

Volunteering at Westonbirt

Do you have a passion for wildflowers or butterflies?

Can you tell your twayblade from your rest harrow, or your red admiral from your painted lady?

We are recruiting for our volunteer Wildflower and our Butterfly survey teams. To find out more about these volunteer opportunities have a read of the role descriptions and please come along to our recruitment morning to find out more:

Where: Westonbirt Arboretum at the Great Oak Hall
When: Saturday 4th November -10am till 1pm

Drop in at any time throughout the event to talk to one of knowledgeable volunteers about these roles and find out how to apply.

To attend this event please let us know you are coming by signing up **HERE:**

<https://forms.office.com/e/xKjgzBHfs6>



Flora Volunteer - Role Description

Westonbirt is a haven for wildflowers, grasses and ferns, some of them rare and endangered. Flora volunteers support staff in collecting vital data for the continued conservation of diverse species at the arboretum. Surveying methods used include an adaptation of the rapid assessment method for monitoring grassland designed by Natural England (Robertson and Jefferson 2000). This role supports and informs management of our wild flora in accordance with the arboretum's Flora and Sward Management Plan.

When: Monitoring and recording takes place in accordance with the Flora and Sward Management Plan during the season from March to September. Team meetings are held at the beginning and end of the season and approx. fortnightly through the season.

What's Involved

Typical tasks could include:

- Identifying herbaceous plants (both in and out of flower), often with the use of a hand lens; some work close to ground level is required.
- Undertaking National Vegetation Classification (NVC) quadrat surveys and rapid assessments
- Accurately monitoring and recording flora data.
- Sending information to the data recording volunteer via email or hard copy.
- Attending review meetings.

We'd like you to be...

- enthusiastic with a positive attitude and the ability to be part of a team.
- **have a sound knowledge of wildflowers and flora in general.**
- have good attention to detail and a keen willingness to learn more.
- be keen to expand/share specialist knowledge.

We will...

- Provide training to cover all aspects of the role, with ongoing help and support.
- Provide all materials and equipment with appropriate instruction.
- Advise that terrain may be uneven, rough or muddy and you will be walking on and off pathways with some steep inclines; sturdy boots/shoes are needed.
- Invite you to regular meetings/training.
- Pay a contribution to the cost of volunteering travel.
- Have copies of the Vegetative Key to the British Flora by John Poland and Eric Clement, and the New Flora of the British Isles by Clive Stace for you to use; the 'Wildflower Key' by Frances Rose (published by Warne) is also recommended.

Fauna Volunteer (Butterflies) - Role Description

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 in key habitats including down land and woodland rides to monitor the health of these important habitats.

Butterfly surveys have been carried out since 2012.

- In 2021, over 3000 butterflies were recorded from 26 species with a top three of Meadow Brown, Ringlet and Marbled White. Notable species include Small Blue which was found along with its foodplant Kidney Vetch on the down land.
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When: Our Butterfly 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. 2-3hours.

What's Involved

You will be joining our Fauna group of volunteers who undertake surveys of the area known as the Downs, as well as some of the woodland rides in the Silkwood, surveying for butterflies. The total fixed route is approximately 5km long.

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 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.

For more information or assistance,
contact the volunteer office on
0300 067 4286 or email:

volunteer.westonbirt@forestryengland.uk