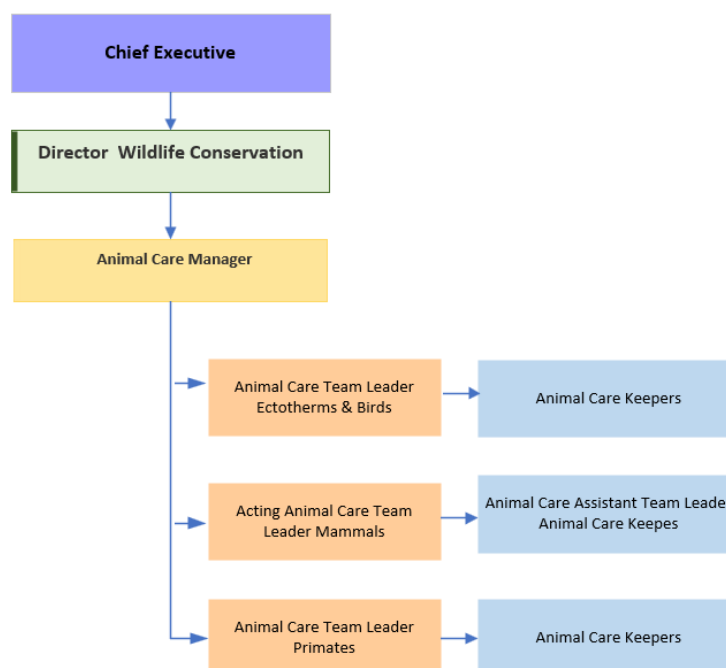


POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Animal Keeper – <i>Level One, Two and Three</i>
Reports To:	Animal Care Team Leader
Direct Reports:	Nil
Status:	Permanent Full-time <i>Fixed Term</i> <i>Permanent Part-time</i> <i>Casual</i>
Position Purpose:	<p>A Keeper is responsible for providing quality animal husbandry to meet the needs and welfare of a range of animals in the Zoo's care. Working within a team of other Keepers they will be allocated specific areas of responsibility within the Animal Care Team. These responsibilities include animal welfare, training, health care, nutrition, behavioural enrichment, record keeping, professional development, health and safety, conservation and sustainability and actively living the Zoo's values.</p> <p>Under the strategic direction of the Animal Care Manager (ACM) and with daily reporting and supervision provided by the relevant Animal Care Team Leader (ACTL), the Keeper position contributes to the development and implementation of new and innovative programmes, training and inspiring staff to embrace new philosophies as part of a cross-functional team. This role contributes to the Zoo's strategy of being the Zoo with the biggest heart and the strategic priorities of Oranga - a healthy organisation, Whānau - our role, Tinana - our animals, Hinengaro - our purpose, and Wairua - our community.</p>
DATE:	March 2026

Organisational Context:



Important Functional Relationships:

External

- Zoo visitors
- Staff of the Zoo's strategic partners
- Staff of related external agencies i.e.: – MPI, DOC, EPA, ZAA
- Zoo Sponsors and Donors
- International Stud Book Keepers
- Staff from other zoos

Internal

- Acting Animal Care Manager
- Animal Science Manager
- Chief Executive and Strategic Management Team
- The Nest Te Kōhanga Team
- Nutrition Centre Team
- Community Engagement Team
- Conservation Manager
- Visitor Services Team
- Zoo staff

The position of Keeper encompasses the following functions or Key Result Areas:

Animal Husbandry

Organisational Requirements

Animal Habitat

Health and Safety and Sustainability

Animal Records, Information and Species Planning

The requirements in the above Key Result Areas are broadly identified below:

Jobholder is accountable for

1. Animal Husbandry

- Deliver efficient and effective animal husbandry that enhances the outcomes of the Animal Care Team whilst assisting in delivering outcomes of the Zoo's Strategic Priorities.
- Assess and apply best practice husbandry to monitor and maintain exemplary animal welfare standards.

Animal Welfare

- Demonstrate an understanding of Five Domains of Animal Welfare, the WAZA Animal Welfare Strategy, the Animal Welfare Code and ZAA Animal Welfare policies.
- Under direction of the Team Leader complete health and welfare assessment of animals you work with.

Animal Behaviour

- Apply understanding of the behaviour, of a broad range of taxa, with the ability to monitor behaviours and suggest ways to improve welfare; implementing changes to ensure good welfare under the direction of the respective Team Leader
- Monitor and respond to breeding animal requirements.

Animal Health Care

- Assist with delivery of medical treatments and care to animals as directed by veterinarians; understand and follow quarantine and zoonotic disease prevention protocols.
- Assist with any health care husbandry that is required by any animal on the respective section.

Animal Dietary/Nutrition Needs

- Under the direction of the Team Leader develop daily diets, with the ability to prepare and present advanced dietary requirements for differing life care, behavioural and physiological needs of animals.

Animal Environment – Physical and Mental

- Use innovative ideas to ensure the animal's environment is stimulating and supports their mental and physical welfare whilst also enhancing the image of the Zoo and the visitor experience.

Capture & Restraint

- Apply best practice in capture & restraint for multiple taxa for introductions and transfers or any other situation where this is required.

2. Animal Habitat

- Implement developed rounds ensuring appropriate habitat maintenance, operations and containment is adhered to at all times.

Enrichment

- Develop, implement, document, monitor and review stimulating animal enrichment programmes.

Training & Conditioning

- Implement, document and maintain effective conditioning/training programmes for different species.

3. Animal Records, Information and Species Planning

- Use ZIMS for maintaining accurate animal records and accessing, analysing and retrieving records.
- Apply knowledge of Zoo's species planning criteria, and the need for sustainable animal populations and have ability to interpret species management and planning documents.

4. Organisational Requirements

Communication

- Maintain effective communication with staff and visitors.

Visitor Experience

- Connect people and animals through actively engaging with our visitors and providing Animal talks, Close Encounters and Behind the Scenes Experiences that inspire and facilitate conservation action.
- Live our values through taking pride in what the Zoo does and finding ways for others to be part of it.
- Ensure the Zoo is a voice to be heard through sharing knowledge and showcasing the Zoo's expertise.

Conservation & Sustainability

- Participate in agreed conservation programmes and demonstrate an understanding of the WAZA Conservation Strategy.
- Lead the way in modelling sustainable behaviours through actively promoting the Zoo's sustainability frameworks and look for the most sustainable way to perform daily work.

Strategy & Values

- Supporting the Zoo's strategy of being the Zoo with the biggest heart and the strategic priorities of Oranga - a healthy organisation, Whānau - our role, Tinana - our animals, Hinengaro - our purpose, and Wairua - our community
- Supporting the Zoo's strategy through actively living the Zoo's values of: We punch above our weight; We have a strong green furry heart; Welcome to our wild party; We are a voice to be heard.

5. Health and Safety and Sustainability

- Ensure any hazardous conditions, near misses, injuries and accidents are reported immediately to your Team Leader or ACM
- Participate in meetings, training and other health and safety activities
- Inform the Safety Improvement Team (SIT) about any areas of concern
- Meet employee responsibilities and contribute to providing a safe working environment for visitors and fellow staff through following safe working instructions and adhering to all health and safety policies and procedures set down by WZT
- Proactively contribute to a culture committed to the health and safety of our staff, visitors and volunteers
- Commitment to and delivery of the Zoo's sustainability strategy and initiatives.
- Ensuring responsibility for reduction of emissions in line with the Zoo's Toitū carbon zero targets.
- Contribute to a culture committed to health, safety and sustainability.

Note: The above performance standards are provided as a guide only. The employee will carry out duties in this job description and other reasonable instructions as required by WZT. The precise performance measures for this position will need further discussion between the jobholder and manager as part of the performance management process.

Qualifications & Experience

Level One

Experience working in a zoo keeping role or an equivalent animal-care related role. Has completed or is studying towards the National Certificate in Captive Wild Animals, Certificate in Zoo Keeping or an equivalent qualification.

Level Two

At least two years full time zoo keeping experience, or equivalent at another accredited zoo, aquarium or animal care facility of similar standing. National Certificate in Captive Wild Animals, Certificate in Zoo Keeping or an equivalent qualification.

Level Three

At least four years full time zoo keeping experience, or equivalent at another accredited zoo, aquarium or animal care facility of similar standing. National Certificate in Captive Wild Animals, Certificate in Zoo Keeping or an equivalent qualification.

Technical Skills

The required technical skills for Keeper Level Two include those listed for Keeper Level One.

The required technical skills for Keeper Level Three include those listed for both Keeper Level One and Keeper Level Two.

Animal Husbandry

Keeper Level One

- Knowledge of animal Husbandry Manuals and record keeping requirements.
- Maintains high levels of husbandry by combining a number of husbandry competencies.

Keeper Level Two

- Can assist with development of Husbandry Manuals.
- Knowledge of specialist requirements for different animals, (Animal biology and husbandry requirements relevant to habitats).

Keeper Level Three

- Ability to develop and implement a Husbandry Manual for any species in our care.

Animal Welfare

Keeper Level One

- Awareness of the Five Domains of Animal Welfare.
- Assists with animal welfare assessments based on Five Domains Model.
- Able to identify and report common indicators for the presence of disease, injury, compromised welfare, health distress in animals.
- Awareness of the role of euthanasia in a zoo context.
- Awareness of the need for regular animal welfare and health assessments.
- Knowledge of methods used to measure, interpret and record animal weight, behaviour indicators, and other objective measures of animal wellbeing.

Keeper Level Two

- Understands the Five Domains of Animal Welfare Model and the relationship between the physical domains and affective state.
- Ability to complete ZAA Animal Welfare Assessments based on the Five Domains Model.
- Understands the considerations needed between species requirements and individual animal requirements and needs.
- Ability to suggest modifications to behavioural enrichment programmes, training programmes and habitat to support positive animal welfare outcomes and to assess and review strategy.
- Identifies potential areas that breach (negative welfare state) the Five Domains of Animal Welfare
- Understands the role of euthanasia in a zoo context and can articulate the difference between medical euthanasia, responsive welfare euthanasia and proactive welfare euthanasia.
- Ability to complete an Aged Animal Assessment and Annual Health and Welfare Assessment and interpret how to consider an animal's affective state using the physical domains.

Keeper Level Three

- Can identify how practices support the Five Domains of Animal Welfare and also identify potential areas/situations contributing to negative welfare states using the Five Domains model. Can solution problem solve and implement change with the direction of the respective Team Leader.
- Ability to advise and train staff on ZAA Animal Welfare Assessments based on the Five Domains Model
- Ability to implement behavioural enrichment programmes, training programmes and habitat modifications to provide full positive welfare state to animal while in habitat
- Assesses animal habitats and management practices to ensure positive animal welfare
- Can articulate how the euthanasia evaluation tool provides a decision-making framework regarding euthanasia based on the positive welfare state and welfare of an animal or on conservation, species management or group welfare grounds
- Ability to assess an animal's welfare state within the Aged Animal Assessment and Annual Health and Welfare Assessment and show ability to consider all the physical domains against the affective state domain.
- Ability to train staff on how to complete and interpret an Aged Animal Assessment and Annual Health and Welfare Assessment.

Animal Behaviour**Keeper Level One**

- Ability to distinguish between normal and abnormal behaviours.
- Demonstrated knowledge of basic animal behaviour and the potential effects that may change in human care.
- Ability to record/monitor behaviour.
- Ability to identify risks or potential danger from animal behaviour to the health and safety of staff and visitors.
- Understanding the role of training and/or conditioning techniques.
- Understanding of the importance and implementation of enrichment for species and individual specific needs.

Keeper Level Two

- Ability to make accurate and objective observations of animal behaviour, monitoring and assessments and to record these in clearly written reports.
- Demonstrated knowledge of the potential changes to animal behaviour in human care both positive and negative.
- Able to assist with creating suitable conditions for introductions and breeding.
- Able to recognise courtship, copulation, aggression and signs of behavioural and physical changes associated with reproduction and gestation.
- Can monitor and respond to breeding animals' requirements.
- Ability to recognise and respond to behavioural signs and physical changes associated with gestation and impending births or hatchings.
- Ability to assist in the training of new staff.
- Understanding of animal behaviour and the potential considerations and dangers for own health and safety and that of staff and visitors.
- Understanding a range of training and/or conditioning techniques, terminology and tools used to train/condition behaviour.
- Knowledge of natural biology and individual history of species being trained/conditioned.
- Demonstrated understanding of principles of animal learning.
- Can use appropriate terminology to describe and document health and behavioural signs and symptoms and repertoires, including desirable and undesirable behaviours.
- Be able to assist in writing an introduction plan.

Keeper Level Three

- Ability to apply and monitor behavioural management strategies suitable for animal species and stage of development
- Demonstrated knowledge of animal behaviour and husbandry across a broad range of taxa.
- Supervise preparation of suitable environments for birthing and hatching.
- Can recognise and respond to behavioural indicators that may suggest the need to remove offspring from the group
- Ability to monitor and respond to reactions and behaviours of transferred or introduced animals.
- Can write a training plan and condition a behaviour with a range of animals having specific needs and requiring varied approaches.
- Capable of developing breeding action plans.
- Competent in the planning of behavioural observations of species/individuals.
- Ability to manage/assist with a habitat re-design and fit-out.
- Ability to write an introduction plan.
- Can compile clear and concise team reports on enrichment to ACM both verbal and written.
- Ability to develop and implement an enrichment plan and prepare enrichment checklist and calendar. Can review, evaluate and plan recommendations from observation from plan implemented.

Animal Health Care**Keeper Level One**

- Knowledge of basic anatomy, physiology and signs of compromised health in animals
- Can assist with collecting (non-invasive) diagnostic biological samples for veterinarians
- Ability to learn, understand and follow quarantine and zoonotic disease prevention protocols.
- Can assist with delivering medical treatments as prescribed by the veterinarians

Keeper Level Two

- Ability to discuss potential treatments with Veterinarians and administer medication as prescribed
- Has a good working knowledge of zoonotic diseases and quarantine protocols regarding the animals they work with.
- Has knowledge of animal medical emergency response procedures, able to assist veterinarians and Team Leader/POC for respective section.
- Is capable of assisting with hand rearing/management of birth if required.
- Ability to manage aged animals and animal health care considerations

Keeper Level Three

- Ability to suggest course of action regarding the wellbeing or treatment of any animal in our care
- Can create and maintain quarantine and zoonotic disease prevention protocols
- Ability to lead an animal emergency response procedure and assist veterinarians
- Capable of hand rearing if required.

Animal Dietary Needs**Keeper Level One**

- Ability to prepare and present diets to animals appropriately.
- Has a basic understanding of the requirements for feeding out live food animals.
- Ability to monitor and feed back to the Team Leader on elements of behavioural dietary changes/concerns for a species or individual
- Ability to assist in monitoring and recording animal weight and condition body scoring.
- Has a basic understanding of how to use diet/nutrition in enrichment and training.

Keeper Level Two

- Can recognise and investigate signs of nutritional concerns or issues in animals
- Ability to review and discuss alterations of diets in liaison with the Team Leader based on specific animal needs (breeding, training, age, medical issues).
- Demonstrates requirements for the care of live food animals.
- Ability to interpret, monitor and record animal weights and condition body scoring.
- Can monitor animal dietary intake and effects.
- Understands the use of diet/nutrition in enrichment and training, and the considerations required.
- Knows where existing enrichment documentations/reports are located and can access them.

Keeper Level Three

- Can formulate/amend animal diets considering species/individual requirements
- In liaison with the Team Leader, is able to plan for and alter nutritional requirements for changed animals' dietary needs (change on group size, seasonal changes)
- Ability to implement, review and monitor an enrichment plan for a species.
- Can review and create diets for a range of species using research.

Capture & Restraint**Keeper Level One**

- Has an awareness of how to assist in the capture, restraint and transport of animals.
- Can use safe and humane procedures for handling, restraining and moving animals.
- Able to assist with husbandry preparations for animal introductions.
- Can assist with monitoring of transferred or introduced animals.
- Ability to maintain capture and restraint tools and equipment.
- Has an awareness of how to safely use handling/restraint equipment and transport containers in accordance with manufacturers' specifications.

Keeper Level Two

- Ability to capture, restrain and transport animals and use safe and humane procedures for handling, restraining and moving animals.
- Knowledge of capture and restraint of multiple species.
- Can assist in developing plans for capture and restraint, internal animal moves, animal introductions or transporting of animals.
- Demonstrates an ability to monitor and respond to reactions of transferred or introduced animals.

Keeper Level Three

- Ability to train staff in capture and restraint and develop plans for capture and restraint.
- Demonstrates an ability to capture and restrain multiple species.
- Ability to improvise based on situation and animal's condition and adapt capture and restrain procedures, animal introductions and animal transfers
- Implement and instructs team on best practice capture and restraint and documentation and correct reporting procedures on capture and translocation events.
- Comprehensive knowledge of requirements for authorising capture and restraint procedures, animal introductions and animal transfers.

Animal Habitat and Environment

Keeper Level One

- Can perform daily habitat cleaning following SOPs.
- Awareness of workplace quarantine, hygiene standards; disinfectants, cleaning agents, cleaning techniques and cleaning equipment and materials
- Can check and maintain animal safety and containment daily, promptly reporting problems.
- Maintains animal habitats; carries out routine basic maintenance and reports maintenance requirements as required.
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- Ability to assist with the effective introduced species (pest) management/control procedures.
- Awareness of the species' biological and ecological requirements and the considerations in human care.

Keeper Level Two

- Knowledge of specialist habitat types for different species and individual animals (animal biology and husbandry requirements relevant to species).
- Facilitates workplace quarantine, hygiene standards, disinfectants, cleaning agents, cleaning techniques and cleaning equipment and materials.
- Able to provide environmental enrichment for animals consistent with species enrichment plan.
- Understands the concept of habitat design considering both species and individual needs and assists with habitat re-design and fit-out as required.
- Can assist with husbandry preparations for animal introductions and can monitor transfer or introduced animals.

Keeper Level Three

- Can develop daily animal husbandry rounds (care, feeding and cleaning)
- Knowledge of specialist habitats for different animals. Animal behaviour and husbandry requirements relevant to habitat design and able to design habitat for specific species.
- Ability to act as an animal advocate for project development teams for major construction, able to read, interpret and prepare project briefs and read basic technical drawings.
- Ability to identify and provide materials reliant on behavioural needs such as housing, nutrition, feeding, habitat maintenance and breeding for a species.
- Able to provide environments, plans and procedures for introductions and breeding.

Animal Records, Information & Species Planning

Keeper Level One

- Basic understanding of the importance of animal record keeping.
- Can collect and record animal data following professional standards, policies and procedures.
- Knowledge of ZIMS Animal Record system. Identify animals within our care to taxonomic family level, using distinguishing characteristics.
- Identify issues, behaviours and events requiring recording.
- Basic understanding of reproductive data using correct terminology

Keeper Level Two

- Ability to access, analyse and retrieve records using ZIMS Animal Record system.
- Understands and demonstrates the purpose, process and importance of accurate daily record keeping.
- Ability to correctly identify individual specimens promptly and accurately, using correct terminology and able to record data
- Awareness of principles of Wellington Zoo Trust and ZAA's species management plans and collaborative management programmes
- Understands in situ and ex situ conservation.
- Awareness of legislation impacting on animals in our care
- Assist with recording of development and reproductive data using correct terminology

Keeper Level Three

- Ability to assist Team Leader with section related management.
- Ability to read and interpret species management documents.
- Clear understanding of difference between assumption and known fact and implications for species management.
- Ability to assist with administering a species studbook if available and required.
- Understands the documents and legislation required for transport of species within and across organisations.
- Able to develop breeding action plans.

Visitor Experience**Keeper Level One**

- Ability to communicate to different audiences.
- Able to present Close Encounters/Behind the Scenes Experiences/Animal Talks.

Keeper Level Two

- Ability to deliver an engaging face to face presentation using the Power Talk methodology.
- Can contribute to the improvement of a presentation/experience using the Power Talk methodology.
- Ability to present a number of different species Close Encounters/Behind the Scenes Experiences/Animal Talks.

Keeper Level Three

- Can contribute to the development of presentations/Close Encounters/Behind the Scenes Experiences/Animal Talks.
- Ability to communicate to different audiences through a variety of methods.
Ability to do media interviews if trained and required.

Conservation & Sustainability**Keeper Level One, Two & Three**

- Recognise and appreciate the need to engage and facilitate community action for conservation gain onsite.
- Be aware of current community conservation campaigns and deliver priority conservation and sustainability messages as required.
- Participate in Zoo's conservation programmes.
- Ability to demonstrate sustainable practices in daily activities.

Strategy & Values**Keeper Level One, Two & Three**

- Ability to understand and demonstrate how their work contributes to achieving strategic priorities and being the Zoo with the biggest heart
- Demonstrates behaviours aligned with the Zoo's Values