field environments.
- Proven experience managing people, resources, and program outcomes effectively, with sound independent judgment on critical issues such as safety, animal ethics, and unexpected changes. Experienced in working within small teams in remote environments.
- Capable of training a team member in current scientific and operational aspects of the established monitoring program during the coming field season.
- Demonstrated ability to communicate with influence in oral and written form; well-developed communication and interpersonal skills.
- Experience in recording and managing field data in a thorough and organised manner, demonstrating strong organisational and report writing skills with attention to detail; including the ability to undertake routine and occasionally tedious data entry and processing tasks efficiently.
- Experience with software for data storage and manipulation (e.g. Microsoft Excel, Access, or R) and mapping (e.g. ArcGIS) would be an advantage. Capability in the analysis of ecological, population and/or monitoring data.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR - Desirable

- A drone pilots' licence with experience in surveying wildlife populations may be an advantage.

ELIGIBILITY AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Personal Qualities:

During the recruitment selection process, the AAD assesses individual personal qualities required to successfully live and work in an isolated Antarctic/sub-Antarctic community. Successful candidates need to demonstrate the personal qualities detailed here.

Pre-employment check:

Your suitability for employment will be assessed through pre-employment screening including National Police Check, referee checks, pre-employment medical assessment, specified mandatory qualification(s) validation and completion of required probation period.

Work Health and Safety Obligations:

All employees have a duty to take reasonable care of their own health and safety while at work, to ensure their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons in line with any reasonable instruction given to comply with the Work Health and Safety legislation.

RecruitAbility:

Under the APS (Australian Public Service) RecruitAbility scheme you will be invited to participate in further assessment for the vacancy if you choose to apply under the scheme; declare you have a disability; AND meet the minimum requirements for the position.

HOW TO APPLY

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