



be part of the team

Residential volunteering on
RSPB nature reserves



"I couldn't have picked
a better place, or had
a better experience."

Sarah Hudson, Coll



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Join the team

The RSPB Residential Volunteering Scheme began in the late 1970s. Now, after nearly 40 years, we offer places at 48 sites in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

If you are interested in nature and the environment, this is an ideal opportunity to help our conservation work, gain practical or people engagement experience, meet new people, explore new areas, enjoy a working holiday or simply make good use of your spare time, whilst keeping fit in the great outdoors.

For more information about our work or joining the RSPB, please contact us (details are on the back cover).

Find out more at rspb.org.uk

We aim to make sure our residential volunteers:

- feel welcome, are valued and thanked
- understand what the RSPB is and does
- are part of the team and included in appropriate social events
- receive appropriate training and supervision
- know who they can talk to if there are problems or difficulties
- know who they are answerable to
- receive regular and constructive feedback
- have safe working conditions
- have adequate insurance cover
- are taken seriously
- can say “no” to unreasonable requests
- have an acceptable standard of accommodation
- enjoy their volunteering.

We ask our volunteers to:

- extend to your fellow volunteers and staff the same degree of courtesy you would expect to receive
- adhere to the RSPB’s rules, procedures and standards, including health and safety and equal opportunities
- be reliable and responsible – you are acting as advocates of the RSPB
- respect confidentiality
- inform us immediately if you have to cancel a booking or will be arriving late
- carry out the agreed work
- give constructive feedback if appropriate
- be accountable and accept constructive feedback
- take part in relevant training
- ask for support if you need it
- keep accommodation in a clean, safe and tidy state.

Catherine Bullen (rspb-images.com)



Working together to save nature.

Ric Elise (RSPB)



Working as part of a team to help nature at Rathlin Island.



"I enjoyed being
useful and feeling
that I was able to
make a contribution."

Lauren Walker at Titchwell

Your questions answered

What do residential volunteers do?

The work varies from reserve to reserve. It often includes practical management tasks, working with visitors and helping with survey work. Here are some examples:

- cutting, clearing and burning dead vegetation
- directing visitors to points of interest and showing them wildlife
- surveying, such as counting rare butterflies
- staffing visitor centres
- managing livestock
- general chores, including litter picking, visitor centre cleaning.


Please note that the RSPB is not a bird or animal welfare organisation. We do not have the expertise or facilities to cater for sick birds, so you will not be involved in work of this kind.

Who can take part?

Nature has no borders, and neither do we.

Anyone over the age of 16 can be a residential volunteer, but some reserves can only accept over 18s. If you're from outside the UK, unfortunately there are some restrictions. Please see page 45 for details.

We're committed to doing everything practically possible to make our residential volunteering an enjoyable, inclusive and safe experience, open and accessible to as wide a range of people as possible. We'll be pleased to hear from you whatever your ability, gender, national and ethnic background, sexual orientation, religious and political belief and marital status.

You're very welcome to volunteer on your own, but if you'd like to volunteer with a friend or partner, we can accommodate you on some reserves, in double or twin bedded rooms, providing you both participate. Each person should complete a separate application, and indicate on it that you're happy to share a bedroom. These spaces are not available at every location, so please send in your application as early as possible to avoid to avoid disappointment. Look for the  symbol for the reserve entries from page 9.

We have different tasks that suit different interests.

Practical management tasks are an important part of our work at most of our locations, so if you're doing this, you should be prepared to undertake strenuous manual labour outside in all

weather. Tasks can be repetitive and may involve walking long distances over rough terrain. However, we will not ask you to do anything beyond your capabilities.


Visitor experience tasks are also crucial to our mission to save nature, and this can involve membership recruitment and meet and greet activities. These opportunities are less strenuous, but you will need to feel happy talking to people. They are available mainly through the summer months, April to September.

When you apply, please tell us about any medical condition or disability that may affect your volunteering. There is a section on the application form for you to give us details, together with any medication you take regularly. It is important that you give as much information as possible, so that we can take all necessary steps to ensure your safety, should an emergency arise. Please take any medication with you, and on arrival tell your line management where you will leave it. All information you give us will be kept strictly confidential.

We welcome applications from volunteers with disabilities, but please bear in mind that there are limitations at some reserves, due to the nature of the location, tasks or accommodation. Based on any information you give us, we will give full consideration to your request. If you have a disability and would like to volunteer, please contact us for more information about the most suitable sites. We're experienced in advising to ensure you get the best possible experience.

We're always pleased to accept applications from placement students who need to undertake a period of volunteering as part of a college or university task. Please apply well in advance, and tell us if there is any project work you need to complete, together with any paperwork from your project officer. Please note, however, that we're unable to guarantee that we can meet your specific requirements, and we do not enter into contracts with, or behalf of, our volunteers (ie the Erasmus+ programme).

Do I need any special skills or experience?

You will not need special skills for most of the volunteering opportunities we have. However, some reserves need volunteers who have good bird identification skills and these are noted in the reserve details in this brochure – look for the  symbol.

A genuine interest in and enthusiasm for birds and wildlife conservation is essential.

You should be willing to help, even with mundane jobs. At reserves where the work includes helping visitors, you must feel comfortable talking to people. Volunteers from overseas must have good conversational English. Long-term placements usually require a driving licence so that you can drive RSPB vehicles.

Is there any charge to take part? There is no charge to take part in the scheme.

It is your responsibility to cover the cost of your transport to and from the reserve, and to provide and cover the cost of your food during your stay.

The RSPB will provide accommodation, together with basic services, free of charge for the period you are volunteering, and cover any expenses incurred as a necessary part of your work on the reserve.


Where will I be staying?


Accommodation varies from reserve to reserve, but we aim for it to be safe and clean and to meet basic standards. We provide a cooker, cooking utensils, cutlery, crockery, a fridge and food storage at all reserves. We expect you to maintain the volunteer accommodation accordingly, and to report any

Key

On the following pages you will find a guide to all our reserve placements. Each entry will have a combination of the following symbols, to help you compare the placements and decide which is best for you.

ST1 Short-term/long-term placement and minimum stay in weeks.
LT4

 Internship place(s) available. See page 44 for details.

 Research, surveying and species protection work. Good bird identification skills required at some locations at certain times.

16+ Minimum age.

issues to your line manager immediately. You are expected to provide and cook all your own food. Unless told otherwise, please take provisions for at least two days: you will be able to obtain further supplies locally.


Not all accommodation has central heating – some may have an open fire or wood-burning stove instead.


At most sites you need to bring your own pillowcase and sheets/duvet cover, or a sleeping bag. Pillows, duvets and blankets will be provided. Most, but not all, reserves have items such as a washing machine, TV, microwave, iron, etc. However, TV reception is a problem on a few sites and **an internet connection is a rarity**. Reserve details containing all this information will be sent to you along with your booking confirmation. Please note, all our bedrooms are single sex. We do not put men and women in the same bedroom unless they are partners or related. If you are booking with someone else and wish to share a room with them, please indicate this on the application form. We will do our best to accommodate your wishes, but this is not always possible.


We can't guarantee whether or not anyone else will be volunteering during your stay, or tell you the gender of other volunteers. It's possible that you will be staying alone in a remote location. Please consider this when choosing a nature reserve.

Please note: pets are not allowed on RSPB reserves, or in the volunteer accommodation. All buildings, vehicles and accommodation are non-smoking.

More frequently asked questions can be found on pages 43–45.

 People engagement work – membership recruitment, guided walks, shop/café work and showing people wildlife.

 Suitable for couples.

 Practical estate maintenance, and habitat and species management work. Livestock farm work at some locations.

Where would you like to go?



Residential volunteering in England



"I spent a wonderful week with committed staff and volunteers."

Elaine King

England

Unavailable for 2022

Aire Valley reserves West Yorkshire

LT26 ST2     18+

What? Fairburn Ings and St Aidan's are products of the coal mining industry, now restored to nature with open water, wet grassland, reedbed, dry grassland and woodland. Just a stone's throw from Leeds and Wakefield, they are important havens for wildfowl, wading and farmland birds as well as bitterns and bearded tits. The reserves are home to butterflies, dragonflies and small mammals including harvest mice. Both Fairburn and St Aidan's have visitor centres with well-established trails, while Fairburn is a popular family site.

When? **Short-term:** one placement available all year.
Long-term: one long term volunteer, and one practical intern only.

Where? Railway station at Castleford (3 miles/ 4.8km from Fairburn Ings) and Micklefield (5 miles/8km). Very limited public transport; pick up by prior arrangement. Accommodation is 1.25 miles/1.9km from the Fairburn Ings visitor centre in a semi-detached house with three bedrooms, each with a single bed. Car or bicycle useful, bicycle is available.

Why? Practical habitat management and estate maintenance throughout the year, including woodland work and scrub bashing in winter. Infrastructure maintenance and invasive species control in summer. Work may be strenuous and repetitive. Some wildlife survey or monitoring work, particularly in spring and summer.

Who? Call the team on 01977 628191 or 0113 232 0529.



Bearded tit

Mike Richards (rspb-images.com)

Aylesbeare Common Exeter, Devon

LT26     18+

What? Part of the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths, originally formed by river deposits during the Jurassic Era, Aylesbeare Common now makes up one of the largest areas of lowland heathland in South West England. The reserve is nationally important for its populations of Dartford warblers, nightjars, southern blue damselflies and a wide range of both heathland and woodland species.

When? **Short-term:** no placements available.
Long-term: three placements available all year.

Where? Railway station at Exeter (8 miles/13km from reserve). Regular bus route (9A or B). Car or bicycle useful. Accommodation is a newly-built log cabin with one single and two double bedrooms, next to the office and close to the reserve.

Why? Practical habitat management work all year round, bird surveys, vegetation surveys, farm work, estate work, working with livestock, assisting with events and working within the wider team in Devon. Work can be heavy at times with scrub clearance and tree-felling over the winter months, and bracken control during summer.

Who? Call Fiona on 01395 233655.



Bog asphodel

Andy Hay (rspb-images.com)

Bempton Cliffs Bridlington, East Yorkshire

LT12      18+

Kevin Grocock



Puffins

- What?** Spectacular 120-metre (400-foot) chalk cliffs supporting England's largest seabird colony. Almost 500,000 seabirds make Flamborough and Bempton their home during summer, including guillemots, kittiwakes and puffins. The reserve is also home to the UK's largest mainland gannetry. In summer, you will also find beautiful carpets of red campion flowers, and grassland with farmland birds such as corn buntings, tree sparrows, skylarks and meadow pipits.
- When?** **Short-term:** no placements available.
Long-term: three placements available.
April to July inclusive for seabird research.
March to September for learning and social media.
- Where?** Railway station at Bempton (1.5 miles/2.4km from reserve).
Local bus routes to Bempton village (1 mile/1.6km from reserve).
House in Bempton village, one single bedroom and a twin room.
- Why?** **Long-term placement one – seabird research assistant.** Monitoring populations and breeding success throughout the colony. An integral part of the team, you will help deliver research and monitoring priorities for the season.
Long-term placement two – learning assistant. Leading our school and youth group education sessions to inspire our young visitors, using fun resources, games and play.
Long-term placement three – social media assistant. Regularly updating social media to promote Bempton Cliffs. This may include photographing and videoing events and activities.
- Who?** Call Dave on 01262 422204

Blacktoft Sands Whitgift, East Yorkshire

LT26 ST1      16+

Sara Marcias Rodriguez (RSPB)



Blacktoft Sands lagoon management

- What?** This is the largest tidal reedbed in England, where 270 bird species have been recorded. In summer, the reserve is especially important for breeding marsh harriers, avocets, bearded tits and bitterns, while in spring and autumn the saline lagoons attract large numbers of migrant wading birds. In winter, good numbers of ducks and wading birds can be seen, as well as hen harriers and merlins. The reserve has up to 26,000 visitors a year, mostly between April and September.
- When?** **Short-term:** placements for individuals, couples or a pair of friends available all year.
Long-term: one long-term placement all year.
- Where?** Railway station at Goole (8 miles/13km from reserve).
A bus passes by the reserve entrance. Volunteers are housed nearby, in a modern, semi-detached house, with one single and one twin bedroom.
- Why?** Year-round duties include all aspects of reserve wardening including practical management, bird and other wildlife monitoring, people engagement, livestock work and estate maintenance. During spring and summer there will be an emphasis on bird monitoring and people engagement, while autumn and winter work will largely be land management, which can be physically demanding. You may be asked to help with work at other reserves along the Humber Estuary.
- Who?** Call Dean on 01405 704665.

England

Burton Mere Wetlands Burton, Cheshire

LT26    18+

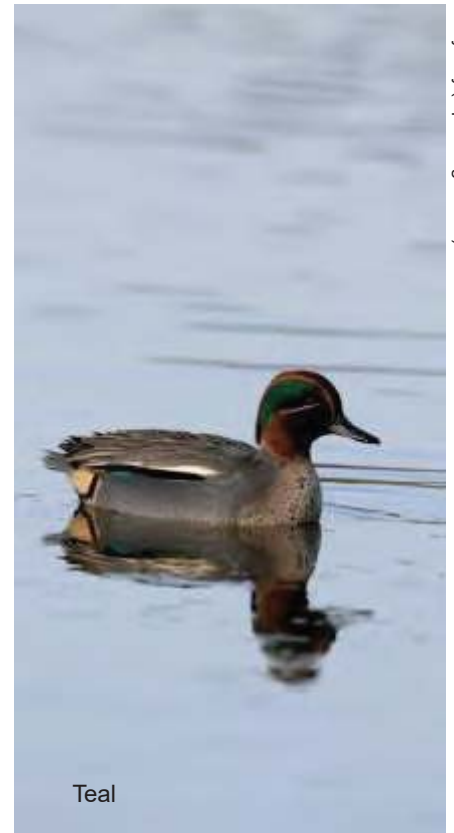
What? The hub of the Dee Estuary nature reserve. Over 6,500 hectares of Special Area of Conservation saltmarsh, hosting internationally important numbers of wintering ducks and geese and overwintering raptors. In spring, brilliantly diverse wet grassland hosts over 100 pairs of lapwings and over 50 pairs of avocets, as well as a little tern colony in North Wales and one of the most important black-necked grebe colonies in the UK at Woolston Eyes in Warrington. The England/Wales border runs directly through the reserve.

When? **Short-term:** no placements available.
Long-term: two placements available all year.

Where? Railway station at Hooton (4.3 miles/7km from the reserve). Car or bicycle useful. Accommodation is an upstairs flat in a large house on the reserve, adjoined to the office.

Why? Placement to cover both practical conservation and visitor operations. Practical habitat management work and estate work all year round. Seasonal activities include bird surveys, vegetation surveys, working with livestock. Meeting and greeting visitors, membership recruitment and assisting with events. Work can be physical at times with scrub clearance and tree-felling over the winter months, and invasive plant control during summer.

Who? Call Liz on 0151 353 2720



Coquet Island Amble, Northumberland

ST2   18+

Paul Morrison



Roseate tern

What? Coquet Island, about one mile off Amble, Northumberland, is occupied by the RSPB in spring and summer. It's home to a large colony of nesting seabirds. It has the only UK colony of roseate terns and has nesting Sandwich, Arctic and common terns. Placements are outside the main breeding season and focus on practical seabird habitat work.

When? **Short-term:** one or two placements during March, April, August and September. Minimum stay two weeks.
Long-term: no placements available.

Where? Railway station at Alnmouth (6 miles/8km from Amble harbour). Lifts are available from the station, and buses run between Alnwick and Ashington, stopping at Amble (Monday to Saturday). We have a rigid inflatable boat, moored at Amble Marina, and volunteers must be able to climb in and out of it, often in rough seas, and traverse very uneven and rocky terrain. There are two single bedrooms in the lighthouse keeper's cottage. The kitchen and office are in the old engineers' quarters to the rear.

Note: there is no mains water on the island, but a recently commissioned desalination plant produces water for drinking, cooking and washing. There is a shower, but with limited water and 110v. Trips to the mainland are approximately once a week. Lighting is a solar system with a 240v generator for back up. We cook on gas and heating is a log burner fed with driftwood.

Why? The work on Coquet is at the mercy of the tide, weather and light. Practical work involves grassland management, habitat restoration and creation, and infrastructure maintenance.

Who? Call Paul on 07811 191928.

Dearne Valley – Old Moor

Barnsley, South Yorkshire

LT26     18+

Matthew Capper (RSPB)



Bee orchid

What? The RSPB Dearne Valley team works across eight very different reserves, managing wet grassland, fen, reedbed, new woodland, an orchid meadow and more for a range of wildlife including bitterns, bearded tits, willow tits, avocets, dingy skippers and water voles. The team maintains a visitor infrastructure, that supports up to 110,000 visitors a year, with a varied and exciting events and activities programme.

When? **Short-term:** no placements available.
Long-term: one or two placements available all year, plus one or two interns.

Where? Railway stations at Wombwell and Swinton (both about 3 miles/ 4.8km from the reserve). Bus stop at reserve entrance. Bicycle or car useful. Three-bedroom cottage within the Old Moor courtyard. Each room has a single bed.

Why? Our residential volunteers work with the teams on all areas of the reserve, including habitat management, wildlife monitoring, visitor experience, reserve marketing and promotion, event planning and delivery, estate management and occasional work with livestock.

Who? Call the team on 01226 751593

England

Dorset reserves Wareham, Dorset

LT26    18+

What? The RSPB Dorset team works across nine reserves managing coppice woodlands, reedbed, heathland, wet grassland and more for a huge host of wildlife including the Dartford warbler, marsh harrier, dormouse and smooth snake. The team is known for its innovative management and is at the forefront of people engagement.

Working across varying habitats, our practical placement is ideal for anyone wanting to gain a broad understanding of what the RSPB does. Our visitor experience placement offers a chance to gain experience, support and lead in our work to inspire the public.

When? **Short-term:** no placements available.

Long-term: three placements based at Arne.

Where? Arne is near Wareham, on the Isle of Purbeck. Railway station at Wareham (5 miles/8km from reserve). Car or bicycle useful. Chalet in the heart of Arne reserve with three single bedrooms.

Why? **Practical placement:** Scrub, gorse and heather management, as well as other habitat-related tasks. Other tasks including bird and insect surveying, hen harrier roost counts. Estate tasks may involve fencing and footpath work. This role involves the safe and effective use and maintenance of tools and machinery.

Visitor experience placement: Assist with the day-to-day running of visitor operations at nine reserves, focusing on Arne and Radipole Lake. You'll help visitors to connect with wildlife and will take on people engagement projects. The role includes events, activities, visitor welcome, social media and publicity.

Who? Call 01929 553360 and ask for Liz (practical placement) or Luke (visitor experience placement).



Andy Hay (rspb-images.com)

Dungeness Lydd, Kent

    18+

What? Dungeness is an incredibly fascinating reserve rich in history and wildlife. Miles of protected, vegetated shingle important for a variety of rare lichens, mosses and insects blends into fields of wildflowers humming with life. Open water pits and reedbed areas are dotted throughout the reserve, providing a home to high numbers of seabirds, ducks, geese and wading birds. Jutting out into the English Channel, Dungeness is an important stop-over place for migrating birds. Species of interest include bitterns and marsh harriers, which are seen on the reserve all year round, medicinal leeches, great crested newts and the Sussex emerald moth, which is only found here. The Dungeness peninsula is also home to one third of the UK's wildflowers and provides an important home for many of Britain's rare bumblebees.

When? **Short-term:** sometimes available, please enquire for details.

Long-term: three interns only.

Where? Railway stations at Folkestone (17 miles/27.4km from reserve), Ashford (18 miles/29km) and Rye (12 miles/19.3km). Bus service from Hastings to Folkestone, via Rye and Lydd, or the Ashford to Lydd bus goes direct to the reserve. Volunteers stay in a newly-renovated farmhouse with three double bedrooms on the reserve. This is a remote site.

Why? A wide range of tasks including estate management, maintenance of visitor facilities, wildlife surveying and monitoring, data entry and report writing, working with livestock, assisting with public events and helping deliver our habitat management programme in the winter, which can be physically demanding.

Who? Call Craig on 01797 320588.



Craig Edwards

Exe Estuary Exminster, Devon

LT26  18+

Andy Hay (rspb-images.com)



Exe Estuary

What?

The Exe Estuary reserves are internationally recognised as important sites for thousands of ducks, geese and wading birds, along with many rare dragonfly, aquatic plant and mammal species. Although based in Exminster, the team manages nine diverse reserves, such as marsh, woodland, mudflat and agricultural land. As a residential volunteer, you will play an integral role in surveying and maintaining the reserves, so that they provide the perfect home for nature. The Lookout at Bowling Green Marsh provides one of the premier birdwatching sites in the south west of England, with regular events being held to get people inspired by nature.

When?

Short-term: no placements available.

Long-term: three six-month placements available all year round.

Where?

Railway station at Topsham (1 mile/1.6km from reserve) or Exeter (6 miles/9.6km). A short ferry ride can be taken from Topsham to Exminster. Local bus routes to Exminster village from Exeter. Pick-up by prior arrangement possible. Volunteers stay in a house in the village, with one double and two good sized single bedrooms. The house is a five-minute cycle ride or 15 minute walk from the reserves office.

Why?

Gain experience in a wide range of tasks including: habitat management, surveying and monitoring endangered species of birds, insects and mammals (including lapwings, curlew buntings, moths and dormice), infrastructure repairs, water level management and more. Get involved in our vital visitor engagement at the popular Bowling Green Marsh.

Who?

Call the team on 01392 833311.

Farnham and Hazeley Heaths

 18+

Fleet, Hampshire

Craig Edwards



Dartford warbler

What?

Two strikingly different heathland reserves in Surrey and on the Surrey/Hampshire border. Farnham Heath is one of the RSPB's largest heathland reserves with over 97 hectares (240 acres) of new heath. The site supports grayling butterflies, sand lizards, field crickets, tree pipits and nightjars and attracts over 60,000 visitors a year. Hazeley Heath is a newer, quieter reserve with a feeling of space that belies its size. It is part of the internationally-important Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area for birds such as woodlarks and nightjars. It supports beautiful silver-studded blue butterflies and the carnivorous plant, sundew. There is also a resident herd of fallow deer.

When?

Short-term: no placements available

Long-term: two interns only.

Where?

Railway station at Fleet is 1.25 miles/2km from the accommodation. Pick-up from station by prior arrangement. Driving licence essential; own transport highly desirable. Volunteers live in a large bungalow with two bedrooms (one twin and one double), 5 miles/8km from Hazeley and 9 miles/14km from Farnham.

Why?

Practical habitat management, estate work and patrols carried out all year round, with survey and monitoring of birds, reptiles and invertebrates in the spring and summer. The work can be strenuous and demanding, especially in the winter. Opportunities to help with people engagement and guided walks on and off both reserves, including running and attending events.

Who?

Call Mark on 01252 795632.

England

Frampton Marsh Boston, Lincolnshire

LT26      18+

What? On the edge of The Wash – the largest and most important wetland for birds in the UK – Frampton Marsh has a developing reedbed, three large freshwater scrapes for nesting and migrant wading birds, wet grasslands and one of the largest areas of saltmarsh in the world. Hen harriers are winter visitors and we see the largest variety of wading birds on any reserve in the country. Our visitor centre is open daily throughout the year, with an exciting programme of events.

When? **Short-term:** no placements available.
Long-term: one placement September to March, and two interns.

Where? Railway station at Boston (4 miles/7km from the reserve). Car or bicycle useful. Accommodation: there are two double bedrooms in a large Georgian, Grade II listed farmhouse, which also hosts the offices.

Why? **Practical intern:** assisting the site Wardens with habitat management and estate maintenance, including vegetation control, and fencing and footpath maintenance. Also survey and monitoring work, such as breeding bird surveys and lagoon invertebrate sampling.

Visitor services intern: assisting the Visitor Experience Manager with welcoming and recruiting visitors, events, producing interpretation, and promoting the reserve through traditional and new media.

Who? Call Anthony on 01205 725145 for the practical intern position.
Call Chris on 01205 725143 for the visitor services intern position.



Andy Hay (rsfb-images.com)



Andy Hay (rsfb-images.com)

Franchises Lodge New Forest, Wiltshire

LT26  18+

Terry Bagley (rspb-images.com)



Wood anemone

What?

Franchises Lodge in Wiltshire is a 386-hectare (almost 1,000 acre) woodland of deciduous and coniferous trees that has been largely inaccessible to the public for many years. We are still finding out more about the site, but initial surveys confirm that there's a good woodland bird community including wood warblers, hawfinches, spotted flycatchers, firecrests and redstarts. These woods are also known to be fascinating botanically, with internationally-important lichens. There's currently no visitor infrastructure and often no staff on site. With 1,000 pairs of breeding toads using the lake, more than 50 firecrest territories and an array of bats and other creatures populating this remote site, you can have an immersive, magical experience.

When?

Short-term: no placements available.
Long-term: two placements available all year.

Where?

Railway station at Salisbury or Southampton. There are buses from Southampton to the village of Lover, but this is a fair walk away. We recommend a car, or contacting us to arrange transport from a mutually agreeable location. There will be a site vehicle available. Accommodation is in a newly-decorated two-bedroom cottage in the heart of the reserve.

Why?

Help us to discover more about our new reserve and manage the habitats. Tasks include practical habitat management all year round, survey work (including birds, bats, butterflies and moths), vegetation surveys, leading walks and work parties and assisting the team in the New Forest. Work can be heavy at times with scrub clearance and tree-felling in the winter months, and bracken control in summer. You'll need to be comfortable working alone and in a team.

Who?

Call Anneka on 07711 385587.

Matt Pringle



Franchises Lodge

England

Geltsdale Brampton, Cumbria

📖 ST2 LT4 🧑🦜🌿 18+

What? Breathtaking fell views sum up this large and remote upland site showcasing moorland, woodland and farmland. Geltsdale forms the north-western part of the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Annually, about 10,000 people visit to see black grouse, birds of prey and breeding wading birds. Ideal for walking and seeing rare upland bird species, flowers, butterflies, the occasional otter and the rare, iconic and much-persecuted hen harrier.

When? **Short-term:** mid-January to the end of March.
Long-term: placements available all year except September. Good bird identification skills and upland experience required to assist with hen harrier monitoring and potentially nest protection April to July.

Where? Railway station at Brampton near Carlisle (4 miles/6.4km from reserve), with pick-up by prior arrangement. Car or bicycle useful. Volunteers live in a remote, terraced cottage on the reserve, with two double bedrooms, 1 mile/1.6km from the office.

Why? Upland conservation work including fencing, drystone walling and footpath maintenance. Monitoring, protection and survey work is available at certain times of the year. There may be occasional opportunities to assist with visitor work – on guided walks, with school groups and membership recruitment. The work can be physically demanding, outside in all weathers.

Who? Call Ian on 01697 746717 for practical placements, and Steve on 01697 740033 for hen harrier enquiries.



Ian Ryding

Haweswater Penrith, Cumbria

📖 ST2 LT8 🧑🦜🌿 18+

What? A ruggedly romantic mixture of woodland and mountain grassland, with tumbling becks and imposing crags, surrounding Haweswater reservoir in the Lake District National Park.

When? **Short-term:** one or two placements available all year.
Long-term: one or two placements available all year.

Where? Railway station at Penrith (10 miles/16km from reserve), with pick-up by prior arrangement. Car or bicycle useful. Farmhouse with two single bedrooms and one twin bedroom on the reserve.

Why? Physical land management work in summer, autumn and winter. This can be physically demanding and repetitive. Survey/research assistance is required in spring and summer if you have specialist skills. At all times of the year manual work is required, including bracken cutting, drystone walling, general farm work and tree planting. This is a remote site.

Who? Call Spike on 01931 713376.



Andy Hay (spb-images.com)

Leighton Moss and Morecambe Bay

LT26    18+

Silverdale, Lancashire

David Mower



Otter

What?

Nestled in the heart of the Arnside and Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Leighton Moss is one of the RSPB's flagship sites. The reserve is home to all sorts of wonderful wildlife including bitterns, otters, eels and a whole host of rare butterflies. With a busy visitor centre, shop, café, hides and trails, there's loads to get involved in.

When?

Short-term: no placements available.

Long-term: two interns (one practical and one visitor experience placement) and one long-term practical volunteer placement all year round (6 or 12 months) .

Where?

Railway station at Silverdale, next to the reserve. Lancaster is 20 minutes by train and Carnforth is six minutes by train. Volunteers live in a renovated farm building on the reserve, with two twin bedrooms.

Why?

Practical: spring/summer: breeding bird surveys, butterfly transects, elver monitoring, habitat assessments, installing and maintaining electric fence to protect nesting avocets. Extensive training is given in wildlife survey and monitoring. Practical work is mostly maintenance with some habitat management for butterflies on Warton Crag. Autumn/winter: habitat management such as reed cutting, fen management, coppicing and woodland restoration, this can be physically demanding. Other tasks involve estates maintenance and Wetland bird surveys around Morecambe Bay.

Who?

Practical: call Nick on 01524 703014.

Visitor experience: call Jon on 01524 703017.



Lapwings roosting at RSPB Leighton Moss Reserve

England

Mid Yare Valley Strumpshaw, Norwich, Norfolk

LT20     18+

What? On the Norfolk Broads along the banks of the River Yare, this large reserve includes grazing marshes, wet woodlands, fen and reedbeds, which in turn provides scope for a broad range of skills and experiences. Many internationally important birds and other wildlife are found here, including bearded tits, bitterns, marsh harriers, Norfolk hawk dragonflies, swallowtail butterflies and spectacular numbers of ducks, geese and wading birds in the winter.

When? **Short-term:** no placements available.
Long-term: two or three placements available all year, plus one visitor intern from March for six months.

Where? Railway station at Brundall (2 miles/3.2km from reserve). Detached cottage in the heart of the reserve, with three single bedrooms and wi-fi.

Why? Typically, physical habitat management involves fen work in late summer, and reedbed work, scrub clearance and woodland tasks in autumn and winter. You will help with the visitor reception and events. Survey work will include breeding bird surveys in spring and summer, and wetland bird counts in autumn and winter. Maintenance of visitor facilities required throughout the year. Some assistance required with the reserve's Highland cattle. People engagement opportunities available all year round.

Who? Call Matthew on 01603 715191.



Matthew Wilkinson

Bittern

Minsmere Westleton, Saxmundham, Suffolk

LT26     18+

What? Minsmere is one of the RSPB's flagship reserves, featuring an outstanding variety of habitats, including reedbed, heathland, coastal lagoons, dunes and woodland. The reserve supports several nationally important populations of breeding birds, including bitterns and avocets, and nationally important populations of wintering ducks and geese. It is also rich in other wildlife, with more than 1,000 species of moth recorded, plus 33 species of butterfly, 23 species of dragonfly and damselfly, as well as red deer, otters and water voles. Konik and Exmoor ponies and Highland cattle graze a variety of habitats on the reserve.

When? **Short-term:** no placements available.
Long-term: one conservation intern and one education intern starting in March, two conservation interns starting in September.

Where? Railway station at Darsham (5 miles/8km from reserve) where you can get a bus, taxi, or pick-up from the station (by prior arrangement). Purpose-built chalet for volunteers on site with two single bedrooms.

Why? Habitat management at Minsmere involves managing the scrape lagoons and islands in late summer, and reedbed work, scrub clearance and woodland tasks in autumn and winter. There are often opportunities to help with visitor reception, events and education groups, mostly in spring and summer. There are people engagement opportunities aplenty. Survey work includes breeding bird surveys in spring and summer, wetland bird counts throughout the year and others such as water vole surveys. Other work includes visitor facility maintenance throughout the year, and daily stock checks of our Konik and Exmoor ponies.

Who? Call Katie on 01728 648075.



Ian Barthorpe

Catkins

North Kent Marshes Rochester, Kent



Ruth Gillies



Lapwing

What? A diverse range of sites between Gravesend in the west and Whitstable in the east. We manage scrub, grassland, reedbed and grazing marsh, with high densities of breeding lapwings and redshanks in spring, and spectacular flocks of wading birds and wildfowl in winter. Northward Hill also has an area of woodland that supports nightingales, the UK's largest colony of breeding herons, several species of owl plus rare white-letter hairstreak butterflies. Nearby Cliffe Pools is an exciting reserve where we have created a unique complex of saline lagoons, attracting internationally important numbers of wintering wildfowl and waders.

When? **Short-term:** sometimes available, please enquire for details.
Long-term: three interns only, starting in March or September.

Where? Railway station at Strood (5.5 miles/8.9km from the reserve). Bus stops at High Halstow (1.5 miles/2.4km). Pick-up by prior arrangement. Volunteers stay in a beautiful farmhouse with three double bedrooms.

Why? Habitat management on grazing marsh, woodland and saline lagoons. Estate maintenance, talking to visitors on the reserves, bird and other wildlife surveys and data recording. Work can be physically demanding, especially in winter.

Who? Call the team on 01634 222480.



North Kent Marshes

Andy Hay (ispb-images.com)

England

Old Hall Marshes Maldon, Essex



What? Old Hall Marshes is 450 hectares of wet grassland with a grazing tradition that goes back centuries. Situated on the Blackwater Estuary in Essex, the reserve is designated as an area of national and international importance. It comprises ancient grazing marsh (characterised by thousands of ant hills made by yellow meadow ants), improved fields, reedbeds, estuarine saline lagoons and scrub habitats. The habitats support breeding birds such as lapwings, redshanks, avocets, shovelers, pochards, marsh harriers, bearded tits and Cetti's warblers. In winter, thousands of dark-bellied brent geese feed on the pastures, and diving birds and grebes can be seen in the estuarine channels. Peregrines, merlins and short-eared owls regularly hunt and roost on the reserve. It's also important for water voles and unusual plants and invertebrates, including scarce emerald damselflies.

When? **Short-term:** no placements available.
Long-term: two interns only.

Where? Railway and coach station at Colchester (14 miles/22km from reserve) and railway station at Kelvedon (9 miles/14km). Pick-up by prior arrangement. Mid-terraced cottage for volunteers, 0.75 miles/1km from the reserve, with two double bedrooms. Bicycles provided.

Why? Habitat management on wet grassland, reedbeds, saline lagoons and scrub. Monitoring of birds and other wildlife, and working with livestock.

Who? Call Neil on 01621 869015.



Watercourse at Old Hall Marshes

Andy Hay (rspb-images.com)

Saltholme near Middlesbrough, Tees Valley



What? Nestled in the Tees Valley, surrounded by many industrial neighbours, Saltholme offers a dramatic landscape and stunning wildlife. Hundreds of pairs of common terns breed on cockleshell islands in the summer and thousands of wildfowl spend the winter here. With habitats such as reedbeds, wet grassland, open pools and scrapes, Saltholme attracts lapwings, water voles, golden plovers, brown hares and sand martins.

When? **Short-term:** no placements available.
Long-term: three placements available all year.

Where? Railway station at Middlesbrough (7.2 miles/11.5km from the reserve). Direct bus from Middlesbrough bus station. Pick-up from station by prior arrangement. Seaton Carew station (4.5 miles/7.2km) is a five-minute walk from the accommodation – a spacious first-floor flat with views of the sea. It has two double bedrooms, one single bedroom, and a fish and chip shop just across the road! Direct bus route to the reserve.

Why? **Long-term placements one and two:** working alongside the estate team on a variety of reserve management activities, and survey/monitoring tasks.
Long-term placement three: working alongside the visitor experience team. This includes meeting and greeting visitors, shop work, helping with family activities and school groups, and assisting in planning and implementing events.

Who? Call Ed or Craig on 01642 546625.



Water vole

Ben Andrew (rspb-images.com)

Somerset reserves Langport, Somerset

LT26  18+

What? West Sedgemoor is an internationally important area of low-lying wet meadows, attracting large numbers of ducks, geese and wading birds in winter and breeding wading birds in spring. Greylake is a wet grassland reserve, attracting breeding and overwintering wading birds, ducks and geese. Swell Wood is an ancient woodland with the largest heronry in the south west. Ham Wall is a mosaic of reedbed and woodland and is becoming a very popular wetland with wildlife such as bitterns.

When? **Short-term:** no placements available.
Long-term: two or three placements available all year.

Where? Railway and coach station at Taunton (10 miles/16km from reserve). A large farmhouse with three double bedrooms.

Why? **Placements one and two:** A combination of practical work, surveying and monitoring, and people engagement. Practical tasks may include maintenance of fencing, visitor facilities and water control structures, hedge-laying, coppicing and livestock handling. Visitor work and face-to-face people engagement is across the Somerset reserves at Greylake, Swell Wood and Ham Wall. This may include meeting visitors, undertaking guided walks, planning and leading events, and writing blogs and newsletters. Survey work is carried out March to June. Please note practical and survey work can be physically demanding, especially in winter.

Placement three (mid-March to July only): The role will specialise in the protection of nesting cranes and breeding wading birds. There may be an opportunity to survey and monitor other species.

Who? Call Paul on 01458 252805.



Nick Upton (ispb-images.com)



Andy Hay (ispb-images.com)

England

Titchwell Marsh Hunstanton, Norfolk

ST4 LT26     18+

What? Located on the scenic north Norfolk coast, the North West Norfolk reserves, including Titchwell Marsh and Snettisham, are some of the best places for wildlife in the UK. From marsh harriers and avocets to rare dune tiger beetles and thousands of wintering waders, there's something for everyone. There are excellent trails and several hides as well as a busy visitor centre, shop and café.

When? **Short-term:** one placement available from June to September. Minimum stay four weeks.

Long-term: conservation intern and a visitor experience intern plus three month placements available from September to May.

Where? King's Lynn railway and coach station (23 miles/37km from reserve), then bus via Hunstanton. Pick-up from Hunstanton by prior arrangement. A bicycle is useful. Comfortable volunteer house, with three double bedrooms and one single bedroom, about 0.75 miles/1km from the reserve.

Why? **Visitor experience intern:** writing posts and articles for social and print media, supporting the visitor centre, helping on the information desk, maintaining reserve interpretation, assisting with volunteer newsletter, planning and delivering reserve events throughout summer, and work with local schools. **Conservation intern:** habitat management work, estate maintenance and species monitoring. During the summer you will be surveying key breeding species, maintaining reserve infrastructure and leading day volunteers. During the winter, you'll lead on completing the annual habitat management programmes. **Short-term volunteers:** species monitoring, site maintenance, and visitor operation.

Who? Call Lizzie (conservation) or Carrie (visitor experience) on 01485 211970.



Chris Gomersall (rspb-images.com)



Andy Hay (rspb-images.com)

Residential volunteering in **Northern Ireland**



"I had an incredible time – I learnt so much and met so many interesting people."

Dakota Reid

Northern Ireland

Portmore Lough Aghalee, Craigavon

ST2 LT12    18+

What? Portmore Lough is a shallow, open lough that is important for ducks and geese over winter, particularly whooper swans from Iceland and greylag geese. The reedbeds are some of the largest in Northern Ireland and are a safe haven for teals and tufted ducks. In summer, the lough is an important place for gadwalls and coots to moult. Rafts provide nesting sites for common terns and black-headed gulls. Garganeys and shovelers raise their young in the pools and channels. The reserve is a focal point for breeding lapwings and snipe. A resident herd of Konik ponies helps manage the habitat and wildflower meadows are alive with butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies in summer. A colony of tree sparrows can usually be spotted around the viewing platform and garden.

When? **Short-term:** One placement, all year round.
Long-term: Two placements, all year round.

Where? Flights to Belfast City or Belfast International, or ferries to Belfast or Larne. All have good coach and rail links – see translink.co.uk for more information. Closest rail station is Moira. Lifts may be available from the station to the reserve. The accommodation is a cottage with three single bedrooms. It is a five-minute walk from the reserve.

Why? Autumn/winter: habitat and estate management, such as scrub control and fencing, which can be physically demanding and repetitive. Survey work on whooper swans and greylag geese. Assisting with visitor engagement and maintenance of reserve facilities. Spring/summer: surveys and monitoring, especially for lapwings and common terns, and surveys of invertebrates and plants. Assisting with people engagement, events and reserve facility maintenance.

Who? Call Laura on 028 9265 1936.



Laura Smith (RSPB)

Cuckooflower at Portmore Lough



Robin Brown (RSPB)

Portmore Lough

“I was given the opportunity to develop a variety of skills in my areas of interest.”

Hannah Coburn

Rathlin West Light Seabird Centre

Rathlin Island, County Antrim

ST2  18+

Ric Elise (RSPB)



Puffins at Rathlin

What? Rathlin Island has a huge breeding seabird colony of guillemots, razorbills, kittiwakes, fulmars and puffins. In the summer, more than 20,000 people come to see the seabirds and visit our famous upside-down lighthouse (which is one of the 13 Great Lighthouses of Ireland).

When? **Short-term:** up to eight placements, late March to mid-September. Monday start and finish. Two weeks' stay preferred. Longer or shorter stays by arrangement.

Where? Ferries from Cairnryan to Larne/Belfast, Liverpool to Belfast and Campbeltown to Ballycastle. Flights available to Belfast City, Belfast International and City of Derry airports. Onward rail connections available from Larne, Belfast and City of Derry airport to Ballymena and/or Coleraine, then by bus to Ballycastle. In summer, a bus service runs from Belfast to Ballycastle. Please see translink.co.uk. The Ballycastle to Rathlin Island ferry must be booked in advance.

Accommodation is in a cottage bunkhouse 3 miles/5km from the harbour and 1.5 miles/2km from the Seabird Centre. One bedroom for three and another for six people. Access to the Seabird Centre is on foot or by bicycle along a road through cattle. Please note that there are 162 steps from the Visitor Centre to the bottom of the lighthouse.

Why? Meeting and greeting visitors; showing them the seabirds from the outdoor viewing platform; presenting the visitor experience of the lighthouse; and enthusing and recruiting new members. Good people and communication skills are vital. International volunteers must speak very good English.

Who? Call Geraldine on 02820 760062

Hazel Watson (RSPB)



Residential volunteering in **Scotland**



**"Such a beautiful place
and I have always
been made to feel
extremely welcome."**

Liz Porter

Abernethy Nethybridge, Inverness-shire

 LT26   18+

Desmond Dugan



Red deer stag

What? Situated in the Cairngorms National Park, the reserve extends from the Caledonian pinewoods around Loch Garten, through heather moorland up to the montane areas of the Cairngorm plateau (a total area of 13,360 hectares). Over 4,800 species have been recorded on the reserve, which is home to the iconic capercaillie and other notable species, such as crested tits, Scottish crossbills, ospreys, golden eagles, dotterels, snow buntings, pine martens, red squirrels and twinflowers.

When? **Short-term:** no placements available.
Long-term: one placement all year round.

Where? Railway and coach station at Aviemore (14 miles/22.5km from reserve). Car useful; bicycles are available for volunteers to use. Pick-up from Aviemore by prior arrangement. A large former hunting lodge houses the volunteers, contract staff and reserve offices. Volunteers stay in a comfortable self-contained flat which has two twin bedrooms with a shared kitchen.

Why? Research, monitoring, data handling and recording, some practical management work. This role will involve a large amount of outdoor monitoring work in rough terrain and in all weathers. The role also requires a basic understanding of scientific monitoring work.

Who? Call Chris on 01479 821409.

Abernethy – Loch Garten Nature Centre

Loch Garten, Abernethy, Inverness-shire

   18+

Danny Green (fspb-images.com)



Osprey catching its lunch

What? Part of the Abernethy reserve, this project supports the Loch Garten Nature Centre in connecting visitors with the pine woodland at the heart of osprey conservation in the UK. The Nature Centre gives the public fantastic views of birds and shows live CCTV footage from the nest on screens. Around the centre, red squirrels can be seen at close range, along with great spotted woodpeckers, crested tits and more.

When? **Long-term:** Placements available.

Where? Railway and coach station at Aviemore 8 miles/13km from chalets; pick-up by prior arrangement. Car useful. Chalet accommodation with twin room for volunteers. The accommodation is 2.5 miles/4km from the visitor centre, but it is a nice, easy walk.

Why? Helping in the visitor centre, welcoming the public and updating them with information about the varied wildlife that can be seen in the locality. This role requires regular trail checks to maintain a clean and safe visitor experience. International volunteers must speak very good English.

Who? Call Fergus on 01479 821409 or the Nature Centre on 01479 831476 (April–August, 9.30am–5.30pm).

Scotland



RSPB Forsinard Flows visitor centre

Forsinard Flows Caithness and Sutherland

ST2 LT20 18+

What? Part of the internationally important Flow Country and the RSPB's largest reserve in the UK. As well as rugged peatland, the reserve also includes moorland, plantation forestry and farmland. The reserve supports important populations of breeding upland wading birds, divers, waterfowl, hen harriers, merlins and short-eared owls.

When? **Short-term:** one or two placements available from October to February and Friends and Family in summer and autumn.
Long-term: up to three winter placements, October to February, and five summer placements, March to September.

Where? A new field centre with five single bedrooms, five minutes' walk from Forsinard train station. The railway station is also the RSPB visitor centre.

Why? Estate management, peatland/forestry survey work and outreach tasks are undertaken throughout the year. Between March and September, assisting with bird surveys, monitoring, research, outreach and visitor operations are the main focus. Good bird skills are required for the summer placements. October to February: peatland restoration, monitoring and habitat management. Work may be strenuous and involve a considerable amount of walking in remote upland areas. Map and compass navigation skills desirable.

Who? Call Claire on 01641 571225.



Forsinard look out tower

Paul Turner (RSPB)

Hoy Orkney

Andy Hay (rspb-images.com)



Hen harrier

ST4 LT20 18+

- What?** Hoy is the “high island” of Orkney and is a haven for lovers of wildlife and wild places. The reserve is largely upland heather moorland and spectacular sea cliffs, with pockets of native woodland. It is home to a wide range of fantastic wildlife, including hen harriers, seabirds and Scotland’s hundredth pair of white-tailed eagles, as well as a dazzling range of wildflowers, dragonflies, seals and otters.
- When?** **Short-term:** one placement available, April to August inclusive. **Long-term:** one or two placements available between April and August inclusive.
- Where?** Either a passenger ferry from Stromness to Moaness Pier (which is a ten-minute walk from the accommodation) or via car ferry from Houton to Lyness (11 miles/17.5km from reserve). Bus/train from Edinburgh to Thurso takes about seven hours. Purpose-built small house (bothy). One bedroom with two single beds.
- Why?** A chance to assist with survey work for an exciting range of wildlife and helping the visitors at Eaglewatch make the most of their visit to the Hoy nature reserve. Footpath and habitat maintenance late summer. Good bird identification skills required April to mid-July. Work may be strenuous and involve a considerable amount of walking in remote upland areas.
- Who?** Call Lee on 01856 791298.

Insh Marshes Kingussie, Inverness-shire

Catherine Owen-Pam (RSPB)



Wetlands at Insh

ST2 LT6 18+

- What?** One of Europe’s most valuable wetlands, this reserve is 1,000 ha of extensive wetland habitats and woodland in the floodplain of the upper River Spey, in the foothills of the Cairngorm mountains. Insh Marshes supports important populations of breeding waders, ducks and geese. It is also a wonderful place for wildflowers, dragonflies and butterflies. In the winter, when the marshes flood, it provides ideal habitat for visiting flocks of whooper swans and greylag geese.
- When?** **Short-term:** one or two placements August to March. **Long-term:** one to three placements available all year.
- Where?** Railway and coach station at Kingussie (5 miles/8km from cottage). Car/bicycle useful. Cottage with two single and one twin bedrooms, next to the reserve office, in the village of Insh.
- Why?** Duties will include all aspects of reserve wardening. During the spring and summer, you’ll be involved in wildlife surveying/monitoring and upkeep of the reserve infrastructure. During the autumn and winter, work will mostly be practical habitat and estate management, such as scrub clearance and fencing. Good bird identification skills desirable from April to June. Long-term and short-term volunteer roles will be similar, although opportunities for long-term volunteers to manage volunteers and lead their own work projects will be provided. Long-term placements at Insh Marshes are an excellent opportunity for those wishing to pursue a career in conservation and reserve management. To help those keen on developing their skills and knowledge for a career in conservation, we would like to recruit volunteer conservation trainees. Please contact the Insh team for further information.
- Who?** Call Cat on 01540 661518.

Scotland

Isle of Coll Argyll

LT4  18+

What? The reserve's primary species is the corncrake. There are regularly more than 50 calling males on the farmland. The wetlands are home to an abundance of breeding wading birds, with lapwings being the most common. Pairs of hen harriers, ravens and twites live on the moorland and the dunes are a botanist's dream during summer, with swathes of flowers. When the weather turns colder, the corncrakes return to Africa, and wintering geese arrive on the island.

When? **Short-term:** no placements available.
Long-term: two placements from mid-March to November. Minimum four weeks with longer stays welcome.

Where? Train or bus from Glasgow to Oban. Passenger/car ferry from Oban to Coll (2 hours 40 minutes). Alternatively, take the light aircraft (eight seats) from Connel to Coll (approximately 40 minutes). Pick-up can be arranged from the pier or airport, or make your own way to the reserve (six miles from the pier; one mile from the airport). Accommodation is purpose-built with two twin bedrooms for volunteers. The island has basic facilities and a population of 220. Ferries are daily in summer; a reduced service runs in winter.

Why? You will be involved in a variety of practical tasks, primarily to ensure our landholding is suitable for farmland birds through agricultural operations such as grazing and cropping. Wildlife monitoring takes place in spring/summer, when there are opportunities to take part in people engagement activities too. Practical skills and bird knowledge desirable. Be prepared to work in a variety of weather conditions.

Who? Call Ben or Mark on 01879 230301.



Common seal at Coll

James Duncan (rspb-images.com)



Isle of Coll

James Duncan (rspb-images.com)

Loch Leven Perth and Kinross

LT12    18+

Alex Gillilia



Geese by Loch Leven

What?

Previously known as Vane Farm, this popular visitor destination, 30 minutes north of Edinburgh, is part of Loch Leven National Nature Reserve – Scotland's largest lowland loch. The site's carefully managed wetlands are grazed by livestock and are important for breeding and wintering birds, including lapwings and pink-footed geese. There is also a wooded hill behind the visitor centre with stunning views over Loch Leven and the surrounding landscape. We welcome 70,000 visitors a year to our shop, café and education facilities, which are housed in an 18th century farmstead.

When?

Short-term: no placements available.

Long-term: one placement from April to June inclusive.

Where?

Railway station at Lochgelly (5 miles/8km from reserve). Nearest bus stop is Balingry (2.5 miles/4km). Both with one single bedroom, next to the visitor centre.

Why?

Become part of the Tayside reserves team over the breeding season and experience a wide range of monitoring, with a focus on lapwing productivity. Get stuck into the role and learn a range of surveys – find and monitor lapwing nests, monitor predator activity, Breeding Bird Survey, surveys for wildflowers, water rails, bearded tits and more. You'll be based at Loch Leven, but will also carry out surveys at Loch of Kinnordy and the Tay reedbeds. Join the team and find out about the reserves, and how they've managed. Good bird identification skills are desirable – or a willingness to learn.

Who?

Call Vicky on 01577 862355.

Loch Gruinart and The Oa Islay, Argyll

LT6     18+

Amy Cooper (RSPB)



Inspecting the sluice

What?

Loch Gruinart is a shallow sea loch. Around it are sandy beaches and dunes, mudflats and saltmarsh. There is wet grassland, important for geese, other wildfowl and wading birds, and a small area of woodland. Moorland and bog surround the low-lying areas. Also on Islay, The Oa reserve has cliffs, moorland and coastal grassland, vital for the resident chough population. Both reserves are managed as working farms, with sheep and cattle as vital conservation tools. In the summer, Islay bursts into colour with meadows of wildflowers. Golden eagles soar over the sea cliffs, hen harriers hunt over the heath and corncrakes can be heard until the end of July.

When?

One placement all year round (except 15 Dec to 14 Jan) and one placement April to August.

Where?

By road to Kennacraig (daily bus from Glasgow), then two-hour ferry trip to the Isle of Islay. Own car or bicycle very useful (although bicycles cannot be taken on the bus). Daily flights from Glasgow or Edinburgh to Islay. Volunteers are based at Loch Gruinart, in a remote location several miles from the nearest shops and services.

Why?

Volunteers will do reserve maintenance, habitat management, surveys, some visitor work (manning the visitor centre and assisting on guided walks and events) and occasional work with cattle and sheep. Throughout the year there is a lot of strenuous manual work, as well as wildlife surveys that involve a considerable amount of walking in remote areas. Be prepared for all weather conditions, particularly wet and windy ones. Driving licence essential. Practical skills and bird knowledge are desirable, but initiative, resilience and a flexible attitude are more important.

Who?

Call Lauren on 01496 850505.

Scotland

Loch Lomond Gartocharn

LT26     18+

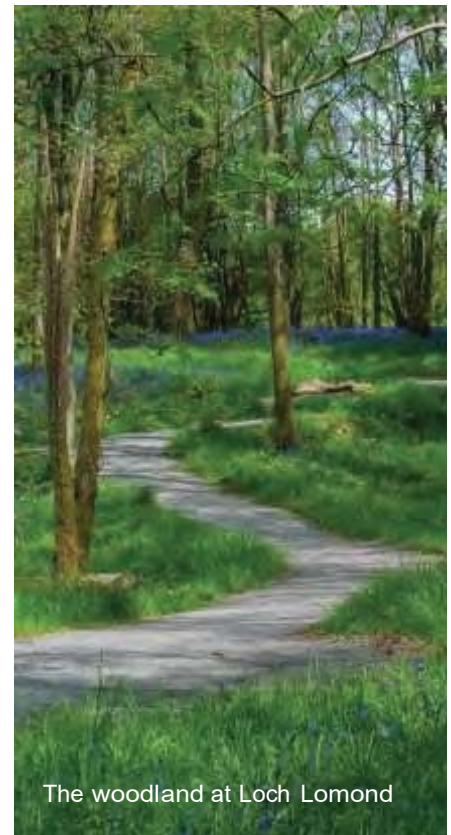
What? Loch Lomond nature reserve is a special place for wildlife. On the south-east shores of the loch, the site has a variety of habitats from ancient woodlands to wildflower meadows and grasslands. In spring, the woodlands are carpeted with bluebells and in summer, visitors such as tree pipits, redstarts and wood warblers sing from the tops of trees. Ospreys are a regular sight too. In winter, large flocks of geese, including internationally important numbers of Greenland white-fronted geese, roost and feed here. The site has been managed in partnership with Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park and Scottish Natural Heritage since 2012, to make it an even better home for nature.

When? **Long-term:** two placements April–September, two October–March.

Where? Nearest train station is Balloch, approximately 5 miles/8km from the site. Pick-up from Balloch by prior arrangement. Own car would be useful as the site is very remote. Farmhouse accommodation is based on the reserve and a two-minute walk from the site office.

Why? From April to September: visitor engagement, monitoring/wildlife surveys, habitat management and assisting with events and wildlife cruises. October to March: wildfowl monitoring, habitat and estate management and assisting at events. Practical management tasks can be physically demanding and repetitive over challenging terrain and in all weathers. You may also work at other RSPB sites. An interest in wildlife, learning practical skills and working with the public is desirable.

Who? Call Luke or Emma on 01389 830670.



David McCulloch (RSPB)

Loch of Strathbeg Crimond, Fraserburgh ST2 LT16 18+

What? A spectacular coastal loch with adjoining beaches, marsh, reedbeds, wet grassland and arable farmland. The reserve is internationally important for wintering ducks and geese, with thousands of pink-footed geese here from late September to March. Many species of bird are recorded annually, along with 300 species of plant. Otters are seen regularly. There are spectacular views over the wetlands from the visitor centre.

When? **Short-term:** one placement available all year except for June.
Long-term: one placement available all year round, plus two interns.

Where? Railway station at Aberdeen (40 miles/64km from reserve) then bus to Peterhead, Fraserburgh or Crimond. Pick-up by prior arrangement. Own transport desirable, but not essential. Farmhouse on the reserve with two doubles and two single bedrooms.

Why? Wildfowl and farmland bird monitoring and survey work during winter. Breeding bird surveys in spring and summer. Invertebrate and other non-bird surveying. Estate and habitat management and maintenance all year, which can be physically demanding and repetitive over difficult terrain. Assisting in the visitor centre and with guided walks and events. May also include work at other Grampian reserves.

Who? Call Lorna on 01346 532017.



Chris Gomersall (rspb-images.com)

Mersehead Southwick, Dumfries and Galloway ST2 LT26 18+

Andy Hay (ispb-images.com)



Natterjack toad

What? Mersehead has a variety of habitats in breathtaking surroundings next to the inter-tidal sandflats of the Solway Firth. The reserve is internationally important for wintering Svalbard barnacle geese, pintails and teals, and nationally important for wintering shovelers. It is home to the UK's most north-westerly population of natterjack toads. Events run throughout the year here.

When? **Short-term:** six two-week placements June to August inclusive; a mix of people engagement and practical work.

Long-term: two five-month placements from April to the end of August, three six-month placements September to the end of February; a mix of people engagement and practical work.

Where? Railway and bus stations at Dumfries (18 miles/24km from the reserve), then bus to Mersehead. Pick-up from Dumfries available by prior arrangement. Top floor of a converted farmhouse, with two twin bedrooms and one single.

Why? Would you like to wake up every morning and go to work on an incredible coastal reserve with amazing views across the Solway Firth and the Galloway hills? Are you passionate about nature conservation and helping visitors to have an amazing experience with nature? Our residential placements are a great way to make a difference, truly discover the wonders of Mersehead and, if you're interested in a career in nature conservation, a great way to gain valuable practical experience. Work is a mixture of practical land management, survey work and people engagement.

Who? Call Paul on 01387 780298.

Andy Hay (ispb-images.com)



Mersehead

Scotland

Onziebust Egilsay, Orkney,

What? Onziebust reserve is a low-lying farm, on the island of Egilsay, Orkney. (272 ha/671 acres). The farm is managed for corncrakes, wading birds and great yellow bumblebees with native-bred cattle and cultivation. The wetlands have reed and iris beds, the shore is mostly rocky with sandy places. In spring and summer the wild flowers are superb.

When? **Short-term:** no placements available.
Long-term: four-week placements from February to end of November. Accommodation suitable for a couple or two friends.

Where? Various ways to get to Orkney: fly from Scottish airports or catch a car/passenger ferry from Aberdeen, Scrabster or Gills Bay (operated by Northlink Ferries and Pentland Ferries). There are around three boats a day to Egilsay from Tingwall on Orkney mainland, visit orkneyferries.co.uk for details. A bus service runs from Kirkwall to Tingwall. There is no pub or shop on the island. Accommodation is a single storey bothy with open plan kitchen/living and sleeping space. Applicants should be happy to share a small space and live on a remote island.

Why? Work will mostly be farm and habitat work. Managing land for corncrakes is very labour intensive and will involve activities such as muck spreading and rhizome planting. Depending on the time of year, there will be an opportunity to get involved with the surveying and monitoring of species on the reserve and on the neighbouring island of Rousay at Trumland reserve, an upland site. We're developing a people engagement, training and education programme and would welcome help from people interested in this aspect. Work can be physically hard and the weather poor. People with trade or practical skills welcomed to help with maintaining the reserve's buildings and infrastructure.

Who? Call Vicky 01856 850176

Oronsay Colonsay, Argyll

What? Oronsay is a tidal island off Colonsay, 30 miles from Oban. The reserve covers most of the 500 ha island, except the Oronsay Estate grounds and ruined priory. As a working farm, the reserve's managed primarily for corncrakes, choughs, waders, farmland birds and wintering geese.

When? **Short-term:** one or two placements for a minimum three-week period between June and September inclusive. Spaces outside this period will be prioritised towards long-term volunteers.
Long-term: one or two placements for minimum two month periods from October to March inclusive. Spaces may be available in April, May and June for those with lambing and calving skills.

Where? Ferry from Oban to Colonsay. Connecting buses and trains from Glasgow may not be on the same day. Check calmac.com. Transfer from Colonsay to Oronsay by prior arrangement with site staff. Accommodation is a well-equipped stone cottage with one double bedroom and a living room with sofa bed. There is no other accommodation available and there are no facilities on the island: no shop, no pub. Access to these on Colonsay is restricted by tides.

Why? Mostly farm work; there are around 60 cattle and 400 sheep. Work may include estate/habitat management, surveying and monitoring. Agricultural/veterinary students are welcomed for placements during lambing and calving (mid-April to mid-June). Work is physically demanding and the weather can be challenging. People with trade or practical skills welcomed to help maintain the reserve's buildings, infrastructure and dry-stone walls.

Who? Call Ryan or Andy on 01951 200367 and leave a message.

LT4     18+



Christine Hall (RSPB)

ST3 LT12    18+



Hannah Sharatt (RSPB)

Unavailable for 2022

Sumburgh Head and Mousa, Shetland

ST2  18+

Helen Moncrieff (RSPB)



Orcas can sometimes be seen

What?

Sumburgh Head is home to thousands of seabirds, including kittiwakes, shags, puffins and gannets. The site is managed by RSPB Scotland, however the lighthouse and building complex is managed by Shetland amenity trust (SAT). We work in partnership to ensure our visitors leave with important seabird/climate change messages.

Mousa is home to a 2,000-year-old, iron age broch, the best example of this structure in existence. The beautiful island is home to special breeding species such as common seals, Arctic terns, Arctic skuas and the UK's largest breeding population of storm petrels.

The island is rat free, and the importance of minimising disturbance as well as clear messaging around bio-security is essential for the safety of the special species that reside there.

When?

June– end of July

Short-term: two places, minimum two weeks. Maximum six weeks

Long-term: None available

Where?

In the stunning location of Sumburgh Head. A short drive from the airport in the South of Shetland. The accommodation is in the lighthouse building complex and comprises: kitchen, living room, bathroom and one bedroom.

Why?

We would like someone to engage with our visitors, welcoming them to Sumburgh Head and the magical island of Mousa. By engaging and communicating key partnership messages, you will be enhancing their visit by giving them up to date relevant information to meet their needs and purpose of their visit. Through proactive engagement the opportunity to ask people to support our work through membership will be important. But the overall experience our visitors receive through the positive welcome will be paramount.

Who?

Call Shetland office: 01950 460800

Helen Moncrieff (RSPB)



Sumburgh Head lighthouse

Residential volunteering in **Wales**



**"I had a wonderful,
fun and amazing
volunteering
experience"**

Michelle Craig

Lake Vyrnwy Llanwddyn, Powys

ST2      18+



- What?** One of our most spectacular and magical reserves, Lake Vyrnwy is run as an organic hill farm with cattle and sheep, showing how farming and conservation can work together. It has a variety of different habitats, a visitor centre with a shop, and seven trails. Lake Vyrnwy also has some rare breeding bird species that need monitoring and protecting
- When?** **Short-term:** two placements, September to February inclusive. **Long-term:** two interns only
- Where?** No public transport- car or motorcycle essential. Two adjoining bungalows for volunteers, both with one single and one twin bedroom, near the visitor centre.
- Why?** October to March: practical management, estate maintenance and some livestock work. Winter work can be repetitive and heavy March to September: bird surveys and monitoring tasks. Interviews may be carried out for these posts. Specialists in other wildlife are especially welcome. The weather can be very changeable, even in summer, so be prepared!
- Who?** Call Gethin on 01691 870278.



“This is my seventh year volunteering and I hope to go again.”
 Nigel Dodd at Lake Vyrnwy

Gethin Elias (RSPB)

Lake Vyrnwy

Unavailable for 2022

Ramsey Island St David's, Pembrokeshire

ST2 LT4  18+

Lisa Morgan (RSPB)



Seal pup

What? A remote island 1 mile/1.6 km off the coast, within the Pembrokeshire National Park. Spectacular cliffs provide breeding sites for thousands of seabirds in spring, and an increasing population of Manx shearwaters breed underground. Grazing sheep maintain feeding habitats for choughs. Ramsey has the largest grey seal colony in south west Britain, with pups born from mid-August onwards.

When? **Short-term:** up to three placements, from April to end of September.
Long-term: six to 12 week placements available, May to September.

Where? Railway station at Haverfordwest, bus to St David's (15 miles/24km away), shuttle bus or taxi to St Justinians (2 miles/3.2km away). Two boat crossings each morning from St Justinians, weather permitting. Volunteers share a large bungalow with four bedrooms: two singles and two twin rooms. Limited power for charging small electrical items only. Log-burning stove in lounge, no other heating.

Why? Volunteers are an integral part of the welcome we offer to day visitors. Role will include providing information, assisting with membership recruitment and serving in the small tea shop. Enthusiasm and good people skills are essential. Other tasks include bird monitoring April to June, manual control of bracken June to August, and seal survey in September.

Work is mainly outdoors in all weathers. Difficult terrain and numerous steep steps on the island and in the mainland harbour. Volunteers need to be able to carry their own luggage up and down these steps and on to the boat.

Who? Call Nia 07796611951

South Stack Cliffs Anglesey

ST1 LT20  18+

Andy Stokes (RSPB)



View over South Stack Cliffs

What? South Stack Cliffs is a large coastal heathland site located in North Wales, with high sea cliffs, caves, offshore stacks and cattle- and sheep-grazed pasture. It is a busy tourist attraction with a shop and café at the visitor centre (open all year round). Ellins Tower viewing centre (open Easter to September) is a short walk away. It is situated on the cliff edge overlooking the sea. During the spring, the breeding auk colonies arrive, leaving by the end of July.

When? **Short-term:** up to four placements, available from mid-March to end of October.
Long-term: one placement available, November to March.

Where? Railway station at Holyhead (3.5 miles/5.5km from reserve). Taxi to reserve. Car or bicycle useful. Shared accommodation comprises a small farmhouse on the reserve with two twin bedrooms and one single, and a small self-contained annex with a twin bed/sitting room.

Why? **Short-term:** helping to deliver the highest quality visitor experience, including helping in the visitor centre and supporting colleagues in recruiting members, showing people wildlife and providing general information. International volunteers must speak very good English.
Long-term: all of the above visitor work, plus estate maintenance and reserve management. Brushcutter certificate especially welcome.

Who? Call the Visitor Centre on 01407 762100.

Wales

Ynys-hir Eglwys Fach, Machynlleth, Ceredigion

ST2     18+

What? Ynys-hir is situated on the southern side of the Dyfi estuary, a UNESCO World Biosphere site. The reserve is stunningly beautiful and supports a unique mix of habitats, ranging from western oak woodlands to the saltmarshes of the Dyfi. It is one of the most important sites for breeding lapwings in Wales. Other key species include pied flycatchers, redstarts, wood warblers, tree pipits, lesser spotted woodpeckers, otters, dormice and ten species of bat.

When? **Short-term:** various placements available June–August.
Long-term: two interns September–March.
Medium-term: one visitor experience placement May–August

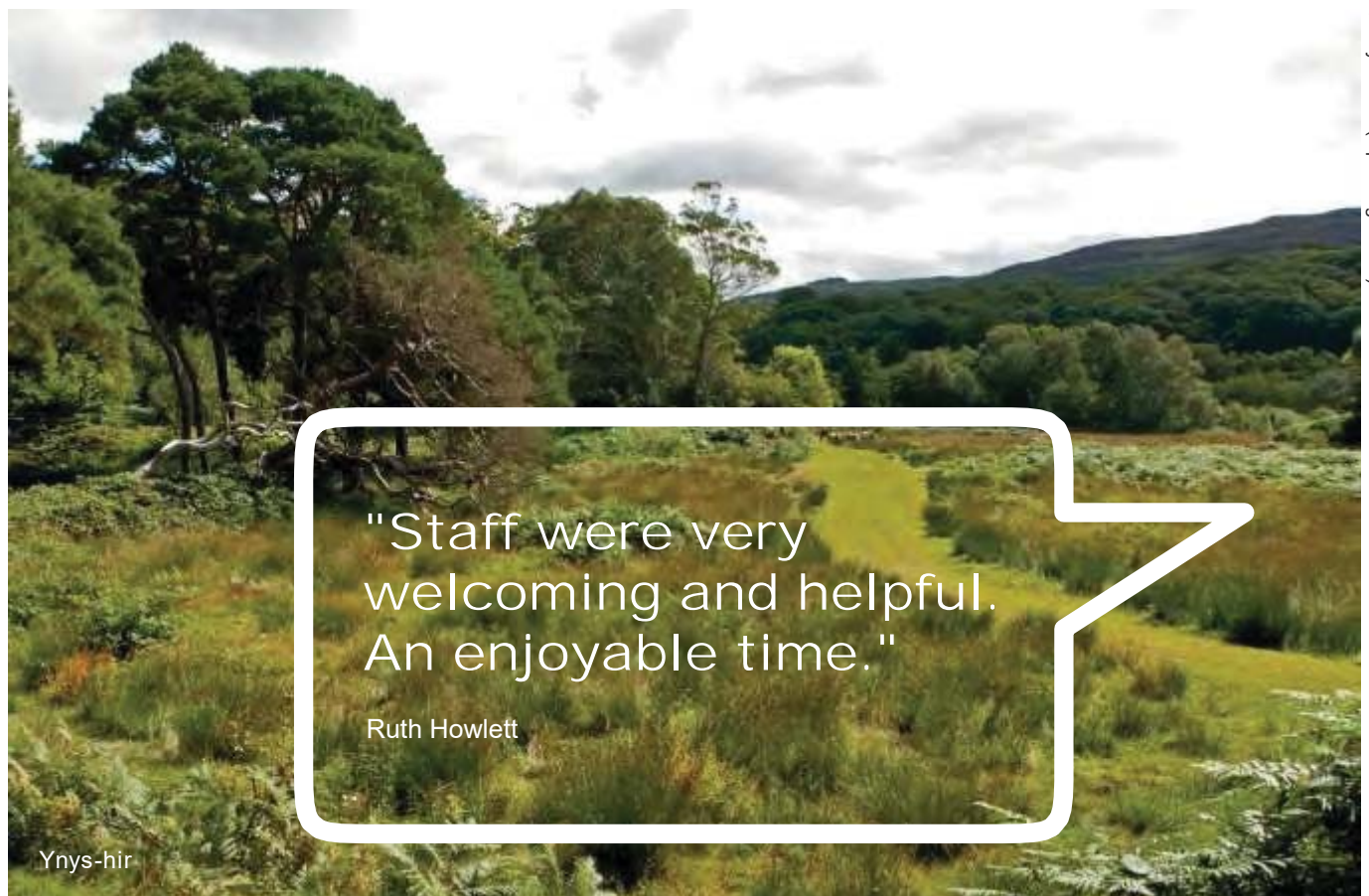
Where? The accommodation is in Furnace, between Machynlleth and Aberystwyth. You stay in a detached two-bedroom cottage (1 mile from the reserve) with one single and one twin bedroom. A car or bicycle is useful as the nearest shop is three miles away. The area is well served by public transport.

Why? Assist with the very varied programme of habitat management, estate work, survey and monitoring and livestock management on a busy nature reserve. Autumn/winter: management of lowland wet grassland, reedbed, woodland, ffridd and the continued restoration of raised bog. The work can be physically demanding. Spring/summer: estate work and species monitoring. Visitor Experience placement: to assist with the events programme, interpretation and maintenance of visitor infrastructures.

Who? Call Neil on 01654 700222.



Andy Hay (rsph-images.com)



"Staff were very welcoming and helpful. An enjoyable time."

Ruth Howlett

Jenny Hilbert (rsph-images.com)

More questions answered

What do I need to bring?

You will need to provide proof of identity, such as a passport, driving licence or a current utility bill made out to your address. We will provide all necessary safety equipment, but you will probably need to bring:

- tough, windproof work clothes, wet-weather clothing
- a warm sleeping bag, or sheets/duvet cover and a pillowcase
- towels
- insect repellent
- flask or water bottle
- small rucksack or carrier
- lunch box
- binoculars/telescope
- stout walking boots/Wellington boots
- work gloves
- enough money to buy your own food during your stay.

A list of what to bring is also included in the reserve details sent to you once a booking has been made.

How will I get to the reserve?

You will need to organise your own transport to the reserve. Details of how to reach each reserve and, where possible, rail/bus stations from which we can collect you, are outlined on pages 9 to 42 for individual reserves.

Further information on most reserves can be found on our website at rspb.org.uk/reserves-and-events

You will be responsible for the cost of travelling to and from your reserve. Some sites suggest that a car or bicycle would be useful or essential due to their remoteness or lack of public transport.

Will there be any free time?

You will not normally be expected to work more than five days per week, or on the day of arrival. Hours will not exceed eight per day, unless you choose to volunteer for longer.

At some reserves, where nests are guarded 24 hours a day, some shift work is required. Duties will vary from reserve to reserve and will depend on the time of year. Please see individual reserve entries. There will always be some free time for birdwatching or other recreation. Please note: our reserves do not take residential volunteers over the Christmas/New Year period.



Helping save nature

Alison Greggans by Clare Ballinger



Insect collecting

How safe is conservation work?

The RSPB aims to take all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its volunteers. We are committed to providing and monitoring a safe and healthy working environment and to giving appropriate instruction, training and supervision for your health and safety.

Health and safety is a partnership between the RSPB and you. We ask you to follow the safety guidelines and not to put yourself, or anyone else, at risk while you are carrying out your volunteering role. An RSPB Health and Safety Handbook is kept on every reserve. Please ensure you read the sections most relevant to your role.

A noticeboard in your volunteer accommodation will display health and safety information, such as fire procedures, first aid provision and details of any specific hazards at the reserve. It is your responsibility to read these.

Robert Coleman (RSPB)

Will I need any special vaccinations?

It is important that you have been inoculated against tetanus, so please ensure you are covered.

What about insurance?

Volunteers are covered by the RSPB's insurance policy while carrying out any business on behalf of the RSPB anywhere in the UK. This includes public liability and limited personal accident cover. As the RSPB personal accident cover is limited, we strongly advise that all volunteers secure their own personal accident insurance.

Public liability cover

Our public liability policy protects you as a volunteer against legal liability to third parties for accidental loss or damage to property or for death, injury or illness. You are protected whilst engaged in volunteering for the RSPB anywhere in the UK.

If someone can demonstrate/prove that your negligence, whilst carrying out such volunteering in connection with the business of the RSPB, caused bodily injury and/or loss or damage to third party property, our insurance protects you. Cover is provided to a maximum of £15,000,000 per event.

Can I use my own vehicle or drive RSPB vehicles?

If you are using your own vehicle for RSPB business, you must check with your insurers to make sure you have adequate cover. You must have a valid MOT certificate and up-to-date road tax. Volunteers over 18 with a current, clean driving licence can use an RSPB fleet vehicle when appropriate, and be protected by our policy, subject to the approval of our insurers. Please discuss this with your line manager and supply a copy of your driving licence.

What about the Duke of Edinburgh Gold award?

Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Award participants can take part in residential volunteering for the residential section of their Gold Award. Always check with your DofE leader first before booking. At the end of your stay, the warden will write the Assessor's report describing your achievements, how you met your goals, what skills you developed and any memorable moments. Please note: candidates must stay for a minimum of one week to fulfil the RSPB's requirements.

Do you take volunteers for long-term placements?

We welcome applications from volunteers who are looking for placements that last six months to gain experience in conservation and/or complement an academic qualification or as part of a sandwich course. These are organised individually following an interview with the reserve staff and therefore may take longer to process. Long-term placements are subject to a satisfactory four-week probation/trial period.

Please enter the entire period you would like to volunteer for on the application form or contact us between 9.30am–1pm, Monday to Friday, on 01767 680551 for details. Please include a copy of your CV with your application form. Long-term volunteers are nearly always required to have a driving licence in order to be able to drive the reserve vehicles.

What about interns?

Volunteering internships are run in some regions. The selected volunteers are usually expected to offer a year's commitment in exchange for a structured training programme in practical reserve management and/or people engagement. The programme offered may vary across locations. The following reserves take residential interns (the number in brackets shows how many placements there are):

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Coombes Valley (three) | Lake Vyrnwy (two) |
| Deame Valley – Old Moor (two) | Leighton Moss (two) |
| Fairburn Ings (one) | Loch of Strathbeg (two) |
| Farnham and Hazeley Heaths (two) | Mid Yare Valley (two) |
| Frampton Marsh (two) | Minsmere (one) |
| Haweswater (one) | North Kent Marshes (three) |
| | Old Hall Marshes (one) |
| | Ynys-hir (two) |

These opportunities are advertised on the RSPB website and the Countryside Job Service and Environment Jobs websites

Karen Williams (RSPB)



Personal accident cover

All volunteers up to the age of 75 have a limited lump sum cover for accidental death, injury resulting in the loss of limbs, eyes, etc and permanent disablement whilst engaged in volunteering for the RSPB anywhere in the UK. Our personal accident cover contains certain limitations for those over the age of 75.

Personal belongings cover

Regrettably, we cannot provide cover for loss of or damage to your personal belongings while you are volunteering. However, you can extend your household contents insurance to cover belongings you take to your place of volunteering.

More questions answered

Can I volunteer if I am claiming benefits?

You can continue to claim benefits and take part in residential volunteering. However, you must be able to meet a number of conditions:

- You must be willing and able to attend an interview at 48 hours' notice and be able to start work with a week's notice.
- You must show that you are actively seeking work.
- You must be able to be contacted promptly if a job opportunity arises.

Your benefits should be unaffected by volunteering as long as you meet these requirements.

Please contact your local Job Centre for advice.

Please be aware that Universal Credit, a new system to replace all existing benefits, is being introduced gradually. For more information, please see gov.uk/universal-credit

Do you accept volunteers from overseas?

Volunteers from any country, that hold a valid visa, are welcome to volunteer with us provided that:

- You are 18 years old or over.
- You speak good English and are able to understand safety instructions. You will need basic conversational English too.
- You apply at least eight weeks before the start of your residential volunteering.
- You make your own travel arrangements from the airport or docks to the reserve or pick-up point.
- It is your responsibility to check before you travel whether you will need to obtain a visa to enter the UK.
- Please note, we do not enter into contracts with our volunteers (eg for schemes such as the Erasmus programme).

We may need to verify your visa entitlement at the time of your application. We cannot advise you directly on whether your visa allows you to volunteer in the UK. We suggest you speak to your consulate, embassy or UK Visas and Immigration for this advice.

We're unable to provide any licenses for sponsorship of volunteers. If you're unable to volunteer with the RSPB because of visa restrictions you may still be able to volunteer with one of our 120 BirdLife International Partners worldwide.

Further information

Keeping children safe

The RSPB believes that nature should be a part of every child's life and is committed to providing experiences and opportunities to bring nature into the lives of children, vulnerable and protected adults. These must be both enjoyable and safe for everyone who takes part, along with providing parents and carers with peace of mind. Our safeguarding policy demonstrates our commitment as an organisation to doing so.

Safeguarding is about ensuring every aspect of a child's and vulnerable and protected adult's welfare. It means protecting them from abuse and neglect, but stretches much further to include all that we can do to support their development and enrich their life experiences.

It is the duty of everyone who has contact with children and vulnerable and protected adults, whatever their role in the RSPB, to protect them from harm as well as to create a positive environment in which they can connect with nature. Based on best practice, the policy provides information about abuse, advice on identifying problems, as well as policies and approaches for use by those involved in delivering our work.

Can you keep a secret?

During your volunteering, you may find yourself working with material that is not public knowledge. Your full co-operation is expected to ensure that this material remains confidential.

You may also come across information on rare breeding bird sites. This must be regarded as confidential and must not be disclosed to, or discussed with, anyone not directly connected with the RSPB.

If there is a problem

We will do our best to make your volunteering enjoyable and worthwhile. Occasionally, problems do occur. Issues that arise during your stay at a reserve should initially be raised with your line manager or, if this is not appropriate, with the warden. If a problem cannot be resolved on site, you should contact us on 01767 680551.

The RSPB reserves the right to refuse applications for volunteering. The RSPB will support the right of a line manager to send volunteers away from a reserve should their behaviour compromise the safety, project or general performance of the Team.



Eleanor Bentall (rspb-images.com)

How to make a booking

Please apply online. Current available opportunities can be found on our website
www.volunteer.rspb.org.uk/residential-opportunities

Please read the information on pages 6–7, and 43–45 carefully. Take into consideration the distance you will need to travel, the nature of the work, the remoteness of the location and style of accommodation when making your application.

We're happy to answer any queries you may have. Feel free to email us at: rvsbookings@rspb.org.uk

Before applying, you must read and agree to the following:

I understand and agree that:

- Accommodation is provided for me, free of charge, but only for the period during which I am an RSPB volunteer. I undertake to maintain the property in a clean and safe condition, and to report any issues to my line manager immediately. I am responsible for all travel expenses to my volunteering location(s) and for providing my own food during my stay.
- The RSPB cannot guarantee whether or not there will be anyone else volunteering during my stay, or the gender of other volunteers. Therefore, it is possible I will be alone in the accommodation in a remote location.
- Insurance for my personal effects is my responsibility.
- I must have a good level of conversational English for health and safety reasons.
- I may be working with confidential information and I will keep any such material confidential.
- I will adhere to and observe the RSPB's policies and good practice when volunteering with, or around, young people. I know of no reason why I might be considered unsuitable to work with young people and vulnerable adults.
- I have completed the medical information and criminal conviction sections of the application form, if relevant, and I give my consent to this information being processed by the RSPB.
- If the information declared on the application form is found to be incorrect, it may disqualify me from this role, or result in the termination of my volunteering.
- The RSPB may take up references from the referees I have provided and I give my consent to this information being processed by the RSPB. I understand that my volunteering is subject to satisfactory references.

It is advisable to apply as early as possible – vacancies are generally over-subscribed.

We reserve the right to make changes to the availability of places, and the number of volunteers accepted, in accordance with changes of circumstances on the reserves.

What if you need to cancel?

If you have to cancel your booking, it is extremely important that you let us and the reserve know as soon as possible, even if this is at the last minute.

Thank you for your invaluable support

All of the donations made via the residential volunteering application form help us make a real difference for nature. We spend 90% of net income on conservation, public education and advocacy.



Building homes for nature

Caroline Clay

The RSPB

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Tel: 01767 680551
volunteers@rspb.org.uk

RSPB England HQ
1st Floor, One Cornwall Street,
Birmingham B3 2JN
Tel: 01295 253330
engvolunteers@rspb.org.uk

RSPB Northern Ireland HQ
Belvoir Park Forest,
Belfast BT8 7QT
Tel: 028 9049 1547
nivolunteers@rspb.org.uk

RSPB Scotland HQ
2 Lochside View, Edinburgh Park,
Edinburgh EH12 9DH
Tel: 0131 317 4100
scotvolunteers@rspb.org.uk

RSPB Cymru HQ
Castlebridge 3, 5–19 Cowbridge Road East,
Cardiff CF11 9AB
Tel: 029 2035 3000
cymruvolunteers@rspb.org.uk

Stay in touch

As a charity, the RSPB depends on the goodwill and financial support of people like you. For other ways to get involved visit www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/, you can find information on becoming a member and other forms of support at www.rspb.org.uk/join-and-donate/, or you can give us a call on 01767 680551.



twitter.com/Natures_Voice



The RSPB is the UK's largest nature conservation charity, inspiring everyone to give nature a home. Together with our partners, we protect threatened birds and wildlife so our towns, coast and countryside will teem with life once again. We play a leading role in BirdLife International, a worldwide partnership of nature conservation organisations.