

Unpaid volunteer role: Monday 22 March – Tuesday 31 August (22 weeks approximately)

Overall purpose of role:

To work with the Handa Ranger and within a small close-knit team of volunteers to deliver visitor and conservation management on Handa Island wildlife Reserve. Each volunteer will lead on one of the following areas of our work, but will be expected to participate in all aspects of the work on the island on a rota basis.

(a) Practical work

- Constructing and repairing boardwalk
- Aggregate path maintenance, clearing vegetation and footpath drainage
- Carrying out regular inspections and recording findings
- Beach cleaning
- Firewood collection
- Maintaining the bothy and its water system
- Assisting with management of the composting toilet
- Sign maintenance and any other duties as and when they arise

(b) Landing visitors and providing information

- Improve visitors' experience by providing a welcome, and information about the Scottish Wildlife Trust;
- Provide interpretation of natural history of Handa (particularly seabirds);
- 6 days/week, for an average of 80 people/day;
- Responsible for the Visitor Shelter and shop (promoting items for sale) in the afternoons;
- Assist with disembarking and embarking of ferry passengers.

(c) Seabird monitoring

- Carry out population and productivity counts for kittiwake, fulmar, guillemot and razorbill;
- Carry out cetacean, plants and general biological recording (you are of course free to carry out more in your spare time if you'd like to);
- Assist with rat monitoring on a monthly basis.
- Data entry for biological recording

(d) Skua Field Worker

- 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;

Personal Specification

Essential:

- A flexible attitude to working hours;
- The ability to thrive in a communal environment, with minimal personal space;
- Desire to pursue career in conservation
- Some fieldwork experience and ability to navigate using map, compass & GPS;
- Good level of health and fitness;
- Be comfortable working at heights and around cliffs;
- Good practical experience and ability with a variety of hand tools;
- Self-motivation and the ability to work independently **and** as part of a tight team;
- Great communication skills and diplomacy
- Confident to use initiative when faced with unplanned/unexpected situations
- Basic IT skills including working knowledge of MS Office programs
- A love of being outside- whatever the weather!

To Lead on one of the areas of work:

- Good practical experience and ability with a variety of hand tools
- Experience of wildlife monitoring
- Prior monitoring (particularly seabird) experience;
- Good all-round wildlife I.D skills;
- Visitor management skills
- Data entry, analysis and report writing experience;

Desirable:

- Experience of Handa Island
- Proven experience in similar role
- Degree or professional qualification in Ecology or related discipline
- have some knowledge of seabird monitoring methodology and practice
- have some knowledge of marine and terrestrial natural history

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

Key Internal & External Contacts

- Handa Ranger, Reserves Manager and Reserve Project Officers
- Operator of the Handa Ferry, contractors and suppliers
- Volunteers
- Island visitors from a range of backgrounds (e.g. tourists/naturalists/academics)
- Various contacts within the Scottish Wildlife Trust

Before applying please make sure you read the “Essential Information for all Long-term Handa Volunteers”, “Volunteer Code of Conduct” and “Safety for Volunteers” documents, and watch the videos on the [Handa webpage](#).

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.

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. There will be a strict Covid-19 Policy particularly with reference to bothy living. This will include a two-week isolation period at the start of the placement.

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 whilst completing the unpaid internship (£20/week for food and up to £40 towards travel on provision of receipts); PPE contribution; full training necessary to carry out maintenance, surveys & monitoring; all equipment and support throughout the season.

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 four placements being advertised, please indicate clearly which one(s) you feel best suited to take a lead on.

Send us your completed **Handa Long-Term Volunteer Application form** by email to volunteerhanda@scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk.

Closing date for applications: 9am Monday 8 February

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 the week commencing **Monday 15 February**. This will be via ZOOM or by telephone. **We aim to appoint candidates by Monday 22 February**. 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 and thank you for your interest in volunteering with the Scottish Wildlife Trust.