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| **Title** | **Seasonal Grey Squirrel Officer - Argyll, the Trossachs and Stirling**  ***Saving Scotland’s Red Squirrels – Developing Community Action*** |
| **Part-time or Full-time** | **Full time, fixed term: December 2020 – end September 2021** |
| **Based** | Home-based. Location flexible within project area covering Arrochar, Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire, Callander, Stirling. |
| **Dept/Region** | Conservation |
| **Line Manager** | *Saving Scotland’s Red Squirrels- Developing Community Action (SSRS-DCA)* Conservation Officer Argyll, the Trossachs & Stirlingshire |

**Our Mission**

For over 50 years, the Scottish Wildlife Trust has worked with its members, partners and supporters in pursuit of its vision of healthy, resilient ecosystems across Scotland’s land and seas. We are proud to be have the support of over 42,000 members, 1,000 volunteers and 23 local (volunteer led) groups.

The Trust successfully champions the cause of wildlife through policy and campaigning work, demonstrates best practice through practical conservation and innovative partnerships, and inspires people to take positive action through its education and engagement activities. The Trust manages a network of 120 wildlife reserves across Scotland and is a member of the UK-wide Wildlife Trusts movement.

**Our Values**

* We are pioneers
* We are always learning
* We act with integrity
* We are evidence-based
* We are impact focused
* We are collaborative

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| Saving Scotland’s Red Squirrels – Developing Community Action Project  *Saving Scotland’s Red Squirrels - Developing Community Action* (SSRS-DCA) is a project to secure the long-term future of red squirrels in Scotland by building capacity among communities of volunteers and land managers, empowering them to take on and take ownership of some of the essential protection measures required to save the nation’s red squirrels.  *Saving Scotland’s Red Squirrels - Developing Community Action* (SSRS-DCA), focuses upon one of our most charismatic and well-loved mammals – the red squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*). Once widespread, red squirrels have undergone a catastrophic population decline primarily due to competition from the non-native invasive, American grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*). There are now only c.160,000 red squirrels remaining in the UK of which 120,000 occur in Scotland – 75% of the remaining UK red squirrel population. Saving Scotland’s Red Squirrels (SSRS) was formed to reverse this decline and create the conditions for this mammal to thrive in future. |

***Saving Scotland’s Red Squirrels***

**Seasonal Grey Squirrel Officer - Argyll, the Trossachs and Stirling**

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| **Overall Purpose of the Role**  Contribute to a programme of targeted grey squirrel control to prevent grey squirrel incursion into Scotland’s core “red-only” squirrel populations of Argyll and highland Scotland, in accordance with the *Saving Scotland’s Red Squirrels – Developing Community Action* (SSRS-DCA) project plan. |

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| **Main Tasks**  Deliver grey squirrel control, including training and supporting grey squirrel control volunteers in the area as advised by the SSRS-DCA Conservation Officer for Argyll, the Trossachs and Stirlingshire (A&T CO). Provide support to the A&T CO with regards Forest Grant Scheme (FGS) application field visits. Carry out grey squirrel trapping and blood sampling for squirrelpox testing and grey squirrel population control in critical dispersal corridors and support and train others in the blood sampling technique.  **Grey Squirrel Control**   1. Conduct grey squirrel control and blood sampling in accordance with the SSRS squirrelpox-monitoring scheme, with the help of volunteer trappers wherever possible, prioritising the key squirrelpox ingress routes at Dumbarton, north Glasgow, Strathblane and the Stirling/Falkirk area 2. Carry out grey squirrel control in geographical areas where outlined above where land managers or volunteers are not yet willing / able to participate, to ensure coverage in the ‘at risk’ areas. 3. Organise land access permission for grey squirrel control work from landowners and managers (public and private), with assistance from the A&T CO where required. 4. Take joint responsibility alongside the A&T CO for securing the continued cooperation of landowners and managers in order to carry out efficient red squirrel conservation work, building contact networks throughout the geographical area. 5. Work with landowners and managers (public and private) within the project area to gain access to land for grey squirrel control work, including obtaining written permissions and secure their continued cooperation. 6. Produce risk assessments for all outdoor work and comply with SWT’s lone working policy for personal and third-party safety. 7. Where opportunity permits, encourage land managers and householders to carry out their own grey squirrel control and assist with the squirrelpox-monitoring efforts and where appropriate provide appropriate individual training and equipment under a trap-loan scheme administered by the A&T CO. 8. In applicable areas encourage landowners to seek assistance from the A&T CO on Forestry Grant Scheme Funding (FGS) for grey squirrel control to benefit red squirrels where appropriate. 9. Support the A&T CO with FGS applications – i.e. field visits to advise on trap-placement. 10. The GSO may also be required to carry out feeder-box or camera-trap monitoring to assess squirrel presence where required. 11. Distribute posters and leaflets in relevant/key places in order to encourage the reporting of squirrel sightings.   **Record Keeping**   1. Keep records of trapping effort, location and results in Excel to agreed SSRS-DCA project standards and submit accurate records and timesheets monthly to the A&T CO. (Computer can be provided and training given if required.) 2. Record sightings of red and grey squirrels in the area via the SSRS website or on the appropriate template in the Microsoft Excel trapping spreadsheet (Training provided).   **Community Engagement**  Where time and resources permit:   1. Assist the A&T CO to deliver workshops and training sessions to volunteers and where appropriate land managers in all aspects of grey squirrel control, including best practise. 2. As time permits, support and encourage land managers and other groups in their red squirrel conservation efforts throughout the geographical patch, encouraging best trapping practise including standardised recording and reporting. 3. Encourage interest in local red squirrel conservation with relevant local communities and organisations encountered while undertaking control work, and encourage recording and reporting of squirrel sightings on [**https://scottishsquirrels.org.uk**](https://scottishsquirrels.org.uk) 4. Assist the A&T CO to respond to enquiries from the public regarding grey squirrel control for red squirrel conservation. |

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| **Key Contacts** |
| * SSRS-DCA Conservation Officer for Argyll & Trossachs. * Landowners / managers, foresters and woodland managers, gamekeepers, volunteers, householders |

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| **Qualifications, Experience (essential/desirable)** |
| *Essential Qualifications (or matched experience) :*   * 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 in practical wildlife management, gamekeeping or other relevant field. * Experience of working successfully with landowners and members of the public. * Proven experience of keeping accurate and comprehensive records. * Prior experience of lone working.   *Essential Competencies / Qualities*   * A strong work ethic and proven reliability are essential. * Control operations must comply with best practice and legislation and the SSRS-DCA Standard Operating Procedures for Grey Squirrel Control. Training will be given. * Ability to work in woodland sites safely and discreetly, some of which are remote (the majority of the work will be lone working). * Willingness to learn new skills and operating methods; openness to a variety of humane dispatch methods, both for own use and to train others. * Confidence to deliver workshops and group or individual training sessions if required. * Current air-weapon license will be required if using air weapon for humane dispatch.   *Desirable Experience/ Knowledge:*   * Familiarity with the Trossachs and Stirlingshire and relevant parts of Argyll. * A knowledge of forest and native tree species |

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| **Key competencies** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Technology and knowledge (IT) | Keeping accurate and comprehensive records | A working knowledge of Microsoft Office software, particularly Excel. |
| Organisation and planning | Self-motivated, energetic and enthusiastic; ability to manage own time schedule; willing to work some unsocial hours. |  |
| Communication  (writing/spoken) | Ability to communicate with colleagues, stakeholders, landowners, householders and the wider public. |  |
| Commitment to organisational culture, values and vision |  | A strong personal commitment to wildlife conservation |
| Problem Solving | **x** |  |
| Judgement | **x** |  |

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| **Additional Requirements** | **Essential** | **Desirable** | **Not applicable** |
| Right to work in the UK | **X** |  |  |
| Full Driving Licence | **X** |  |  |
| Protection of Vulnerable Groups membership |  |  | **X** |
| First Aid Certificate |  | **X** |  |
| Credit Check |  |  | **X** |

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| **Author** | Mary-Anne Collis | **Position** | Saving Scotland’s Red Squirrels Conservation Officer Argyll & Trossachs | Date | 30/07/2020 |