# JOB DESCRIPTION

## Seasonal eDNA Great Crested Newt Surveyor

**Location: Cambs, Herts, Essex**

**Full-time position, but may consider four day week**

- **Employer:** FWAG East Consultancy Ltd (Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group)
- **Team:** Pond Delivery & Monitoring Team
- **Contract Type:** Fixed-Term/ Temporary (Monday 12 April – Friday 9 July 2027)
- **Working Hours:** Full-time (four day working week will be considered)
- **Location:** Field-based across Essex, Cambridgeshire, and Hertfordshire (with occasional hybrid/office reporting)
- **Remuneration:**
  **£13.25 per hour** + Business Mileage Expenses Covered
- **Reports To:** Pond Project Manager / Senior Ecologist

**Role Overview**

FWAG East works in partnership with farmers, landowners, and Natural England to create and restore high-value farmland ponds under the Great Crested Newt (GCN) District Level Licensing (DLL) scheme.

We are seeking a motivated, well-organised Seasonal eDNA Surveyor to join our pond team during the peak spring survey window. Ideally a full-time role (though part-time hours will be considered for the right candidate), you will be responsible for collecting environmental DNA (eDNA) water samples and conducting rapid habitat assessments across newly created and restored DLL ponds in Essex, Cambridgeshire, and Hertfordshire. Your work will provide vital monitoring data to track the ecological success of our landscape-scale conservation projects.

**Key Responsibilities**

- **eDNA Field Sampling:** Carry out environmental DNA water sampling at assigned ponds across Essex, Cambridgeshire, and Hertfordshire, strictly adhering to Natural England's approved eDNA collection protocols to prevent sample cross-contamination.

- **Habitat Assessments:** Complete standard Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessments and record basic pond condition metrics (e.g., water levels, aquatic macrophyte establishment, shading, and surrounding terrestrial habitat) during site visits.

- **Landowner Liaison:** Contact farmers and landowners in advance to arrange site access, confirm biosecurity protocols, and act as a polite, professional ambassador for FWAG East on working farms.

- **Biosecurity & Health and Safety:** Strictly follow "Check, Clean, Dry" biosecurity procedures between waterbodies to prevent the spread of invasive non-native species and amphibian diseases (such as chytrid fungus). Adhere to lone-working and rural health and safety procedures at all times.

- **Sample Logistics & Data Management:** Label, store, and dispatch eDNA kits to the accredited laboratory within required timeframes. Accurately input field data, GPS/grid references, and site photographs into FWAG East's database or GIS system.

- **Route Planning:** Plan efficient daily travel schedules across the three counties to meet survey deadlines within the strict 15 April – 30 June biological window.

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**Person Specification**

| Criteria | Essential | Desirable |
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| **Qualifications & Training** | • Full, clean UK driving licence. | • Degree or equivalent qualification in Ecology, Conservation, Environmental Science, Agriculture, or a related discipline.<br>• Current First Aid at Work or Outdoor First Aid certification. |
| **Experience & Knowledge** | • Demonstrable interest in UK wildlife conservation, farmland ecology, or freshwater habitats.<br>• Experience working independently outdoors in all weather conditions and navigating rural terrain. | • Previous experience conducting GCN eDNA water sampling or Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessments.<br>• Experience liaising with farmers, landowners, or working within an agricultural environment.<br>• Basic identification skills for UK amphibians and common wetland plants. |
| **Skills & Competencies** | • High attention to detail and ability to follow strict scientific and biosecurity protocols without deviation.<br>• Strong organisational and time-management skills to plan multi-site routes effectively.<br>• Good written and verbal communication skills for landowner coordination and accurate record-keeping.<br>• Basic IT literacy (smartphones/tablets for field apps, spreadsheets, email). | • Familiarity with digital mapping tools (e.g., QGIS, ArcGIS, OS Maps, or mobile field data collection apps like Survey123). |

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| **Personal Attributes & Logistics** | • **Access to own reliable vehicle** insured for business use to travel extensively across Essex, Cambs, and Herts (mileage expenses covered).<br>• Self-motivated, reliable, and comfortable lone working.<br>• Willingness to work flexible hours as required by travel and weather conditions. | • Based within or easily commutable to Essex, Cambridgeshire, or Hertfordshire. Own laptop and smartphone. |

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**How to Apply**

To apply, please email a **one-page covering letter** and a **one-page CV** to **ponds@fwageast.org.uk** by **Friday 15 January 2027**.

In your covering letter, please outline:

1. Your relevant previous experience.
2. Why you want this role and your interest in conservation.
3. How you meet the criteria outlined in the Person Specification (including your availability for full-time or part-time hours).
4. Your full contact details including address, email and mobile number.

*Note: Interviews will be held on **Friday 29 January 2027**. Due to the strict biological survey window starting on 15 April, successful candidates must be available to start on **Monday 12th April 2027** for induction, visit planning and equipment handover.*