Volunteer role description: Jurassic Fossil Re-boxing

Background
The Jurassic vertebrate collection includes around 5,000 specimens, ranging from small isolated teeth to near-complete skeletons of dinosaurs and marine reptiles. Many were collected in the 1800s and are important both historically and scientifically.

The re-boxing project began in July 2019 and has been progressing well. We would now like to recruit two more volunteers to join our small team and help us continue the work.

About the opportunity
Volunteers will help with tasks including:

- handling fossil specimens, some of which may be fragile and/or delicate
- making bespoke boxes out of archival card, using a craft knife and cutting mat
- lining the boxes with conservation-grade material (acid-free tissue paper and/or Plastazote), and placing specimens in them
- gently cleaning specimens and associated labels, where appropriate, and placing labels in archival polyester envelopes
- organising boxes to fit in drawers

Who are we looking for?
Manual dexterity, a sense of care, and a methodical approach are all important for this role.
Our ideal volunteer will:

- be confident and careful using a craft knife to accurately cut archival card and Plastazote
- be safe and careful handling fossils and labels in order to avoid damaging them
- be practical and organised, and won’t mind doing potentially repetitive tasks
- be happy getting on with the task-at-hand (following instruction) but feel able to ask questions if unsure of something
- be comfortable carrying light loads
- have a prior interest in palaeontology, geology, zoology, collections management, and/or the conservation of museum objects – although no prior knowledge is required, and enthusiasm is more important than expertise

Why volunteers might enjoy this opportunity
It’s a chance to:

- see behind-the-scenes in the Museum’s Earth Collection
- get hands-on with some really interesting fossils
- learn a bit about collections care and gain experience using some basic conservation techniques and materials
• contribute to a project helping to protect our objects and preserve them for the future

**Timing and location**
Volunteers will ideally help 1 regular day per week (Monday - Friday), starting in April 2020. However, the opportunity is flexible, and volunteering will be organised by mutual agreement. A full day would be 10am - 3pm, including coffee and lunch breaks. We anticipate the project taking up to 6 months, but with a review after 2 months.

Volunteers will be trained and supervised by the Earth Collections Manager (Hilary Ketchum), and although they will be working relatively independently, they will be based in her office, and she will be on hand to offer guidance and answer any questions they may have.

**Induction and training**
Full induction and training will be provided, to be arranged at mutually convenient times.

**Other practicalities**
- Volunteers can claim reimbursement of travel expenses up to £4.30 per volunteering session upon presentation of original tickets or receipts.
- This opportunity is open to volunteers aged 18+.
- This role does not require a Right to Work.
- For breaks, volunteers will have access to the staff kitchen/common room, with fridge, microwave, and free tea and coffee. They can bring their own packed lunch; otherwise, there is a café upstairs in the Museum.

**Next steps...**
If you’re interested in potentially getting involved, then please email Caroline at volunteering@museums.ox.ac.uk by Sun 8th March, including:
- Why you would like to be involved (a paragraph is fine – no essays please!)
- An example of a time when you have had to work carefully and/or methodically
- An indication of your potential availability

She will pass applications on to Hilary Ketchum, the Collections Manager, for selection after that.