



for birds  
for people  
for ever



**A LITTLE TIME MAKES A  
WORLD OF DIFFERENCE**

Volunteering information



## A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY

Thank you for your interest in volunteering for the RSPB. You don't have to be an expert on birds to be able to help – whatever skills you have to offer, or whatever aspect you are interested in, we can find something to suit you. Whether you want to get your hands mucky on our reserves, or you prefer to help out in an office or from the comfort of your own home, it's entirely up to you. In this brochure you will find just some of the opportunities available. Through volunteering, you'll meet lots of people, have great fun and help one of the world's largest wildlife charities.

*'In my teens, and later, I was a regular volunteer helping to look after peregrine falcons, red kites, stone curlews and red-backed shrikes. I had some fabulous times, formed lots of friendships and learnt plenty too. Best of all, of course, I played a small but significant part in conserving these birds. I hope you will volunteer for the RSPB to help conserve wild birds and their habitats.'*

*Chris Packham, broadcaster and photographer*

*'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.'*

*Margaret Meads, anthropologist*

## LOCAL GROUPS AND YOUTH WORK

Do you want to give something back to your local community? Local RSPB groups promote and represent the RSPB in their area and organise a number of activities, such as slide shows, quizzes and field trips. Run entirely by volunteers, local groups are always looking for people like you to keep the show on the road: secretaries, sales people, treasurers, fundraisers, newsletter editors and computer whizz kids, to name but a few.

### By being involved in a local RSPB group you can:

- offer conservation help in local areas
- help organise events in your local community
- help fundraise for wild bird conservation
- help other people to enjoy birds and other wildlife
- learn about birds from others more experienced than you
- enjoy common interests with other people.

If you enjoy working with young people, there are a number of ways you can help us to develop our work. We work with all ages of children and young people in schools and the community. We have a network of RSPB Wildlife Explorers groups for 8–12-year-olds. Activities that these groups get up to include bug and bat hunting, pond dipping and birdwatching. **Could you help out?**

*'RSPB local groups are a wonderful way to meet other people who are only too happy to pass on their enthusiasm for birds. They can also be great fun. We liked birds but didn't feel we could go to the local group because we thought they all must be experts and we certainly weren't. A neighbour took us to one of the meetings. Now we wish we had gone before. They made us very welcome.'*

*Brian Sivyier, Lowestoft RSPB Local Group*





## VOLUNTEER ON OUR NATURE RESERVES

RSPB nature reserves are home to some of the UK's most wonderful wildlife. You can make a real difference to protect it, so why not get involved at your local reserve?

The RSPB manages over 100 reserves and, if you like to get active, then you can help us to create and manage the habitats that are essential for birds and other wildlife. Tasks can include planting seeds, clearing bracken, creating ponds, planting hedges and putting up nestboxes.

Understanding how well the birds and wildlife are doing on our reserves is important so we can manage the habitats correctly. So, if you are a brilliant birder, passionate about plants, fascinated by fungi or bowled over by butterflies, then you could get involved in surveying the wildlife on the reserve. And if you're a whizz on the computer, you could help us record the data.

Each year, over one million visits are made to RSPB nature reserves. Volunteers help visitors to enjoy their time on the reserve by running guided walks, providing activities for children and offering a reception service at our visitor centres. **Does this sound like it's for you?**

*'Working on my local reserve has given me the opportunity to make new friends, use my skills, give something back to the community and care for the environment at the same time. It gives me great satisfaction to know that future generations will continue to see and share in the diversity of nature due to this work.'*

*John Boxall, volunteer at RSPB Otmoor nature reserve, Oxfordshire*

## RESIDENTIAL WARDENING SCHEME

Want to get away from it all? Fancy a holiday with a difference? If you have more than a day or two to spare, then come and spend a week or more living and working as a volunteer on one of our reserves.

You can choose from over 30 reserves around the UK, with accommodation provided on or near the reserve. The tasks are wide-ranging and can include:

- practical management
- working with visitors or giving guided walks
- survey, protection and monitoring work
- farm/stock work
- habitat management.

Work varies from season to season, and from reserve to reserve, but there is something suitable for volunteers of all ages (you have to be over 16).

Bookings are made by the week, Saturday to Saturday. Long-term placements (by arrangement) are ideal for those planning a career in conservation.

Ask for our Residential Wardening Scheme brochure to find out more.

*'My stay at the Haweswater reserve far exceeded my expectations. The wardens were very welcoming and included me in all activities and ensured that the tasks were interesting and informative. I really enjoyed my stay and learnt a lot about the eagles and other wildlife on the reserve and in the local area.'*

*Liz Smith, Voluntary Wardening Scheme volunteer at RSPB Haweswater nature reserve, Cumbria*





## REGIONAL AND COUNTRY OFFICES

If donning boots and binoculars is not for you, there's a whole host of opportunities in our offices around the UK. Writing press releases, creating a publications' database, monitoring newspapers, inputting scientific data, designing posters and cataloguing the slide library may not be what you immediately think of when you consider volunteering for the RSPB. But these are just some of the tasks that volunteers have recently undertaken in just one of our offices.

With country offices in Sandy, Belfast, Edinburgh and Cardiff, and a host of regional offices from Shetland to Devon, there's likely to be something near you that you can get involved with.

Whether you're a bird expert or a complete novice, a younger person wanting to enhance your CV or an older person with a little bit of time on your hands, **we've got a role for you.**

*'I started by offering to help catalogue the bird slide collection and, since then, I have moved on to creating CD presentations for staff. I've learnt so much since I started and I really do feel part of the team. Whatever skills and experience you have, I'd say give it a go.'*

*Aileen Fox, volunteer at RSPB Scotland HQ in Edinburgh*

## HELP FARMERS, HELP BIRDS

Over the past 25 years, many of our farmland birds, such as lapwings, have halved in numbers. You could help stop this decline. We pair volunteers with local farmers who want a free survey of the birds on their farm. We then give them information so they can help these birds.

You don't have to be a bird expert to take part in the Volunteer & Farmer Alliance, as we can give you training before you start.

You will visit your designated farm three or four times in April, May and June between sunrise and midday to see what birds are about. You will record any signs of breeding, such as courtship displays and birds carrying nesting material or food to their young.

When you have finished the survey, the farmer will receive a map showing where important birds are breeding. Not only will you have the privilege and pleasure of being allowed to survey private land, but you will also be able to help farmland birds by letting others know about them.

This is just one example of the many surveys volunteers get involved in to help the RSPB. For many of them you don't need to know much about birds.

*'All you do is look for and map birds. There is no canvassing. Whatever happens, you will have seen areas not open to others and know that you have done something to help our feathered friends and a local farmer.'*

*Peter Clayton, volunteer for Volunteer & Farmer Alliance*





## **VOLUNTEER FROM YOUR OWN HOME**

Volunteering doesn't necessarily mean wearing green wellies and wielding a chainsaw, or joining RSPB staff in office-based activities. Many RSPB activities can be carried out from the comfort of your own home and still provide us with your gift of time.

A lot of people give invaluable support to the RSPB's conservation lobby by writing letters to MPs, MEPs and influential groups about issues of current and prime importance – your help could make a difference.

If you have a specialist skill, give us a call to see if we could use it. For example, a number of people volunteer with us as translators, other people help design websites, enter data and edit/write reports from their own home. A small team of volunteers also make props and toys for use with our educational work.

Other ways you could help include distributing leaflets to assist us in recruiting members or putting out collecting tins and pin badge boxes to help us raise vital funds.

**Tell us how you think you might help and we will certainly take you up on the offer!**

*'As a sufferer of mental health problems, I wanted to do something useful for others and to help build my confidence. I started by entering all the region's press clippings onto a spreadsheet and analysing the information. I then helped to get the south-west region online. I learnt so much. There is so much more to RSPB work than meets the eye.'*

*Alison Terry, media volunteer for the RSPB's South West Regional Office*

To find out more about how you can help the RSPB by volunteering, contact the Volunteer Unit at the UK Headquarters address below. Or contact your nearest regional office to see what's available. You can see volunteering opportunities on our website: [www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk) or e-mail us at: [volunteers@rspb.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@rspb.org.uk)

## The RSPB

### UK Headquarters

The Lodge, Sandy,  
Bedfordshire SG19 2DL  
Tel: 01767 680551

### Northern Ireland Headquarters

Belvoir Park Forest, Belfast BT8 7QT  
Tel: 028 9049 1547

### Scotland Headquarters

Dunedin House, 25 Ravelston Terrace,  
Edinburgh EH4 3TP. Tel: 0131 311 6500

### South Wales Office

Sutherland House, Castlebridge,  
Cowbridge Road East, Cardiff CF11 9AB  
Tel: 029 2035 3000

## Regional Offices

### Central England

46 The Green, South Bar, Banbury,  
Oxfordshire OX16 9AB. Tel: 01295 253330

### East Anglia

Stalham House, 65 Thorpe Road,  
Norwich NR1 1UD. Tel: 01603 661662

### North England

4 Benton Terrace, Sandyford Road,  
Newcastle NE2 1QU. Tel: 0191 281 3366

### North West England

Westleigh Mews, Wakefield Road,  
Denby Dale, Huddersfield HD8 8QD  
Tel: 01484 861148

### South East England

42 Frederick Place, Brighton,  
East Sussex BN1 4EA  
Tel: 01273 775333

### South West England

Keble House, Southernhay Gardens,  
Exeter, Devon EX1 1NT  
Tel: 01392 432691

### East Scotland

10 Albyn Terrace, Aberdeen AB10 1YP  
Tel: 01224 624824

### North Scotland

Etive House, Beechwood Park,  
Inverness IV2 3BW  
Tel: 01463 715000

### South and West Scotland

10 Park Quadrant, Glasgow G3 6BS  
Tel: 0141 331 0993

### North Wales

Maes y Ffynnon,  
Penrhosgarnedd, Bangor,  
Gwynedd LL57 2DW  
Tel: 01248 363800



The RSPB works for a healthy environment rich in birds and wildlife. It depends on the support and generosity of others to make a difference. It works with bird and habitat conservation organisations worldwide in a global partnership called BirdLife International.

Front cover by Flowerphotos  
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Registered charity no 207076 36-0694-02-03