

Vulture Conservation Foundation – Job Specification-Description: **Bearded Vulture captive breeding assistant**

Job Title

Full-time Bearded Vulture captive breeding assistant, Vallcaient, Spain

Overall purpose of the job

To support the VCF's Bearded Vulture captive breeding manager and Bearded Vulture EEP coordinator on all tasks

Reporting to

VCF Bearded Vulture captive breeding manager

Background

The wildlife rehabilitation center Vallcaient is one of the five rehabilitation stations from the Generalitat of Catalonia, located in the outskirts of Lleida, and includes two departments:

1. Wildlife Rehabilitation Department, which includes the Hospital and the rehabilitation facilities
2. Project Department, which includes different captive breeding units: the barn owl, the Bearded Vulture, and the lesser grey shrike

The Bearded Vulture unit occupies a 0.5-hectare area and includes 8 aviaries. Additionally, 2 other aviaries inside the Rehab area are destined for the Bearded Vulture.

The Vallcaient Bearded Vulture unit is an integral part of the Bearded Vulture EEP (Endangered Species Programme), managed by the VCF, for conservation purposes – to produce young for reintroduction projects.

The Vallcaient Bearded Vulture unit uses its long-lasting expertise to receive Bearded Vulture pairs with behavioural-difficulties which have not reproduced in other institutions or birds with physical difficulties. This requires accurate analysing, specific management, periodically vet attention for reproduction and/or artificial incubation to obtain descendants. Currently, it houses 12 birds, with very valuable bloodlines from the Pyrenees, Crete and mainland Greece (a population which has disappeared). Consequently, the Vallcaient Bearded Vulture unit has a significant genetic diversity and is important for the Bearded Vulture reintroduction projects.

Furthermore the manager of the Vallcaient bearded vulture unit coordinates also the Bearded Vulture EEP. It is one of his responsibilities to advice all EEP partners and to edit and update the guidelines of this international captive breeding program.

As a result of the manager's experience, the Vallcalent Bearded Vulture unit participates in all bearded vulture reintroduction projects as well as in captive breeding programs of other vulture's species. This means to advice first releases through the hacking method in new reintroduction projects, involving long stays in the release site.

Summarizing, the goals of the Bearded Vulture captive breeding Unit from Vallcalent are:

- Reproduce behaviourally-difficult birds
- Reproduce founder or/and handicap birds
- Use imprinted birds as foster parents
- Adoptions of hatchlings
- Advice EEP partners
- Edit and update guidelines of the captive breeding programme
- Participate in all Bearded Vulture conservation projects approved by the VCF/EEP
- Advice Bearded Vulture new reintroduction projects
- Vulture advice on technical/behavioural aspects

Main duties & responsibilities

Outside of the breeding season, data management and the maintenance and cleaning of the aviaries are the most important tasks. During the breeding season (November-May) tasks related with bird monitoring, artificial incubation and chick rearing are more relevant.

- Daily bird monitoring, including through video camera system and recordings
- Daily food preparation and storage
- General maintenance and cleaning
- Reconstruction of the nests (includes preparation of nest material: e.g. wool wash)
- Management of vegetation cover inside and outside the facilities
- Monitoring evolution of pair bonding and breeding
- Capturing of birds if needed (e.g. by appearing strong fights)
- Monitoring artificial incubation (egg control, thermal shock, adapt incubation parameters in relation to egg/embryo evolution, etc.)
- Rearing of chicks
- Collection and storage of all monitoring data
- Assist with the preparation of all the captive breeding technical guidelines and documents
- Assist with the production of annual reports
- Assist with the contact with all the Zoos and centres in the network
- Substitute the captive breeding manager when he is on holiday or travelling
- Organizing and participating on the transfer of birds, including administrative tasks (CITES, Government authorizations, TRACES)



- Participate in situ on releases in new reintroduction projects

Education - Skills - Experience required

- ✓ University degree level general education
- ✓ At least 3 years professional experience on captive breeding, or handling of animals
- ✓ A strong motivation to work with animals and contribute to vulture conservation
- ✓ Previous experience with vultures preferred
- ✓ Good organizational and planning skills, ability to determine and set work priorities, organise activities and an ability to adhere to deadlines
- ✓ Fluency in Spanish and English
- ✓ Able to travel 6-10 times a year

Job Location

Vallcalent centre, Lleida, Spain

Salary and benefits

Starting at 1,377€ monthly/gross during the six-month trial and/or first year, with potential for increase, dependent on experience, qualifications, and performance. Travel expenses covered.

Documents requested

CV plus cover letter in English, to be sent by the 20th April to recruitment@4vultures.org in one single pdf file.