

Job Description

Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels – Developing Community Action Grey Squirrel Officer Western Tayside (Fixed term to March 2022)

Based	Home-based. Preferred location Brechin/Montrose area
Dept/Region	Conservation
Line Manager	<i>Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels – Developing Community Action (SSRS-DCA)</i> Conservation Officer Tayside

Overall Purpose of the Job

Contribute to the implementation of a programme of targeted grey squirrel control to prevent grey squirrel incursion into Scotland's core "red-only" squirrel populations in highland Scotland by carrying out grey squirrel control on private and public land in key parts of Tayside.

Main Duties

Deliver grey squirrel control, including training and supporting grey squirrel control volunteers in the area from Forfar – Montrose and up to the River North Esk, or other areas as advised by the SSRS-DCA Conservation Officer for Tayside (Tayside CO).

Grey Squirrel Control

1. Carry out grey squirrel control according to the SSRS-DCA project's Standard Operating Procedures to provide coverage for the "at-risk" areas not yet covered by land managers or volunteers.
2. Take responsibility for approaching the relevant landowners, estate managers and staff on private land to make arrangements for access to carry out control, including obtaining written access permission, associated maps and completion of other necessary paperwork. Secure continued cooperation.
3. Liaise with Forest & Land Scotland to gain access to the National Forest Estate where necessary for grey squirrel control work and secure continued cooperation.
4. Encourage land manager and householders in the SSRS target areas to carry out grey squirrel control on their own land. To include providing SSRS-approved training and equipment under a trap-loan scheme.
5. Assist in recruiting landowners/ managers in critical gaps in the network to apply for Forestry Grant Scheme funding for grey squirrel control; carry out site visits to identify trap placement.
6. Provide support for land managers and individuals in their red squirrel conservation efforts, building contact networks throughout the geographical patch and encouraging best trapping practice, standardised information recording, completion of the necessary paperwork and regular information sharing.
7. Assist the Tayside CO in delivering SSRS approved grey squirrel control training workshops and training sessions to landowners and volunteers.
8. Conduct grey squirrel control within sample sites in order to take blood samples for Squirrelpox virus (SQPV) testing.
9. Utilise baited squirrel hair-traps or remote trap monitors to increase the efficiency of trapping.
10. Distribute posters and leaflets in key places to encourage the reporting of squirrel sightings.
11. Provide assistance to the Tayside CO with spring survey preparation during January/February.

Record Keeping

12. Keep accurate records of trapping effort, location and results in Excel to agreed SSRS project standards; submit records and timesheets monthly.
13. Produce risk assessments for all outdoor work and comply with SWT policy for personal and third-party safety.
14. Add new grey squirrel volunteers and their trapping records to the SSRS Hub (database).
15. Complete necessary record keeping associated with SQPV blood sampling.
16. Record sightings of red and grey squirrels in the area via the SSRS Hub (database)

Community Engagement (Where time and resources permit)

17. Encourage interest in local red squirrel conservation with relevant local communities and organisations encountered while undertaking control work including the recording and reporting of squirrel sightings on <https://scottishsquirrels.org.uk>
18. Assist the Tayside CO to respond to enquiries from the public regarding grey squirrel control for red squirrel conservation and provide assistance with events where possible.

Key Internal & External Contacts

- Tayside CO; other SSRS-DCA Grey Squirrel Officers and contractors
- Landowners / managers, forest managers, gamekeepers, volunteers & householders

Personal Specification

Essential Qualifications

Essential Qualifications

- SVQ/NVQ level 2 or equivalent qualification in Game and Wildlife Management or related discipline **or** relevant experience of game keeping or invasive/non-native mammal control.
- Good understanding of conservation principles, practices and legislation.

Essential Experience

- Minimum two years' previous experience practical wildlife management, gamekeeping or other relevant field.
- Experience at keeping records using Microsoft Excel (training in using specific SSRS forms will be given).
- Experience of working successfully with landowners and members of the public.
- Experience in training or supervising the work of others

Essential Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Control operations must comply with best practice and legislation and the 'SSRS-DCA Standard Operating Procedures for Grey Squirrel Control'. Training will be given.
- Self-motivated, energetic and enthusiastic, with ability to manage own time schedule; willing to work some unsocial hours.
- Understanding of working in a strategic manner to deliver efficient animal population control.
- Ability to communicate successfully with colleagues, stakeholders, landowners, householders and the wider public.
- A love of outdoor working and ability to access and work in woodland sites, some of which are remote.
- Willing to learn new skills and operating methods and attend training as advised by the Tayside CO.
- Confidence to deliver grey squirrel control workshops and training sessions as required.
- Full clean UK driving licence.
- Current air-weapon licence (if using air weapon for dispatch).

Advantageous

- Familiarity with mid Tayside geography.
- First Aid certificate.
- A knowledge of forest and native tree species.
- A knowledge of Scottish wildlife and environment issues.

Date	13/08/2020		
Author	Ann-Marie MacMaster	Position	Conservation Officer (Tayside)