FREE FLIGHT BIRDS DIVISION ZOOKEEPER VOLUNTEER

Cluster/Agency	Climate Change, Energy, the Environment & Water - Environment & Heritage
Division/Branch/Unit	Taronga Conservation Society Australia
Location	Taronga Zoo
Role Type	Volunteer
Time Commitment	1 regular day per week – 12-month commitment. We understand that holidays, illness and events come up; however, volunteers are expected to make a genuine commitment to attending their rostered shifts.
Shift Times	7:40am-4:00pm
Training & Onboarding	Volunteer Induction, eLearning modules, Working with Children Check and any role-specific training.
Date of Approval	November 2026

Department/Agency Overview

The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) includes the Office of Environment and Heritage. Taronga Conservation Society Australia (Taronga) forms part of the DCCEEW in The Environment and Heritage Group.

Primary purpose of the Taronga Volunteer Roles

Taronga volunteers support the Taronga Conservation Society Australia to achieve our vision of Securing a Shared Future for Wildlife and People. Through our efforts we protect endangered species, increase understanding of wildlife and inspire community action.

About the Free Flight Birds Team and our Volunteers

From playful parrots and homing pigeons to majestic owls and birds of prey, the Free Flight Birds Team cares for a diverse range of bird species, while delivering Taronga's iconic Free Flight Birds presentations. The Team is dedicated to exceptional animal welfare, training, enrichment, and memorable experiences that inspire guests to become advocates For the Wild!

As a Free Flight Birds Volunteer Zookeeper, you will work alongside dedicated and experienced Keepers to support the daily care and wellbeing of a diverse collection of bird species, while gaining hands-on insight into avian husbandry, animal behaviour, enrichment, training, and presentation delivery.

A unique feature of this role is the opportunity to assist behind the scenes with Taronga's beloved Free Flight Birds presentations. From preparing props to supporting bird releases and assisting with operations, volunteers play an important role in helping deliver engaging wildlife experiences for thousands of guests each year.

ABOUT THE ROLE

Key Responsibilities of the Free Flight Birds Zookeeper Volunteer

- Preparing animal diets and browse
- Assisting with enrichment preparation
- Cleaning and maintaining habitats and holding areas
- Cleaning equipment, bowls, windows and operational areas
- Supporting feeding, training, presentations or husbandry tasks
- Observing and reporting animal behaviour

What to Expect



Average of 12,000 steps per day



Assisting with animal presentations



Minimal hands-on animal contact



Attention to detail and following instructions

A Typical Shift

7:40-8:00	Arrive at the office and join the morning meeting. Begin morning husbandry routine
8:00-10:00	Clean the Homing Pigeon aviary, prepare enrichment, and prepare stage area
10:00-10:15	Morning Tea
10:15-11:15	Prepare goal-based enrichment, observe or assist in training sessions
11:15-12:00	Prepare for Free Flight Birds presentation. Set up parrot stations with rewards, arrange crates and place props
12:00-12:45	Assist in delivering Free Flight Birds; cameras and audio, bird release and pack up/clean up
12:45-13:30	Lunch
13:30-14:15	Prepare enrichment, observe or assist in animal training sessions or behaviour watches
14:15-15:00	Prepare for Free Flight Birds presentation. Set up parrot stations with rewards, arrange crates and place props
15:00-15:15	Assist in delivering Free Flight Birds; cameras and audio, bird release and pack up/clean up
15:15-16:00	Pack up post-show, clean enclosures/crates and wash up equipment and food bowls

Animals on our Division

- Vultures, kites and buzzards
- Multiple owl species
- Cockatoos, including galah, sulphur-crested cockatoo, Carnaby and red-tailed black cockatoo
- Domestic chickens and rats
- Homing pigeons

REQUIREMENTS AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Essential Role Requirements

This role requires volunteers to have a reasonable level of fitness and to independently undertake the inherent physical, environmental and cognitive requirements of the position for the full scheduled shift while working safely within operational animal care environments.

Volunteers must be able to:

- Undertake physically active tasks including walking, cleaning, lifting, carrying, pushing and pulling.
- Safely work across a range of indoor and outdoor operational environments, including uneven terrain and varying weather conditions.
- Understand, remember and independently follow written and verbal instructions, procedures and safety processes.
- Maintain awareness of their surroundings and respond appropriately to changing operational and safety conditions.
- Maintain concentration and attention to detail when undertaking routine and repetitive tasks that are essential to animal husbandry, operational requirements, and workplace safety.
- Independently meet all essential role requirements and safely undertake all duties for the full shift duration.

Selection Criteria

As part of your application, you will need to address the following criteria:

- Demonstrated interest in or experience with avian training, behaviour and husbandry.
- Ability to work flexibly and proactively in a physically active, fast-paced, and dynamic environment.
- Ability to maintain concentration, situational awareness, attention to detail and a high standard of work when undertaking routines and operational tasks.
- Demonstrated ability to work respectfully within a diverse team and closely follow instructions, procedures, and workplace health and safety requirements.
- Demonstrated commitment, punctuality, reliability and ability to maintain regular attendance and fulfil all requirements of this role.

Diversity & Inclusion

Taronga has an equal opportunity, merit-based recruitment process and is committed to providing an inclusive volunteer program. We encourage applications from people with diverse backgrounds, experiences and abilities and, where possible, reasonable adjustments will be considered throughout the recruitment process and volunteer experience. As some requirements of this role are inherent to the operational environment and nature of the work, we encourage applicants to review this Role Description and reach out to us if they have any questions.