

Placement from 18th March – 26 August (23 weeks)

Please make sure you read the “Essential Information for all Long-term Handa Volunteers”, “Volunteer Code of Conduct” and “Safety for Volunteers” documents.

The Handa Island Skua Monitoring Programme has been monitoring productivity and the feeding ecology of Handa’s Great and Arctic skua breeding populations since 2003. The island supports over 200 pairs of Great skua and about 20 pairs of the nationally declining Arctic skua.

We are looking for an exceptionally committed volunteer to continue our annual monitoring of the skua populations. The successful applicant will be an integral part of the close-knit reserve team of Rangers and Assistant Rangers, spending the entire season managing the reserve for over 75,000 breeding seabirds and 7000+ annual visitors.

Duties:

- Monitor productivity of great and Arctic skua populations
- Locate, map and regularly visit territories to determine outcome
- Locate, ring and measure chicks, supported by an experienced ringer
- Locate and identify colour-ringed birds
- Record data in a standardised way using MS Excel
- Production of a report
- Assist the Ranger and other volunteers with reserve maintenance, landing and welcoming visitors and additional surveys as required (full time April to mid-May, thereafter c.10 - 20% of work time)

The Skua Fieldwork Assistant Ranger **must have:**

- A flexible attitude to working hours;
- The ability to thrive in a communal environment, with minimal personal space;
- Some fieldwork experience;
- Ability to navigate using map, compass & GPS;
- Good level of health and fitness;
- Self motivation and the ability to work independently **and** as part of a tight team;
- Good communication skills;
- A love of being outside- whatever the weather!

It **would be good for the Skua Fieldworker Volunteer to have:**

- Prior monitoring (particularly seabird) experience;
- Good all round wildlife I.D skills;
- Data entry, analysis and report writing experience;
- Basic practical skills and experience with hand tools;
- Desire to pursue career in conservation;

Having your own transport is something you will find very useful, but this is not essential for the role.

Hours and days of work:

35 hours per week over 5 days (but not necessarily 9am-5pm) with some early morning or late evening work required for which you will be given time off in lieu. Days off will be taken dependent on weather and progress of fieldwork. You're welcome to leave the island on your weekday off if you wish, providing you catch the last boat back and communicate with the Ranger and Boatmen. This does however become difficult during peak monitoring season. The boatmen provide one free return trip for every 2 weeks of your stay, so if you wish to go off more frequently than this, you will have to pay the concessionary fare of £10 each trip.

Responsible to: Handa Ranger; and Scottish Wildlife Trust Reserves Manager.

Health and safety

It is crucial the successful candidate adheres to strict health and safety guidelines and lone worker procedures both when working and relaxing on the island. With extreme weather, difficult terrain and precipitous cliffs coupled with limited phone signal Handa is an extreme living and working environment which the Ranger is responsible for at all times. Failure to adhere to the Handa Code of Conduct will see the placement terminated.

The Scottish Wildlife Trust will provide:

Basic, bunkhouse-style accommodation is provided free of charge in the Handa Bothy. Limited assistance with travel expenses and subsistence (£20/week for food and up to £40 for travel on provision of receipts), **2 day Emergency First Aid course**, full training necessary to carry out surveys & monitoring; all equipment and support throughout the season.

See www.handaskuas.org for more information about the project and previous annual reports.

How to apply:

The placements on Handa are widely recognised as important field experience and provide the successful applicant with valuable experience and networking opportunities with the Trust, the RSPB and with several seabird researchers and academics. Many former volunteers have gone on to paid employment with the Trust and other organisations, and the majority are now employed fulltime within the conservation or academic sectors. As there are multiple placements being advertised, please indicate clearly which one(s) you are interested in, and indicate your first, second and third choices.

Send us the following:

- Completed **Handa Volunteering Application form**. NB: make sure you specify which role(s) you're applying for and order of preference;
- CV tailored to the specific role(s) you're applying for;
- Covering letter stating why you want the post and why you think you're suitable;
- The full contact details of 2 referees and how they know you should also be included on a separate sheet.

By email to volunteerhanda@swt.org.uk or by post to **Handa Volunteering, Scottish Wildlife Trust, Harbourside House, 110 Commercial Street, Edinburgh, EH6 6NF.**

Closing date for applications: 09:00 Monday 5th February 2018.

Incomplete applications or those that do not closely match the specified dates will not be considered.

Candidate selection

If shortlisted for the position, you will be invited to take part in an interview with the Handa Ranger and/or Reserve Manager. Depending on your location, this will be in person, via Skype, or by telephone. **We aim to interview and appoint candidates in mid February 2018.** We regret that due to limited resources, we are unable to contact unsuccessful candidates. If you have not heard from us within 2 weeks of the closing date for applications, please assume that you have been unsuccessful. Good luck!