



An exciting opportunity in the Vallée des Baux, Provence

To work as Voluntary Centre Manager as part of the A Rocha's creation care and conservation ministry in one of the most biodiversity-rich areas in Europe. The post is ideal for a Christian couple (or individual).

The vision for A Rocha France here in Provence is *"to be a community for conservation and research in Vallée des Baux and surrounding areas"* demonstrating God's care for the stewardship of the planet, maintaining the bio-diversity of the area and heeding the call for us to work together to achieve this in practical ways. This work has been developing here for 20 years. A Rocha France is part of the wider fellowship of A Rocha International. A Rocha projects, *"have a community emphasis bringing together people from widely differing backgrounds to work towards common goals,"* which include, scientific research, community-based conservation, environmental education, equipping the church and in a context of being very aware of the impact of climate change.

The role we seek someone for is that of volunteer Centre Manager for the house and for the community working here. The work includes general management of the house, practical work, helping with the administration of the centre and sharing the pastoral and spiritual work. The role is a great opportunity to work with different nationalities and ages and to live in community with people who have a concern for the conservation of the local environment. It offers a huge variety of interest and many surprises and delights. In addition to the specific areas of work there is the opportunity to get involved in supporting the field-work by participating and helping in a variety of ways, from holding a ladder to logging birds in the bird count, from catching dragonflies to cutting back brambles, from ensuring tools are working to spotting frogs! It is not all work though as there is free time to visit the locality and to get to know this beautiful part of the world.



The details - The Centre Manager role has several strands to it and these include keeping house, helping to run the administration of the centre and also includes a spiritual and pastoral role among the community living and working here.

The house itself is a community where people live together and need to be mutually aware and have a commitment to working together and supporting each other. It is a community which seeks to demonstrate a care for the environment both locally and globally.

The three strands of the role are as follows:

- i. Practical
- ii. Administration
- iii. Spiritual

Practical - In a practical sense the Centre Manager (CM) manages the house and sets the pattern for meals etc. The hope is that the CM will work with the people in the community to set patterns of work and rest which make for a good atmosphere and good relationships. The practical work falls into several areas.

- i. **Food** - the CM will shop for provisions for the house on a weekly basis. Working within a budget and with due regard to the importance of environmental concerns of reducing food miles, using seasonal produce, reducing waste, reducing single use plastic. To live in a more sustainable way we eat a vegetarian diet with meat and fish occasionally. The CM will organise the cooking rota and work with the resident interns to make sure that there are enough ingredients for breakfast, lunch and evening meal. The main meal is shared at lunchtime and this is the main community meal for the day.
- ii. **House maintenance** - the cleaning of the house needs to be shared by all who are living in the house. A rota may be needed for corporate areas but each person is responsible for their own room, for cleaning it, washing and changing bedding etc. The CM will take a lead in ensuring that the garden area is well looked after and involve others as appropriate. The CM will also keep an eye on minor repairs and maintenance and where possible carry out the small tasks and arrange for someone to come in for the bigger tasks. The CM also oversees and tries to reduce the amount of waste and to recycle as much as possible.

iii. **Cars and cycles** - the CM will keep an eye on the cars, ensure they are fuelled (usually done when visiting the supermarket to save fuel), ensure that tyres are properly inflated, clean cars as appropriate, take cars to garage when needed. There is a log book in each car for mileage to be logged and this is then put onto a spreadsheet to provide information on the use of the cars by the various projects. The personal mileage is also logged and charged to the people using the cars for their own use. Cycles are available for use and they often need servicing or repair.

Administration

Again this falls into several areas:

- i. **Finance** - It is a real help to the Director if the finance recording can be done by the CM. This task is fairly simple and a matter of recording any receipts, categorising them and copying them into a .jpg and uploading them onto the Quick Books software. In addition the production of invoices for activities, everything from people coming for meals, to personal use of the car and invoicing any services which have been carried out on behalf of some of our partners. Having an overview of income and expenditure is also helpful and keeping track of budgets will help the Director in his role. Also, there is a small amount of banking which needs to be done.
- ii. **General Administration** - including receiving and processing mail, and handling any correspondence to help the Director. Helping with office duties such as filing, sorting out ordering and ensuring that resources are available when needed. In addition, liaising with ARF France concerning general and specific issues of administration, record-keeping etc.

Spiritual

The CM has an eye for the spiritual well-being of the community, being aware of the needs of the household and offering pastoral support where appropriate. The CM represents A Rocha in offering a welcome and hospitality that encourages visitors and household to feel part of what is going on. An important part of this is praying for the community and for the work of A Rocha in VdB. We welcome a number of volunteers who are not Christians but who are supportive of the work and committed to the community. The role includes scope for developing the pastoral and spiritual life of the work and to witness to the community in word and deed.

Essential qualities:

- Christian with a heart for God's call to be good stewards of the planet and committed to the values of ARF - <https://www.arocha.org/en/work/> and with an interest in the environment, conservation and the natural world
- A heart for people and for sharing in community with others
- Flexible and able to adapt to the place and the people
- A willingness to serve in the practical, administrative and spiritual life of the centre

Desirable qualities:

- Willingness to commit to undertake the role for at least 6 months
- Clean driving licence
- Functional knowledge of French language
- Standard Computer skills: email, word-processing, excel etc

Details and how to apply:

This voluntary role offers an opportunity to live and work in such a beautiful place and to serve the community working here. It is not paid but comes with accommodation in the centre. The current Centre Manager(s), who are retired, have made a donation covering the cost of their food which helps with the running of the centre.

The post is immediately available and if you are interested and want to find out more then you can speak to the current Centre Managers:
David and Jenny Bird: drbirdis@gmail.com

or with the Director:
Timothée Schwartz: timothee.schwartz@arocha.org

