



Practical Conservation Thursday Volunteer Group

About Us

Forestry England is a part of the government Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and is tasked with the sustainable management of the Public Forest Estate for timber, recreation, and wildlife.

Bedgebury National Pinetum is home to a world-leading collection of conifers. It is unique in the UK and of global significance for the purposes of species conservation, scientific advancement, and the understanding of conifers. It is also a rich and biodiverse site providing habitat to a wealth of flora and fauna.

Role Description

Working as a part of a small and dedicated team (up to 6 members) our Thursday Group volunteers meet each week to help us with vegetation maintenance in various sections of the pinetum. This volunteer role provides an opportunity to learn new skills, to work to an agreed standard and follow a written programme of tasks set in accordance with the pinetum landscape plan. From time to time the group will work alongside visiting groups e.g., on corporate volunteer days when the tasks will be led by the tree team.

The group is self-led and guided by the pinetum tree team and volunteer coordinator.

When?

- Every Thursday 09.30 - 14.30 (with lunch and tea breaks)
- A commitment of at least 3 sessions per month

What's involved?

The day starts with collecting a vehicle, tools and equipment from the volunteer shed in the tractor yard then driving or walking to the work site. A schedule of tasks is supplied in advance to help determine what is needed and regular reviews of works take place between the pinetum curator, volunteer coordinator and volunteers.

You will write task specific risk assessments and deliver your own toolbox briefs before starting the day's tasks. You will be requested to undertake training before using a winch and driving an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) and trailer. Volunteers will not be asked to use power tools.

Typical tasks include:

- Clearing scrub and weeds from around specimen trees

- Removal of saplings and natural regeneration using a hand operated winch, mattock, spades, forks etc.
- Occasional maintenance of tree cages
- Collecting and applying mulch
- Helping to maintain waterways.

We'd like you to

- Have horticulture or arboriculture experience in a similar environment, though not essential.
- Enjoy working as part of a team - either as a team member or team leader
- Be willing to follow guidelines on a written works programme.
- Be willing to follow guidelines on health and safety, including risk assessments and toolbox briefs.
- Undertake training for driving the volunteer ATV if required.
- Undertake training for using a hand operated winch.
- Have a friendly personality and enjoy meeting people.
- Attend relevant training courses and be willing to learn from Forestry England staff.
- Wear suitable protective clothing for working outdoors.
- Bring your own refreshments and lunch for the day.

We will provide.

- A volunteer registration prior to taking up the role.
- A volunteer induction, training, and support
- Necessary tools, equipment, guidance, appropriate supervision for the tasks
- Appropriate personal protective equipment, including safety boots, gloves, safety glasses, hand sanitiser etc.
- A volunteer t-shirt/name badge/water bottle
- Free vehicle admission on your volunteer day
- A free cup of tea or coffee on your volunteer day
- A volunteer's membership for free admission to Bedgebury Pinetum throughout the year after 35 hours of regular volunteering (reviewed annually)
- A volunteer newsletter
- An invitation to annual events such as the 'Thank you' BBQ and other volunteer events.

Who to contact?

If you would like to volunteer in this role, please register your expression of interest [here](#)
For other enquiries please email bedgebury@forestryengland.uk

For more information about volunteering at different Forestry England sites please visit our website www.forestryengland.uk/volunteering