



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: Practical Conservation Grazing Placement

Why do we need you?

At WWT we create and conserve wetlands and save species. As one of the UK's leading wetland conservation organisations we have a long history of managing wetland sites and species as well as conducting research into wetland wildlife. WWT Martin Mere Wetland Centre is based in the heart of Lancashire and is home to over 40,000 Pink-footed Geese and 2,000 Whooper Swans. The majority of the land is managed through conservation grazing with the traditional breed English Longhorn Cattle.

We are looking to recruit a full-time volunteer for a 12 month period who will help with looking after our cattle and managing our grasslands. This is a great opportunity for people looking for experience in practical conservation as a conservation grazing warden or similar outdoor career. Accommodation is provided.

Who will be responsible for your role? Reserve Manager

Where will you be based? WWT Martin Mere Wetland Centre

How much time will it take? Full-time placement for 12 months, starting in August/September 2021

What will you be doing?

The main duty of the placement will be assisting with the management of our breeding herd of English Longhorn Cattle including calving and tagging of calves, administering medication, daily checks and up keep of all livestock infrastructure.

Other duties may include some or all of the following:

- Assisting with all practical reserve management activities including grassland cutting, scrub control, pruning, coppicing and weed control
- Assisting with the construction and maintenance of ponds, scrapes, ditches and reed beds
- Facilitating and undertaking water quality monitoring
- Supporting with the construction and maintenance of access routes including the maintenance of fences, bridges and viewing hides
- Undertaking agreed training in order to operate machinery with proper regard to safety regulations, in accordance with WWT's health & safety procedures
- Using all tools safely and correctly and observing and applying health and safety regulations at all times, including daily risk assessments and machinery checks
- Supporting research and monitoring activities which may include surveys for species such as breeding and wintering birds, water voles, dragonflies and wetland plants
- Contributing to the upkeep of the nature reserve's databases
- Assisting with the upkeep of visitor's wildlife sightings, bird boards and website and sharing responsibility for wild bird feeding stations

- Assisting with events for visitors and media related activities
- Assisting with the daily running of the visitor Centre, facilities and admissions
- Taking due care for the safety, welfare and enjoyment of the visiting public
- Possibly assist with the day to day running of the bird observatory (subject to opening) which could involve talking to visitors, conducting surveys, daily counts and bird ringing
- If volunteering as a student placement you will be able to carry out your own research project if required by your university as part of your assessment, supported by the expertise of relevant WWT staff

Who are we looking for?

Working with cattle is physically demanding and involves being outdoors in all weather conditions. We are looking for a keen and enthusiastic person who loves nature and supports the work of WWT.

This role will suit you if you are:

- Interested in and enjoy working with cattle
- Interested in conservation grazing/ farming with livestock
- Practical and physically able
- Able to enjoy practical activities outside in all weathers
- Interested in practical wildlife conservation with some previous experience of similar role
- Able to work in a team of staff and volunteers
- Proactive and able to carry out tasks with a minimum of supervision, or independently under the direction of the reserve team
- Able to follow instructions and manage time efficiently
- For student placements the ability to develop scientific ideas and design a suitable research project

The following would be desirable but not essential;

- Experience in working with cattle
- Agricultural/farming background
- Certificates in the use of chainsaws and brushcutters
- A clean driving licence and experience of tractor driving
- Experience in managing small groups of volunteers
- Bird identification skills are particularly useful, as is the ability to identify other wildlife
- Familiarity with entering data into databases

How will you benefit?

- Accommodation including utility bills will be provided at Martin Mere Wetland Centre
- This is an exciting opportunity to contribute to the management of an important wetland site and to learn the skills and techniques used to manage a variety of different habitats for wildlife
- Volunteer in an amazing environment with a very friendly, sociable team
- If undertaking volunteering as a student placement, guidance for your personal research project is provided by friendly staff with significant experience in their field
- Training package relevant to role and ongoing support is provided. This may include: animal husbandry, brushcutter, working safely near water, ATV, 4x4 and tractor driving training
- Suitable WWT uniform is provided
- A discount is available in WWT cafés and shops
- Free entry to all WWT centres throughout the UK on presentation of your WWT name badge

General Notes:

This is a full-time opportunity which will, from time to time, require volunteering during some evenings, weekends and public holidays. Placements are entitled to 25 days annual leave. This role is unpaid but accommodation (including utility bills) is provided. The exact hours you are able to contribute will be discussed prior to placement. There will be a training week at Martin Mere or the WWT Headquarters in Slimbridge for the successful candidate prior to the commencement of their placement year at the Martin Mere Wetland Centre.

We regret we are not in a position to reimburse expenses incurred in travelling to and from the centre, but any pre-agreed expenses incurred in the course of your duties will be reimbursed.

This position is entirely voluntary and is therefore unpaid. Any offer of a volunteer opportunity is not intended to create a legally binding contract between us and any agreement may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intends any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future.

How to Apply:

Please go to www.wwt.org.uk/placements to see details of this role and then complete and submit the application form. Please email abigail.mackay@wwt.org.uk if you have any problems with completing the application form.

Closing Date:

Please return all completed application forms by **Monday 16th November 2020**. After this date successful applicants will be asked to attend an informal interview either at the Martin Mere Wetland Centre or by Skype call in the week commencing 30th November 2020, to find out more about the role and discuss availability after which a suitable candidate will be offered the placement.