

Job Vacancy:

Tern Warden, Lady's Island Lake – Summer 2025

Lady's Island Lake, Co. Wexford

Background

BirdWatch Ireland is Ireland's largest conservation charity concerned with the protection of birds and biodiversity. A key part of our conservation work over many decades has been the protection and monitoring of nesting terns at a number of sites. Given that each of Ireland's breeding tern species is currently 'amber-listed' and the fact that terns were amongst the species groups most heavily impacted by avian flu in recent years, the conservation and enhancement of breeding terns in Ireland remains a key focus for BirdWatch Ireland.

Lady's Island Lake in Wexford is a shallow, brackish coastal lagoon which is designated as an SPA for breeding Roseate Tern, Common Tern, Arctic Tern, Sandwich Tern, Black-headed Gull and other species. The terns and gulls nest on two small islands in the lake. The site holds the second largest colony of Roseate Terns in Europe, the largest Sandwich and Arctic Tern colonies in Ireland, and the second largest Common Tern colony in Ireland. Lady's Island also hosts one of the largest Black-headed Gull colonies in Ireland. The aim of the conservation project at Lady's Island is to maximise the survival and breeding success of all Tern species at Lady's Island Lake by minimising disturbance and predation, in order to fulfil Ireland's legal obligations under the EU Birds Directive. Since the early 1980's a number of management actions have been carried out each year by the National Parks and Wildlife Service and landowners to maximise the suitability of the site for these colonies. Key to the breeding success of these species at Lady's Island has been the presence of wardens throughout the summer months to monitor the colonies and identify and address any threats.

Overview of the role

Subject to a successful tender bid, BirdWatch Ireland will be seeking to appoint two suitably qualified wardens at Lady's Island for the 2025 breeding season. The responsibility of the wardens is the protection and monitoring of the tern colony and includes the following duties:

- Predator monitoring and management including rat control.

- Set-up of nesting areas with suitable electric fencing, hides and nestboxes.
- Ringing of chicks, under BTO and NPWS license.
- Surveillance of the colony to identify emerging threats such as predators or disturbance, and taking action to address these.
- Promoting awareness amongst the visiting public, to seek their co-operation in minimising human disturbance.
- Monitor the number of nesting pairs and breeding productivity of the priority tern species, according to standardised methodologies.
- Writing a detailed end-of-season report summarising the 2025 breeding season.
- Regular communication with BirdWatch Ireland and NPWS staff throughout the season.

The role will begin on an initial part-time basis in March, followed by a full-time basis from the start of April to August (exact end date tbc). Wardens are expected to base themselves in proximity to the site for the duration of the breeding season and to be available to work and visit the site outside of normal hours as needed to address specific threats and problems.

Requirements

The successful applicants must be very self-motivated and meet the below requirements:

Necessary

- A degree in biology or related discipline or previous proven experience working on conservation projects.
- Prior experience working in seabird colonies.
- Experience carrying out census and productivity surveys in seabird colonies.
- Full clean drivers license.
- BTO licensed bird ringer (experienced trainee at a minimum).
- Excellent bird identification skills.
- Report-writing and data collection experience.
- Excellent communication skills and ability to work as part of a small team.
- Awareness of ecology and conservation issues surrounding terns and gulls.

Desirable

- C-permit or higher level bird ringing permit with seabird ringing experience.
- Experience with predator monitoring and control including deployment of rodenticides following CRRU guidelines.
- Experience erecting and operating electric fencing.
- Powerboat license (level 2)

Pay

Salary and any other benefits to be determined following outcome of tender process. It is expected that BirdWatch Ireland will be able to make a contribution towards accommodation costs.

How to Apply

[Please download and complete a BirdWatch Ireland application form here.](#)

Closing date for applications: Wednesday 22nd January at 17:00. Interviews will be conducted that week.

Applications can be emailed to recruitment@birdwatchireland.ie

Or posted to: BirdWatch Ireland (Recruitment), Unit 20, Block D, Bullford Business Campus, Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow A63 RW83.

Please contact recruitment@birdwatchireland.ie with any queries.

Please note that BirdWatch Ireland expects to be in a position to advertise for other seasonal fieldwork positions for summer 2025 in the coming weeks. If your application is unsuccessful for this post, you will be considered for other suitable positions that may arise.