

May 2019

Connecting Country position description Volunteer Biodiversity Data Officer

Connecting Country is a community-operated organisation working across the Mount Alexander region to connect people and landscapes in ways that support a healthy, resilient and productive natural environment.

Connecting Country is immensely grateful for the generous contribution of our committed volunteers, who make it possible to achieve our aims. In turn, Connecting Country strives to support and empower volunteers to become agents for the restoration of landscapes across the Mt Alexander region, for the benefit of our community and environment.

Position overview

The Biodiversity Data Officer is responsible for collating and uploading Connecting Country's existing fauna records into the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas. This is an opportunity to get involved in Connecting Country's activities, gain experience in biodiversity data entry and contribute to wildlife management in Victoria.

Connecting Country's biodiversity monitoring began in 2010 and is central to our ongoing efforts towards habitat restoration and healthy environments in the Mount Alexander Region. Rigorous, long-term monitoring is essential to determine if threatened species are declining, or on-ground habitat restoration is successfully increasing populations of at-risk species, such as brush-tailed phascogale and woodland birds. Connecting Country monitors birds, arboreal mammals, and frogs and reptiles. To date we have collected over 23,425 bird records.

The Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA) is a web-based information system designed to manage information about native and species present in Victoria. The atlas includes species attribute information, including origin and conservation status, along with more than seven million records of species distribution and abundance. The VBA incorporates data collated from many different sources, as well as the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning's (DELWP) own data.

The VBA species observations are a foundation dataset that feeds into many biodiversity tools used in DELWP's everyday decision making - showing where wildlife is now and how this has changed over time. It provides a core input to government processes, decisions and programs that impact native species.

Entry of fauna records into the VBA is an essential part of Connecting Country's ongoing efforts towards habitat enhancement and healthy environments in the Mount Alexander Region. Adding records to the VBA is also a way to influence a range of government investment, regulation and management decisions.

This is a part-time role (one day per week) based in the Connecting Country office in Castlemaine, Victoria.

Required skills

This position requires the ability to:

- Communicate effectively and seek help when required.
- Pay close attention to detail.
- Work both independently and as part of a small team, being flexible as the situation demands.
- Plan and manage time, tasks and workload.
- Be responsible, reliable, adaptable and solution-focussed.
- Use Microsoft Excel, online databases and other relevant software.

The following qualifications are not essential, but may be an advantage:

- Work or volunteer experience with an environmental, natural resource or community organisation.
- An appropriate qualification related to environmental science, natural resource management or similar.
- Practical experience managing and curating data.
- Previous experience uploading data to the VBA.

Tasks

Tasks include:

- Develop and maintain understanding of the VBA and how to use it.
- Enter data from Connecting Country's database into the VBA Batch Upload templates.
- Upload data into the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas.
- Communicate with team members and other relevant contacts.
- Provide clear and timely updates on activities.
- Comply with health and safety requirements.
- Act in accordance with legal responsibilities, as well as Connecting Country's policies and procedures.
- Other tasks as required and as determined in consultation with the Monitoring Coordinator.

Organisational relationships

The Biodiversity Data Officer reports to the Connecting Country Monitoring Coordinator.

They liaise internally with Connecting Country's staff, and may liaise externally with data collection volunteers, project partners, government agencies, land managers and other community groups.

Training and equipment

Connecting Country will provide:

- Office space and equipment including computer and relevant software.
- Volunteer staff induction.
- Training on how to use the VBA.
- Access to a motor vehicle, if required for work purposes.
- Reimbursement for pre-approved, work-related expenses.
- Ongoing support for the role.

Background checks

All staff and volunteers must provide the following information, if requested:

- Curriculum vitae and references.
- Photo identification.
- Driver's licence and driving history.
- Proof of qualifications.

All personal information as treated as confidential and handled in accordance with relevant privacy laws.

Other information

Connecting Country:

- Strives to provide a safe and healthy environment for all people involved with us.
- Is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.
- Is committed to the safety and welfare of children and operates in accordance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards.
- Requires staff and volunteers to obtain a Working with Children Check, where relevant to the role.