

# Scottish Wildlife Trust

## Job Description



<b>Title</b>	<b>Project Officer (South East Scotland)</b> <i>Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels</i>
<b>Part-time or Full-time</b>	<b>Full-time until 31 March 2024</b>
<b>Based</b>	Scottish Borders - Home-working possible
<b>Dept/Region</b>	Conservation
<b>Line Manager</b>	<i>Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels</i> - Project 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 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*

### Project Officer – South East Scotland

#### Overall Purpose of the Role

To oversee the implementation in South East Scotland of *Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels* project in accordance with the SSRS project plan to secure red squirrel conservation objectives through the management of grey squirrel populations:

- Support community volunteer networks and land managers in the Scottish Borders to enable them to independently take on protection of red squirrels in priority landscapes from replacement by grey squirrels by the end of March 2024, and to develop a sense of ownership and pride in their role in the conservation of the species in the UK.
- Engage wider audiences and communities across the Scottish Borders with the work of the project.

#### Strategic planning and partnerships

1. Oversee the delivery of strategic grey squirrel control in the Southeast Scotland Priority Areas for Red Squirrel Conservation (PARCs), by working with project partners and all regional /local stakeholders to support the delivery of grey squirrel management in the SSRS PARCs in the Scottish Borders.

#### Operational Implementation

##### *Grey Squirrel Control*

2. Line manage and support a full-time Grey Squirrel Officer working in tandem with volunteer control networks and Forestry Grant Scheme-funded land managers to deliver grey squirrel management to minimise the grey squirrel populations in the Tweed and Upper Teviot & Rule PARCs, including protection of selected National Forest Estate forests from incursion by grey squirrels.
3. Co-ordinate volunteer networks to deliver the required grey control across the Tweed, Teviot & Rule and Esk Valley PARCs, assisting with arranging land access where necessary.
4. Manage trap-loan scheme for land managers and volunteers who are not attached to local SSRS red squirrel networks, providing information on SSRS best practice methods, ensuring the provision of the latest SSRS documentation, organising access to grey squirrel control training and supporting all participants to report control effort and catch on the online SSRS Hub.
5. Support local volunteer red squirrel groups to become responsible for managing trap-loans within their own groups, including arranging the training of appropriate group members to take on the role of Volunteer Grey Squirrel Control Trainer for their Group. Organise access to grey squirrel control training where required and support all participants to register and keep records of control and monitoring on the SSRS Hub.

##### *Community Support*

6. Support volunteers to carry out practical red squirrel conservation tasks, including reporting squirrel sightings, surveys, hosting traps under the trap-loan scheme, carrying out grey squirrel control independently, and raising awareness of the red squirrel conservation issue and taking on responsibility for their practical conservation work.
7. Provide advice and support to volunteers to ensure effective functioning, including the skills required for running volunteer groups.
8. Ensure each group has a constitution (or is affiliated to a constituted organisation), a means of banking, and public liability insurance.
9. Ensure every group has several volunteer GSOs and a Grey Squirrel Control trainer, a volunteer Data Officer to co-ordinate upload of the group's data to the SSRS Community Hub and the capability of collecting evidence that volunteer GSOs are properly trained, have air weapons licenses, etc.
10. Ensure volunteers are fully apprised of relevant Health & Safety policies and that the correct risk assessments are in place.

### *Reporting*

11. Encourage and promote the use of the online SSRS Community Hub by staff, landowners, community groups and volunteers to submit their records on trapping effort and captures, squirrel sightings, surveying, voluntary activity and training, ensuring that volunteer groups are fully able to manage their own registrations and records reporting by end March 2024.
12. Help to collect, maintain and report the information required for reporting on project performance to the Trust, funders and partners.

### *Communications & PR*

13. Assist in carrying out publicity to promote understanding among the South East Scotland community of red squirrel conservation / grey squirrel control, and to encourage the reporting of squirrel sightings.

### **Key Contacts**

- SSRS Project staff
- Landowners/managers, local red squirrel protection networks and volunteers, wider stakeholders
- South Scotland regional project advisory group and volunteer Red Squirrel Forum for South Scotland.

### **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
- Demonstrable track-record of recruiting, motivating, training, and managing rural and community-based volunteers (groups and individuals) to undertake active conservation work
- Leadership and staff management experience
- Experience of working with a diverse range of people including countryside rangers, landowners, estate staff, householders, local community volunteers
- Experience of the administration of long-term volunteers to ensure ongoing delivery of support.

#### *Desirable Experience/ Knowledge:*

- Good knowledge of the Scottish Borders
- Experience in engaging the wider public in conservation issues
- Knowledge of current legislation relating to mammals and invasive non-native species control
- High awareness and knowledge of Health & Safety, Risk Assessment and Data Protection.

<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)	Good communication skills (both written and verbal); comfortable talking to a wide range of people including landowners and volunteers.	
Commitment to organisational culture, values and vision	<b>X</b>	A strong personal commitment to wildlife conservation.
Problem Solving	<b>X</b>	
Judgement	<b>X</b>	
Teamwork	Motivation to work on own initiative and to motivate others.	

<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>	Mel Tonkin	<b>Position</b>	SSRS Project Manager	<b>Date</b>	01/12/2021
---------------	------------	-----------------	----------------------	-------------	------------