

Railway Land Wildlife Trust



Job Title: Conservation Volunteer Group Leader

Location: Railway Lane Land Local Nature Reserve BN7 2FG, Cockshut Stream Restoration Project BN7 3NB, and various other locations in Lewes District TBC

Responsible to: CEO

Hours: 4 days per month on a regular basis, plus other occasional days throughout the year

Pay: £165 per day, worked on a freelance basis

Railway Land Wildlife Trust

The Railway Land Wildlife Trust's vision is for everyone in our community to connect with the natural world. To that end we:

- Provide lifelong environmental learning and engagement for all
- Run the Linklater Pavilion as a focus for local environmental action
- Offer nature based solutions to the climate and ecological crises
- Care for the Railway Land Local Nature Reserve in partnership with the Lewes District Council

We run a dynamic programme of school visits for primary and secondary pupils, holiday clubs, a mental health project, a youth engagement project, volunteering programme, and inclusive community events such as walks, talks and hands on learning events and festivals. We work in partnership with other organisations locally on projects that promote nature based solutions to climate change. All our work focuses on the benefits of engaging with the natural world and steps we can take to protect and enhance it. We have a small, friendly staff team and a large cohort of volunteers who support all aspects of our work.

For more information about our work, please visit our website www.railwaylandproject.org

Conservation Volunteer Group Leader

The Trust runs a volunteer conservation group – the Meadow Minders - on the Railway Land Local Nature Reserve twice a month, one session at the weekend and one during the week. Tasks include habitat creation such as making basking spots or hibernacula, maintenance such as step building and creating natural barriers, conservation maintenance such as reed bed clearance, and some general maintenance such as litter picking and keeping pathways clear. Meadow Minders also undertake occasional surveying when specialists can come in to support this, such as bryophyte surveys.

We are also partners with Lewes District Council in an exciting new project – the Cockshut Restoration Project – which involves redirecting and reprofiling the Cockshut stream where it runs behind the Stanley Turner Cricket and Rugby Club, and creating a new 7 hectare wetland. Our role is

to coordinate and run the volunteer activity there. This will entail two sessions per month, again one at the weekend and one during the week. Activities will include planting, seasonal conservation, general maintenance and surveying.

In both these pieces of work, a day is allowed for running the task and for the associated administration (risk assessments, communicating with volunteers, doing some promotional work including recruiting new volunteers). The task itself generally runs for three hours.

In addition, we have occasional project work that needs the support of someone with practical conservation skills and the ability to share and instruct others in these skills. For example, our NatureLinks Youth Action Project participants would like a short course in countryside management skills (6 days over two months); we will be doing some restoration work to the area at the entrance to the Railway Land in the autumn / winter and will need someone to coordinate volunteer participation (4-5 days' work).

The work coordinating Meadow Minders and the Cockshut Restoration project volunteers is regular and we need someone who can commit to running them on a regular basis; the project work is occasional, and we would offer it to the Conservation Volunteer Group Leader in the first instance, bearing in mind they might have other commitments.

Main areas of responsibility

To work with the CEO and LDC Specialist Advisor to draw up a schedule of conservation tasks for both sites, including ecological monitoring and surveying

To undertake risk assessments for all activities

To implement all health and safety guidelines as required, and reporting any health and safety concerns to the CEO as soon as practical

To ensure that all necessary resources are in place for tasks

To coordinate volunteers: Communicate with them about upcoming tasks, answer any queries, ensure that they are familiar with risk assessments and Health and Safety issues, ensure they are familiar with RLWT volunteer Code of Conduct; support them while tasks are undertaken; share knowledge and skills; provide a welcoming and supportive environment.

To create promotional materials, including posters, social media content and occasional articles for RLWT newsletters and updates

To provide feedback on sessions to CEO, and bring any issues or problems up in a timely manner

To represent the Railway Land Wildlife Trust positively and professionally

To manage and maintain tools and resources necessary for the sessions

Person Specification

Qualifications

Qualifications in Countryside Management, Sustainable Land Management or Conservation, or similar qualification, or demonstrable equivalent experience

First Aid at Work (3 day) or Outdoor First Aid (2 day) or similar, or willing to arrange and undertake prior to start of work

Experience

Developing a programme of conservation tasks for a specific site

Undertaking ecological monitoring and surveying on a range of habitats

Volunteer coordination, including ensuring good communication and following necessary policies and procedures

Leading groups of volunteers in undertaking practical conservation tasks

Management of resources

Applying all H&S considerations in the outdoor environment to ensure the safety of all

Knowledge

Knowledge of local natural habitats including wetlands, woodland, and meadow and their management

Knowledge of health and safety considerations in practical conservation

Knowledge of good practice in volunteer management

Skills and Attributes

Positive attitude, including the confidence to work flexibly in response to group dynamic, ability or weather conditions

Ability to talk to a wide range of people about conservation issues in a positive, informative manner

Friendly and welcoming

Confidence in basic IT communications including email, MS Word

Please contact Helen Meade, CEO with any queries: helen@railwaylandproject.org

Closing date for applications: 30th April 2023

Date for interview: 10th or 11th May 2023

