

Volunteering for young people



*Volunteering
is brilliant fun...
& I can help make
a big difference!*

Mitch Perkins
Volunteer 2021

In this booklet...

- Why volunteer with us?
- About volunteering
- Benefits of volunteering



Above:

Youth Volunteers clearing Bracken in
Venetia Park © Jonny Owen 2021

For volunteering enquiries please contact:
volunteering@dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk

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Why volunteer with us?

Volunteering with Dorset Wildlife Trust is a great way to help maintain and support the growth of the amazing wildlife in your local area all through the year. Our mission is to maintain, restore & protect vital habitats for the unique & fascinating species that depend on them. Whether it's woodland, wetland, grassland or heathland – come & have a go!

What kind of activities will I be involved with?

Practical volunteering with us involves many interesting, challenging and rewarding activities. These include shrub clearance, path creation, path clearance, hedge-laying and small pine removal in areas such as heathland habitats. In summer, activities are more survey based, recording and monitoring wildlife alongside our experienced team members. There's something for everyone!

Information on all our practical work parties can be found at:

<https://www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/events>

<https://www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/things-do/volunteering>



Left:

Volunteers making tern shelters on Brownsea Island © Jonny Owen 2021



What do I need to bring?

If you are involved in any practical volunteering, we suggest that you wear:

- Old clothes that you don't mind getting dirty, snagged or wet
- Waterproof clothes (depending on the weather)
- Sturdy shoes such as hiking boots or wellies
- Thermals and warm gloves if you are working in the colder seasons of the year

You will also need to bring:

- Packed lunches (unless told otherwise), but we will provide tea, coffee and biscuits throughout the day!
- A water bottle



We'll provide all protective equipment (glasses, gloves etc) and all tools needed.

Left:

Dorset Wildlife Trust Volunteers getting stuck into a practical task ©



At what time of year can I volunteer?

Our opportunities are available all year round; however, winter volunteering mostly involves practical work such as shrub clearance with our work parties across Dorset, whereas summer activities are more survey based, recording and monitoring wildlife alongside our experienced team members.

Can I carry out my work experience with Dorset Wildlife Trust?

Yes, we do offer work experience to pupils aged 15 and over (apart from our coastal centres where it is 18). You could be involved in any of our activities mentioned above, depending on what time of the year your placement is. The placement with us is arranged via the school.

What is the required age for general volunteer work?

Age restrictions are in place for young volunteers as follows:

Aged up to 16 years: Must be accompanied by parent/guardian.

Aged 16/17 years: Parental consent form to be completed (a downloadable version is available on our Volunteering Page).

Aged 18 or over: No restrictions.



Left:

Youth Volunteers getting speedy with the bracken clearance!

© Jonny Owen 2021



Where is Dorset Wildlife Trust located?

We have 42 different reserves across Dorset and five centres. Information on our centres and reserves can be found at:

<https://www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/nature-reserves>

<https://www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/our-visitor-centres>

Benefits of volunteering with us...

"By volunteering with Dorset Wildlife Trust you will gain experience in practical activities, which will help improve your employability and enable you to gain the experience needed in the future. If you wish to go to a college or university to study any particular course which links to what we offer, for example conservation of wildlife, this will look great on your application. Working with a team will improve life skills like your communication, teamwork and time management, which will be helpful throughout university and in the workplace.

Not only will this be a huge benefit for you but your volunteering will bring diversity and fresh ideas to our ever growing Trust and allow us to keep on doing what we do, as without volunteers none of the conservation work we do would be possible. Your advice and thoughts help us to improve and become more appealing to younger volunteers, which is a great start towards the futures and aspirations they are moving towards. Also, you are more than welcome to bring your friends or family along with you, the more the merrier!"

**Written by work experience students, Max Russell & Isabella Vallier,
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