



## **Red Squirrel Conservation Officer for Ayrshire The Ayrshire Red Squirrel Rescue Project**

### **JOB SPECIFICATION**

#### **POST TITLE**

- Red Squirrel Conservation Officer for Ayrshire (RSCOA)

#### **PLACE OF WORK**

East, South and North Ayrshire and Arran

#### **MANAGEMENT**

- Day to day management will be through the Project Manager, Southern Uplands Partnership
- Work plans will be agreed and monitored through regular meetings with the Ayrshire Red Squirrel Group Project Steering Group (PSG)

#### **MAIN OBJECTIVES**

To deliver the outputs set out in the Action Plan of the Ayrshire Red Squirrel Rescue Project and the Scottish Squirrel Strategy according to the agreed work programme. In particular:

##### **Extend the knowledge of Ayrshire's Red and Grey Squirrel populations**

To coordinate and carry out surveys of all national and local priority woods in Ayrshire in line with the Scottish Squirrel Survey Strategy and produce distribution maps. To actively promote sightings from the public and collect and collate sightings and pass records on to the relevant organisations including the Scottish Squirrel Survey Co-coordinator. To identify strategic pinch points where grey squirrels can readily move in to threaten the priority woods.

##### **Engage landowners and other land managers in promoting red squirrel populations and halting incoming grey populations**

To identify and work with landowners/managers who are key to the conservation of red squirrels in Ayrshire, and provide general guidance on red squirrel requirements for the development of appropriate woodland management plans, grey control and squirrel pox testing. Provide training on grey control and pox testing. Support land managers with grant applications where appropriate and manage a trap loan scheme. Progress inclusion of the red squirrel within local LBAP process.

##### **Extend popular awareness of the threat to red squirrels and engage local communities in supporting red squirrel conservation**

Develop and distribute an education pack and video for local schools. Increase public awareness through organising and attending local events and giving talks on red squirrel conservation, media releases and through the Ayrshire Red Squirrel Group (ARSG) website. Identify opportunities for nature based tourism and develop red squirrel trails in cooperation with local communities and land owners.

##### **Implement activities for members and the public**

Organise and lead talks and training sessions for the public to enable them to become involved in red squirrel conservation. Recruit volunteers and support their work in monitoring and survey.

## **OTHER OBJECTIVES ARE:**

**Policy and Legislation.** Keep abreast of relevant information and legislation to enable responses to general enquiries and pass enquiries onto the appropriate organisations. Review the Ayrshire Species Action Plan targets.

**Coordination of Effort.** Maintain links with neighbouring squirrel groups and nationally relevant organisations. Closely liaise with Scottish Squirrel Survey Coordinator.

**Funding.** Perform fund raising work at events and talks where necessary for specific sections of the project.

## **MAIN TASKS/RESPONSIBILITIES**

In order to deliver these objectives, the following tasks have been identified:

- Carry out and coordinate surveys of all local and national priority woods in Ayrshire in line with the Scottish Squirrel Survey Strategy.
- Manage a squirrel record database and pass sightings onto the Scottish Squirrel Survey Coordinator.
- Produce habitat management plans for red squirrel conservation in local and national priority woods
- Develop and maintain good working relations with owners and managers of priority woods and develop an information pack.
- Identify and promote implementation of key actions required within and around the Priority Woods to limit grey squirrel invasion.
- Increase the involvement of local communities, schools and volunteers in red squirrel conservation through targeted events, talks and the provision of information and educational materials.
- Identify and develop opportunities for nature based tourism including the development of red squirrel trails.
- Provide training sessions for the public on squirrel surveying and support them in their implementation
- Respond to public enquiries and raise awareness through newsletters, the website, press releases (subject to steering group approval) and provision of talks and/or guided walks where appropriate.
- Produce an annual report at the end of the each year and a progress report to members at the ARSG AGM
- Attend relevant squirrel meetings, events and conferences held in the north of England/south Scotland. Contribute to the delivery of the Scottish Strategy for Red Squirrel Conservation.

## **FEEDBACK RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Report to the steering group on a regular basis
- Report to ARSG as required
- Manage relationships with key stakeholders, i.e. Forestry managers (as required)

## **LINKS**

Maintain working relationships with:

- Other Red Squirrel Conservation Officers and Groups as well as the Scottish Squirrel Survey Co-coordinator (the project must maintain good working relations across the border into D&G to S Lanarkshire )
- Ayrshire Red Squirrel Group
- Statutory Bodies (Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry Commission)
- Local Authorities (South Ayrshire Council, East Ayrshire Council and North Ayrshire Council)
- Non Governmental Organisations (charities, e.g. Scottish Wildlife Trust)
- Landowners and forestry managers (state and private)
- Key communities and community representatives
- Funders and funding partners
- The press and media

**SALARY**

Salary: between £17,000 and £18,000 (rising to a maximum of £18,500 in year 2) payable by monthly installments in arrears by cheque or credit transfer on the last working day of each month.

**Pension**

An amount equivalent to 8% of salary will be paid into an agreed pension scheme

**HOURS**

The post is based on a 37-hour week. This is ostensibly Monday to Friday, but there will inevitably be unsocial hours working in evenings and at weekends. Time off may be taken in lieu of additional hours worked, with the approval of the line manager.

**HOLIDAYS**

Holiday entitlement is accrued at a rate of 2.5 days per month (pro rata), plus statutory/local public holidays. Holidays should be agreed with the Project Manager as early as possible.

**TRAVEL**

You will be responsible for providing your own, appropriately insured, vehicle and it is a condition of your employment that you hold a valid driving licence at all times. You will be responsible for recording all business mileage that you wish to claim for. Mileage is paid on travel incurred on project business, at a rate of 40p/mile.

**CONTRACT AND NOTICE**

Fixed term contract for one year in the first instance  
Four weeks notice required.