RBAPS Shannon Callows Project – Maternity Cover
Job Description

Post Title RBAPS Project Officer (Maternity Cover)
Department Conservation
Main place of work Banagher, Co. Offaly
Immediate Line Manager RBAPS Project Manager
Period covered 8th January – 29th June 2018.

BirdWatch Ireland is looking for a suitably qualified person to provide maternity cover (January – July 2018) for the Results Based Agri-Environment Payments Scheme (RBAPS) Shannon Callows Project Officer.

Background
Payments for results based schemes are related to specific biodiversity outputs (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/rbaps/index_en.htm) and thus differ from traditional agri-environment schemes (AES), where payments are solely based on adherence to prescribed actions. A number of schemes have already been successfully implemented across Europe, including one established scheme in Ireland, the Burren Farming for Conservation programme; a second scheme is currently being trialled through a LIFE project on the Aran Islands.

In 2014, the European Commission issued a call for projects to further develop and implement results based schemes in Europe. The overall aim is to gain an increased understanding of the factors that contribute to the success or failure of such schemes, with a view to promoting their adaptation in the next Rural Development Programme.

A consortium of partners from Ireland and Spain was successful in securing funding to trial schemes from the period January 2015 to December 2017 across the 3 pilot areas, Leitrim and the Shannon Callows in Ireland and Navarra in Spain. The project is led by the European Forum on Nature Conservation and Pastoralism (EFNCP); other partners include the Institute of Technology Sligo (Sligo IT), BirdWatch Ireland, the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), High Nature Value Services Ltd. and Gestión Ambiental de Navarra. The project is 70% funded by the EU Commission with co-funding provided by project partners with the support of The Heritage Council, The Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine and Teagasc.

The project trialled schemes in the three areas through the design, set-up, management and monitoring of pilot schemes on working farms. In each area, schemes were focused on the delivery of specific biodiversity outputs. Farmers participated in management agreements for either one or two years, focused on the delivery of these outputs. RBAPS on the Shannon Callows trialled two schemes, one for species rich meadows (with or without ground nesting birds) and one for breeding waders (Lapwing, Curlew, Redshank and Snipe). We are seeking to provide maternity cover for the Shannon Callows to carry out any outstanding analysis and input to end of project reporting on both the breeding wader scheme and the species rich meadow with ground nesting birds scheme.

Overall Purpose of the Job:

During the period of maternity cover, the successful applicant will assist with, quantitative and qualitative analysis of farmer attitudes and economic effects of participating in the RBAPS scheme; collation and inputting to end of project reports; and dissemination of project results. Additional work on BirdWatch Ireland projects based in the Shannon Callows area may also be required.

The relevant person will have experience of national Agri-environment Schemes (REPS, AEOS, GLAS and NPWS Farm Plan Scheme) and ideally have experience of results based schemes; data analysis and collation and report writing. See below for a full person specification.

Main Tasks:

Tasks related to the completion of the RBAPS project:-

- Assessment of overall scheme performance against the project goals.
- Assist with the assessment of stakeholder attitudes to RBAPS.
- Assist with the economic assessment of participation in the scheme.
- Assist with the assessment of costs of administering the scheme.
- Collation of all data and maintenance of GIS databases for the scheme.
- Contribute to relevant documents, including all end of project reports due to the commission in May 2018.
- Assist with dissemination of project results to the Local Action Group, stakeholders, general public and scientific community.

Additional tasks, linked to related BirdWatch Ireland work, may from time to time be required, to include:-

- Survey and monitor breeding waders at key sites in the Shannon Callows as part of a wider monitoring programme.
- Undertake field scoring assessments against the selected indicators and discuss the results with the participant farmer, if required.
- Provide guidance and training to farmers on how scores may be improved, if required.
- Determine ownership and land management on Callows sites as required.
- Monitor and assist in the maintenance of a predator proof fence operational at a key site.
- Liaise with the NPWS Predator Control Operator.
- Carry out practical management work during the breeding season, including operation of a sluice and pump at a key site to create optimum conditions for breeding waders.

Terms and Conditions

Applicants will be required to provide an average of 35 hours per week over a five day period. Your normal working hours are 09.00 – 13.00 and 14.00 – 17.00 Monday to Friday. Employees are expected to be co-operative in working outside these hours if necessary and the post holder may be expected to work longer hours as the project requires during key times. Time off may be taken in lieu of extra hours worked. The salary for this position is €24,000–€28,000 per annum, pro rata. A car will be provided for work use. Leave entitlement is 20 days per annum, pro rata, plus statutory holidays.

Please complete the application form available on the BirdWatch Ireland website (www.birdwatchireland.ie *see jobs section*) or contact Michelle Kavanagh, 01-281-9878 or email mkavanagh@birdwatchireland.ie. Please include a CV.

Application forms should be sent to **mkavanagh@birdwatchireland.ie** (please put "RBAPS Project Officer (Maternity Cover)" in the subject box) or by post to BirdWatch Ireland, Unit 20 Block D, Bullford Business Campus, Kilcoole, Co Wicklow.

Closing date for applications: 5pm on 24th November. Interviews will be held on Tuesday 5th December in Banagher, Co. Offaly. Anticipated start date is 8th January 2018

Person Specification

Essential criteria	Desirable criteria
Qualifications	
Third level qualification or equivalent in an environmental or related subject	
Experience	
Experience of producing published reports and scientific papers	Liaison with farmers/landowners, including provision of advice on management of farmland for biodiversity.
Experience of data analysis, quantitative and qualitative analysis	Experience working with dry stock
Experience of the delivery of land management actions, particularly on farmed land.	Knowledge of factors affecting breeding wader populations in Ireland.
Experience of GIS software	Knowledge of predator tracks and signs
Experience of surveying and monitoring species and habitats, particularly birds and breeding waders	Organising training events and / or workshops
	Experience of working with habitat management contractors
Skills and abilities	
Competent bird identification skills	Experience producing advisory materials, newsletters etc
Ability to work within the project area	
Ability to communicate clearly with the media and the public, both verbally and in writing	
Ability to work well with minimum supervision, be delivery and priority focused and responsible in relation to Health & Safety considerations	
Ability to work well as part of a team, be accountable to peers and take the lead when appropriate	
A full driving licence	
Knowledge	
Knowledge Agri-environment policy, CAP and the factors affecting the agriculture industry in Ireland	Understanding of breeding wader ecology
Familiarity with agricultural habitat types and an understanding of agricultural practices and their impacts on breeding waders and farmland biodiversity	Understanding the sensitivities of the Irish farming community
Disposition/circumstance	
Willing to undertake lone working in accordance with agreed safety procedures	
Ability to work occasional weekends and evenings	