

# Scottish Wildlife Trust

## Job Description



<b>Title</b>	<b>Conservation and Control Officer (Stirlingshire, Argyll &amp; Trossachs)</b> <i>Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels</i>
<b>Part-time or Full-time</b>	<b>Full time, fixed term: until 31 March 2024</b>
<b>Based</b>	National Park Headquarters, Balloch – hybrid working may be possible
<b>Dept/Region</b>	Conservation
<b>Line Manager</b>	<i>Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels</i> - Programme Manager

### 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 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

### Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels - Transition

*Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels* (SSRS) is a project to deliver the essential protection measures required to secure the long-term future of red squirrels in Scotland and to ensure that systems are put in place to continue the delivery of these measures over the long term by working with other agencies with a stake in native species conservation and invasive non-native species management.

SSRS 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 is 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

### Conservation and Control Officer – Stirlingshire, Argyll & Trossachs

#### Overall Purpose of the Role

Lead on the implementation across Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park and parts of Stirling and Argyll of the *Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels* project in accordance with the SSRS project plan to:

- Protect red squirrels in the Highland Line priority landscape across Argyll and Trossachs from replacement by grey squirrels and from Squirrelepox disease.
- To inspire people to value their local red squirrels and the wider natural heritage.
- 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* (SSRS) project plan.

#### Main Tasks

##### Strategic planning and partnerships

1. Plan and lead the delivery of strategic grey squirrel control work in Argyll & Trossachs, in the Project's priority area, to create an integrated grey squirrel control network as outlined in the SSRS project plan.
2. Maintain strong partnership working with project partners and local stakeholders to deliver the priorities outlined in the SSRS project plan and the Scottish Strategy for Red Squirrel Conservation.

##### Operational Implementation

###### *Grey Squirrel Control*

3. Carry out grey squirrel control according to the SSRS project's Standard Operating Procedures, prioritising the sites of grey squirrel occupation within the National Park, the dispersal route into Argyll at Arrochar and the landscapes immediately south and west of the Park, as well as Callandar and the Teith Valley to Doune, focussing on locations not yet covered by land managers or volunteers.
4. Organise land access permission for grey squirrel control work from landowners and managers (public and private), including obtaining written permissions and secure their continued cooperation.
5. Ensure the continued cooperation of landowners and managers in order to carry out efficient red squirrel conservation work, building contact networks throughout the geographical area.
6. Co-ordinate a project trap-loan scheme for land managers and volunteers to carry out grey squirrel control in a co-ordinated network in Argyll & Trossachs and support recipients to report control effort and catch.
7. Organise and deliver grey squirrel control training for landowners and individual volunteers via grey squirrel control workshops and individual training.
8. Work in accordance with risk assessments for all outdoor work, creating site-specific risk assessments in sites with additional risks, and comply with SWT's lone working policy for personal and third-party safety.

###### *Reporting*

9. Collect and maintain high-quality, accurate records on trapping effort and control data using Excel and the SSRS Hub (database).
10. Ensure all grey squirrel control volunteers complete the relevant paperwork.
11. Encourage and promote the use of the online SSRS Community Hub by staff, landowners and volunteers to submit their records on trapping effort and captures and squirrel sightings.
12. Help to collect, maintain and report the information required for reporting on project performance to the Trust, funders and partners.

###### *Surveying and Monitoring*

13. Support volunteers with appropriate training (e.g. hair sample identification), standardisation and verification of records.
14. Increase efficiency by monitoring using feeder-box and camera-trap or remote trap sensor in low grey squirrel density locations to detect grey squirrel presence and trigger trapping where required.

### *Public Engagement*

Where time and resources permit:

15. Encourage and support a network of land managers and communities to engage actively in red squirrel protection and monitoring work in strategic areas of Argyll & Trossachs.
16. In target areas, encourage landowners to apply for Forestry Grant Scheme funding or seek to carry out grey squirrel control on their own land.
17. Undertake publicity to promote understanding of red squirrel conservation and grey squirrel control among the wider community and to encourage the recording and reporting of squirrel sightings.

### **Key Contacts**

- SSRS Project staff, especially SSRS Conservation Officer for Tayside
- The Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park staff, including National Park Ecologists
- Landowners/managers, gamekeepers, woodland managers, householders, volunteers, wider stakeholders

### **Qualifications, Experience (essential/desirable)**

*Essential Qualifications (or matched experience):*

- Degree in ecology, biology, countryside management or related discipline.

*Essential Experience:*

- Minimum two years' experience in a relevant field, including wildlife ecology, conservation, non-native mammal control, practical wildlife management.
- Good understanding of conservation principles, practices and legislation.
- Experience of collecting, maintaining and reporting standardised ecological data.
- Experience of standardised surveys and understanding of scientific method.
- Experience in recruiting, motivating, training and supporting volunteer groups and individuals to undertake active conservation work
- Confidence to train householders /volunteers to assist in /carry out grey squirrel control where required.
- Experience of working with countryside rangers, landowners, estate staff and gamekeepers or similar
- Ability to work alone in woodland sites safely and discreetly, including in some remote locations.
- Current air-weapon license will be required if using air weapon for humane dispatch.

*Desirable Experience:*

- Knowledge of the Argyll, Trossachs and Stirling area
- Experience in engaging the wider public in conservation issues
- Knowledge of forestry/woodland management
- Knowledge of current legislation relating to mammals

<b>Key competencies</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
Technology and knowledge (IT)	Competent and experienced with the range of Microsoft Office applications (Excel, Outlook, Word, Teams).  Competent in using online reporting platforms to record standard data and able to enter data accurately.	Awareness and knowledge of General Data Protection Regulations.
Organisation and planning	Strategic thinking coupled with excellent organisation	
Communication (writing/spoken)	Excellent communication skills (both written and verbal); comfortable talking to a wide range of people including landowners and volunteers.	

Teamwork	Motivation to work on own initiative and to motivate others.	
Commitment to organisational culture, values and vision		A strong personal commitment to wildlife conservation

<b>Additional Requirements</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>
Right to work in the UK	<b>X</b>		
Full Driving Licence	<b>X</b>		
Protection of Vulnerable Groups membership			<b>X</b>
First Aid Certificate		<b>X</b>	

<b>Author</b>	Lucy Lush	<b>Position</b>	SSRS Assistant Project Manager	Date	30/03/2022
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