

# BORDERS FOREST TRUST



## Wild Heart Ecologist Job Description

### Background

The Wild Heart Ecologist post presents an exciting new opportunity to join the work of Borders Forest Trust to lead on developing and delivering a monitoring programme for the Wild Heart Sites and to input into habitat restoration works on these sites.

Borders Forest Trust (BFT) is a charitable organisation established in 1996 to restore native woodland and associated natural habitats in the south of Scotland for the benefit of both wildlife and people. The South of Scotland has one of the lowest land covers of native woodland in the country and BFT was formed to address this issue and to date has planted more than 2 million native trees & shrubs.

BFT is delivering a landscape scale ecological restoration initiative “Reviving the Wild Heart of Southern Scotland” on its 4 landholdings, the Carrifran Wildwood, Corehead & the Devil’s Beef Tub, Talla & Gameshope and Ericstane. Together these sites span over 3,250ha of stunning uplands and valleys in the Central Southern Upland Hills where a range of upland habitats are being restored.

The part time post has been created to develop and deliver a monitoring programme to assess the impact of the habitat restoration work being carried out across the Wild Heart sites. Two of the sites have been included in pilot monitoring programmes and this role will initially focus on facilitating the delivery of these. First is at Carrifran which will take part in Rewilding Britain’s monitoring framework pilot and will monitor metrics that will provide data on Biodiversity, Complexity, Heterogeneity, Connectivity and Ecosystem Function/process themes. The second is at Ericstane and is part of the IUCN Peatlands Project, FIRNS funded Biodiversity Credit Monitoring Framework which is setting out a framework that can be used to assess and monitor biodiversity changes that can be translated into credits. The ecologist will lead on the delivery of these programmes and role out a programme of monitoring different metrics across all Wild Heart Sites to evidence changes occurring as a result of undertaking landscape scale habitat restoration works. Beyond the Wild Heart Sites, there is scope for involvement in ecological aspects relating to other work of the Trust

The post holder will be part of a small, enthusiastic and dynamic team and have the opportunity to contribute to restoring native woodlands and associated natural habitats in some of the most beautiful ‘wilderness’ of south of Scotland working with a broad range of people and organisations. The work will involve a balance between office and site based work throughout the year.

### Principal Duties

This part-time post will focus on developing and delivering a monitoring programme on BFT’s ‘Wild Heart’ sites – Carrifran, Talla & Gameshope, Corehead & the Devil’s Beef Tub and Ericstane.

Specifically the initial duties will involve:

- To develop and deliver a monitoring programme, initially relating to the delivery of pilot projects at Carrifran and Ericstane

- To undertake surveys and co-ordinate survey work with external contractors to ensure that different monitoring metrics are assessed.
- To summarise results of the survey and monitoring work and produce associated reports and promote findings
- To work with BFT Ecological Sub-Committee to influence direction of work on the Wild Heart Sites
- To develop monitoring and surveying programme of activity with the Wild Heart Project Officer that can be undertaken with volunteers
- To work closely with the Wild Heart Team and input to practical conservation works being undertaken, such as tree planting and montane scrub creation to ensure the right trees are planted in the right place.
- To compile and collate the results of previous surveys and research carried out in the Wild Heart Sites and explore potential for research opportunities.
- To liaise with those undertaking research on the Wild Heart Sites and collate results from external studies undertaken.
- To ensure good photo-documentation of activities, and to contribute to BFT social media

### **Person Specification**

#### **Required**

- Educated to degree level or equivalent
- Experience in developing and delivering ecological monitoring programmes
- Excellent practical surveying skills
- In-depth knowledge of upland habitats
- Good IT skills, including Microsoft Office and QGIS
- Proven track record of report writing
- Passionate and enthusiastic about the ecological vision of Borders Forest Trust
- Excellent communication skills – especially around reporting, feedback on progress with projects and liaising with different interest groups
- Ability to manage and prioritise a diverse workload
- Physically fit and able to work independently on remote upland environments

#### **Desirable**

- Membership/chartership with CIEEM, or working towards this
- Experience in working on upland habitat restoration or rewilding
- Experience of working in small, geographically spread team
- Local knowledge of the Scottish Borders and South of Scotland.
- First Aid qualification, but training can be provided.
- Qualified and experienced in using all terrain vehicles
- Experience of working with and/or licensed for bats, badgers, raptors, protected species

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

### Accountability

The Wild Heart Ecologist will be responsible to the Head of Land Management

### Salary

£27,000- £30,000 pro rata depending on experience.

### Hours of work

Part-time 0.6 Full Time Equivalent, 22.5 hours per week. Work will occasionally include including evenings and weekends. Core hours are flexible and time off in lieu (TOIL) system is in place. Overtime is not paid.

### Place of work

This post is both office-and site-based on BFT sites. Office space is at the BFT Office in Ancrum, and the post-holder should consider this their base along with the Wildheart Sites. Working from home is an option that could be considered with frequent sessions in the BFT office.

### Travel

Clean driving license and own car required with agreed mileage expenses (in accordance with BFT's mileage policy) re-imbursed at a rate of 45p/mile. The Wild Heart Ecologist is responsible for recording mileage.

## APPLY

Please email [recruitment@bordersforesttrust.org](mailto:recruitment@bordersforesttrust.org) with a cover letter outlining why you are a great fit for the role (max 2 pages) and a CV (max 4 pages) by midnight on **Wednesday 19 JUNE 2024**. Interviews are planned for **26 JUNE 2024** at the BFT offices.