BACKYARD TO BUSH 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 fortnight – 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 Backyard to Bush Team and our Volunteers

The Backyard to Bush (B2B) Team cares for a diverse collection of Australian native and domestic animals, ranging from invertebrates and reptiles to mammals, birds, and farmyard species. The B2B team is dedicated to providing exceptional animal welfare, while creating engaging and memorable experiences that connect guests with wildlife and inspire a passion for conservation.

As a B2B Volunteer, you'll work alongside our passionate and experienced Keepers and gain hands-on insight into animal husbandry, welfare, behaviour, and modern zoo operations. Volunteers support the daily care of a diverse range of native Australian and domestic species while helping maintain the high standards of animal care provided across Taronga. Located on the popular Kids Trail, B2B attracts a high volume of guests each day. Volunteers play an important role in creating positive guest experiences by engaging with guests from diverse backgrounds, providing excellent customer service, sharing information about animals, and conveying key conservation messages that inspire guests to become advocates For the Wild!

ABOUT THE ROLE

Key Responsibilities of the Backyard to Bush 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
- Engaging with guests of all ages and backgrounds

What to Expect



Average of 15, 000 steps per day



Guest Experience focus – talking to guests



Attention to detail/following instructions



Physically demanding

A Typical Shift

07:40-10:15	Arrive at the office and find out your rounds for the day, cleaning windows, raking exhibits, spot picking, preparing and collecting food.
10:15-10:30	Morning Tea
10:30-12:15	Washing up, food preparation, kitchen clean down, cleaning exhibits, collecting and trimming browse.
12:15- 13:00	Lunch
13:00-15:30	Making animal enrichment, final feeds, animal observations, final checks.
15:30-16:00	Clean down and record keeping.

Animals on our Division

- Snakes and lizards
- Invertebrates, including spiders
- Kangaroos
- Echidnas
- Emus and other bird species
- Quokkas and wombats
- Rabbits, guinea pigs, and mice
- Farm animals including sheep, alpacas, and goats

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.

Selection Criteria

As part of your application, you will need to address how your skills and experience meet the following criteria:

- Demonstrated interest or experience in animal husbandry and welfare.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills, a friendly manner, with the ability to confidently interact with and provide excellent customer service to guests of all ages and backgrounds.
- Ability to maintain concentration and attention to detail when undertaking routine and repetitive tasks.
- Ability to work flexibly and proactively in a physically active, fast-paced, and constantly changing environment.
- Demonstrated commitment, reliability and punctuality, with the ability to maintain regular attendance and fulfil the 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.