

Wildlife Volunteer

Role Name: Squirrel Management Volunteer

Forest: North District, Kielder Forest, Sidwood

Location	Forestry England, North District, Eals Burn, Bellingham, NE48 2HP
Supervisor	Adam Fletcher
Position Type	Voluntary
Closing date for applications	15th December 2025
Interview Dates	W/C 5th January 2026

Background Information

Forestry England are the country's largest land manager, caring for the nation's forests for people, nature, and the economy. The foundation of our organisation is our world-class sustainable management of the nation's forests. Wildlife Management plays a vital role in protecting and enhancing the environmental and commercial value of our forests.

We are proud to offer a Wildlife Volunteer opportunity within England's largest red squirrel reserve for an individual with an interest in wildlife management. The role will be based in Kielder Forest and focus on grey squirrel control by live trapping with cranial dispatch. Kielder is the largest man-made forest in England covering over 250 square miles and is home to approximately 50% of England's Red Squirrel Population.

What we offer

The successful applicant will be given:

- Practical wildlife management experience
- Training relevant to the role.
- Support from a supervising Wildlife Ranger.
- Essential Equipment, (traps, bait etc.)
- Genuine out of pocket expenses which includes travel expenses beyond your reporting station.
- Personal Protective Equipment and access to our lone working system.
- Opportunities to develop and learn from an experienced team of Wildlife Rangers.
- Volunteer parking pass after 35 hours of volunteering.

Purpose

Pro-actively assist with Red Squirrel Conservation through the control of non-native Grey Squirrels.

Red squirrels are a native UK species but their numbers have plummeted due to the introduction of the non-native grey squirrel, which outcompetes them for food and spreads the deadly squirrel pox virus. As a result, red squirrels are now restricted to strongholds across the British Isles which have a low numbers or no grey squirrels. Grey Squirrels also cause damage to trees by stripping bark, impacting woodland management and biodiversity.

Key work areas

Assist with Grey Squirrel Control within England's Largest Red Squirrel Reserve.

- Run your own trap line, following all best practice and legal guidelines.
- Reporting to the beat Wildlife Ranger, Brian Scott.

Independent volunteering

- Independently carrying out your volunteer role within an agreed work area in the forest and complying with our lone working policies and procedures

Embed a safety-first culture in our teams

- All near misses, incidents & accidents reported to your supervisor, collating all relevant information.
- Ensure personal safety at all times by following job risk assessments and by carrying out PPE and safety checks, in compliance with policy guidance

Person Specification

Read this section carefully as it will help you complete the [online application form](#).

The application form will ask you questions based on each section of the person specification below. Make sure you read each section so you can provide **examples** of experience, training or study in these areas in the application form.

Experience

Essential

An interest in forestry, land management or Forestry England.

Experience of practical conservation, working outdoors, environmental management; through previous employment, voluntary work, or study.

Desirable

Experience of squirrel trapping

Wildlife Volunteers

Qualified through Lantra in trapping and cranial dispatch of squirrels

Work with Other People

Essential

Be approachable, open, polite, and helpful to others.

Respect diverse backgrounds, views, and approaches.

Willingness to work as part of a team as well as the ability to work on your own.

Desirable

Enthusiasm for wildlife management coupled with the ability to communicate the reasons for lethal control in a concise and constructive manner.

Willingness to learn from others.

Communication

Essential

Enthusiasm for Wildlife Management.

Ability to listen and communicate with people from a variety of age groups, abilities, behaviours, and backgrounds.

Ability to deal with difficult situations with tact, diplomacy and in a constructive manner.

Deliver Results

Essential

Motivated and capable of working under own initiative.

Prioritise and organise your time and resources effectively to meet agreed deadlines and objectives.

Desirable

Understand and apply current legislation, rules, and procedures relevant to the job (e.g., Health & Safety, Risk assessment).

Learn and Apply

Essential

Be open to change and show a willingness to undertake appropriate training to develop new skills and confidence.

Take responsibility for own work, learning from experience, mistakes, and constructive feedback.

Other

Able and willing to work flexibly. A commitment of at least 5 days per calendar month.

Wildlife Volunteers

Hold a full current driving licence. Duties will require you to be fit and able to negotiate rough terrain. However, Forestry England is willing to consider proposals put forward by applicants that would allow them to do the role by other means.

Complete a DBS check and provide references.

How to apply

Please apply online by completing the [online application form](#).

There may be more applications for this role than positions available and the information provided will help us select the most suitable person for the role. You may be invited to an interview to assist this process. Interview dates are shown on Page 1.

Question 1: Make sure when applying, you type **Squirrel Management Volunteer** as the role which you are interested in.

Question 2: For the Forest, please type in or select from the drop down **Kielder Beat Wide**.

When completing the **About You** section of the application please give examples of Essential and Desirable experience, training or study you have for each of the Person Specification sections. These examples don't always have to be in the environment sector they can demonstrate your experience or things you have done in any situation relating to the specification area.

If you have any problems with the application or questions, please email victoria.tofte@forestryengland.uk and state which opportunity you wish to apply for and your question or what you need assistance with.

If you consider yourself to have a disability the application form will ask you to provide details of any support you may need or reasonable adjustments, we can make to enable you to fulfil the role. If your application is successful based on your skills and experience this will allow us to assess whether support can be safely and practically put in place or whether other alternative solutions are a possibility, in discussion with you.

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