

Head Keeper – Crocodiles of the World

Location: Brize Norton, Oxfordshire, UK

Contract: Full-time, roster-based (includes weekends & bank holidays)

As we continue to grow, Crocodiles of the World is excited to introduce a new role within our award-winning team. The UK's only crocodile zoo – is seeking a dedicated and experienced Head Keeper to lead our Animal Department. This is a hands-on leadership role at the heart of our mission to inspire, educate, and conserve. If you're passionate about exceptional animal care, developing people, and driving operational excellence, we'd love to hear from you.

About Us

Crocodiles of the World is home to the largest collection of crocodiles and alligators in the UK, and one of the most significant in the world, we are continually growing with new expansion plans underway. Our mission is centred on education, conservation, and inspiring visitors through safe, up-close encounters with these incredible reptiles. Alongside the 19 species of crocodylians, we are home to numerous different reptile species including Komodo Dragons, Galapagos Tortoise, Tree Monitors, Greys Monitors, Lace Monitors, Emerald Tree Boas and Green Anacondas, as well as a range of small carnivores, small primates and felids such as Binturong, Cotton Topped Tamarins and Clouded Leopards.

About the Role

As Head Keeper, you will provide day-to-day operational leadership for the zoo keeping team, ensuring the highest standards of animal care, welfare, safety, and visitor experience. You'll play a key role in shaping the future of our collection and supporting the wider zoo through expert oversight, innovation, and a commitment to best practice.

Key Responsibilities

Team Leadership

- Lead, support, and develop the zoo keeping team.
- Conduct training, performance reviews, and workforce planning.
- Foster a positive culture built on teamwork, innovation, and high performance.

Animal Care & Husbandry

- Work on site as part of the hands-on daily zookeeping team.
- Oversee and set standards for husbandry, welfare, behavioural management, and record-keeping.
- Act as point of contact for operational animal-related issues.
- Manage animal records, databases, and health & safety documentation.

Visitor Experience

- Ensure animal areas are presented to an excellent standard each day.
- Support out-of-hours events and animal-related media, donor, and VIP interactions.
- Promote Crocodiles of the World's conservation work and contribute to exhibit development and refurbishment.

Operational Management

- Act as Duty Manager when required.
 - Uphold a positive, proactive health & safety culture.
 - Assist with emergency procedures and the zoo's Firearms Team operations.
 - Support zoo licensing compliance, documentation, and professional collaboration with other zoos and associations.
 - Encourage research and scientific thinking within the team.
 - Set standards and protocols for enhanced visitor/animal contact experiences.
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About You

Essential Experience

- Significant experience working with a diverse range of species in a zoo setting.
- Proven experience leading people within an operational environment (mentoring, scheduling, performance management).
- Experience developing animal projects, enclosures, or exhibits to a high standard.

Essential Skills & Knowledge

- Advanced understanding of animal behaviour and best-practice management.
- Strong knowledge of relevant taxa, conservation issues, and population management.
- Good working knowledge of health & safety procedures.
- Strong communication skills and confidence engaging with varied audiences.
- Innovative thinker with the ability to implement new ideas.

Desirable

- Degree or equivalent experience in zoology, biology, or a related field.
 - Experience with zoo licensing and emergency procedures (including firearms teams).
 - Experience overseeing zoological project developments.
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Additional Requirements

- Comfortable working outdoors in all weather and in high-temperature indoor environments.
 - Physically able to meet the demands of an active, labour-intensive role.
 - Commitment to safeguarding, diversity, inclusion, and ethical practice.
 - Availability to work on a rota including weekends and bank holidays.
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Why Join Us?

This is a rare opportunity to shape the future of a unique, conservation-focused zoo with an international reputation. You'll work alongside passionate experts, contribute to meaningful conservation initiatives, and inspire thousands of visitors each year.

How to Apply

To apply, please send your CV and a covering letter outlining your relevant skills and experience to: jobs@crocodilesoftheworld.co.uk

Your CV should include:

Full name, address, and contact details

Employment and educational history

Names and contact details of two referees (one must be your current or most recent employer; references will only be contacted for shortlisted candidates)

Closing Date for Applications: 28th February 2026

Interview Location: In person or online – by arrangement