

Working for a river catchment with healthy fresh waters and wildlife, valued and enjoyed by local people

Our background - RTCT are a small grassroots environmental charity operating across Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire founded in 2012 when a group of local naturalists, farmers, riparian landowners and anglers came together. Their original interest was to safeguard and enhance the river catchment they loved which had been deteriorating for some years in terms of its water quality and associated wildlife health. RTCT has built on the motivation that galvanised those first volunteers to become a registered charity with a very small team of paid staff supported by a strong group of local trustees and an ever-growing band of active and engaged local people who volunteer on a range of practical tasks and surveying across the catchment. (www.riverthame.org)

The Trust works closely with Freshwater Habitats Trust (www.freshwaterhabitats.org.uk) on some projects as both organisations are joint catchment coordinators for the Thames in partnership with the Environment Agency.

RTCT work with local people in rural and urban areas to improve biodiversity of watercourses and freshwater features and to improve public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the river and its wildlife.

Our aims:

1. **Increase our understanding of the freshwater habitats and species of the Thame catchment and monitor changes in them** - gathering and evaluating a range of biological data. Either from ourselves (through growing our volunteer programme) or data held by others.
2. **Improve biodiversity by practical habitat works on the ground** - working directly with farmers, landowners and volunteers to carry out on the ground projects in and around existing freshwater habitats to make them better for wildlife and to create new habitats – especially where they are needed to create biodiversity corridors and passages across the catchment. In particular, we will seek to create ‘catchment resilience’. We also work with and through other organisations and networks to influence habitat /land management where it affects the Thame.
3. **Improve water quality** - we do this by increasing chemical and biological monitoring, setting in place comprehensive coverage across the catchment through citizen science initiatives. We want to capture both gradual changes over time or one- off incidents that occur that may not be picked up by Environment Agency or Thames Water’s own monitoring.
4. **Improve knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the freshwater environment** with local people and increase recognition of freshwater habitats in local planning.

The River Thame Catchment– covers the freshwater habitats within the river’s catchment area across Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire; the main river, its tributaries, its headwaters and the small freshwater areas of ponds, ditches and flushes. This broad remit recognises the well documented crucial role smaller freshwater areas play in biodiversity.

NOW RECRUITING – Project Officer - River Thame Conservation Trust

Are you an all-rounder who combines sound knowledge of freshwater ecology and citizen science with the ability to engage and communicate well with a wide range of people? Do you enjoy a varied role working part office based, part outdoors across Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire where you have autonomy in your day to day work but also the support and guidance of a friendly team of experienced colleagues? Do you have a can do, enthusiastic attitude and track record of making things happen on the ground?

If so, you could be just the person we're looking for! An exciting opportunity has arisen for a freshwater scientist to join us in a rewarding and varied Project Officer role, based at the Freshwater Habitats Trust's office in Headington, Oxford. You'll play a leading role planning and delivering water quality improvement and biodiversity projects across the River Thame catchment. You'll be involved in our thriving volunteer programme, managing citizen science and other data gathering and analysis to monitor change in our river and to report to funders. You'll continue our good work of building constructive relationships with landowners, farmers, partner organisations and local communities to successfully deliver practical on the ground projects to make our catchment better for wildlife and people.

The package - Salary £22,000 - £28,333 pa subject to experience, flexible working, 6% company pension, 30 days leave (annual leave and public holidays) and pleasant office surroundings within Bury Knowle Park, Oxford. (We'll also provide some wellies!). This post is full time and initially a two-year fixed term contract with the intention to continue the post subject to funding.

Applications: please see the full job description and person specification and if you think you fit the bill, send a current CV (max 2 sides A4) with a cover sheet (max 2 sides A4) outlining how your experience and expertise meet the job requirements we've outlined and why you'd like to work for RTCT to louise@riverthame.org

Closing date: Friday 17 November 2017

Interviews: Friday 24 November 2017 in Oxford.