

Volunteer Role Description

Fauna volunteers

Westonbirt is the National Arboretum and our collection of rare and beautiful trees has few rivals. Our 15,000 trees and shrubs represent around 2,500 species and include 5 national collections. We are also a site of great ecological importance and our fauna volunteers play a key part in surveying the species which live in our down land to monitor the health of this important habitat.

In 2017, 23 different species of butterfly were identified with the top two of Meadow Brown and Marbled White. Our volunteers also recorded two priority species, Small Blue and Brimstone butterflies. Overall the butterflies have been steadily increasing in number since 2012 with a peak in 2017. The numbers and species of bumblebees have however have been more variable.

When

Our Fauna Group carries out surveys between April and October. Surveys must be carried out in pairs and take place on a fortnightly basis but the precise date is dependent on volunteer availability and the weather. The surveys normally take place between 10am – 2pm and surveying normally takes approx. 1-2hours.

What's involved?

You will be joining our Fauna group of volunteers who undertake surveys of the area known as the Downs, surveying for bumblebees and butterflies. The group have been surveying this area since 2012 as part of our monitoring of the impact of the Downs Restoration project. The current fixed route is approx. 2.6km long.

We hope the group may move into surveying other parts of the arboretum, precise details have yet to be determined.

We'd like you to be

- ✧ be enthusiastic with a positive attitude and the ability to be part of a team.
- ✧ ideally have some experience in identification of bumblebees and/or butterflies.
- ✧ have good attention to detail and a keen willingness to learn more.
- ✧ be keen to expand/share specialist knowledge.

We will

- ✧ Provide you with an on-site radio for communication and all materials needed.
- ✧ Invite you to team meetings held two times per year which include on-going training.
- ✧ Provide access to Westonbirt's library and archive resources for further research.
- ✧ Provide access to specialist books and equipment used for identification.
- ✧ Pay a contribution to the cost of volunteering travel.
- ✧ Ensure you are with another volunteer whilst carrying out surveys.
- ✧ Advise terrain may be uneven, rough or muddy, therefore sturdy boots/shoes are needed.

Please send your application to us

By email to volunteer.westonbirt@forestryengland.uk or by post to Alice Chadwick, Westonbirt, The National Arboretum, Tetbury GL8 8QS

<https://www.forestryengland.uk/westonbirt/volunteering>

