

Role: Conservation Officer	Region / Department: Operations, Mar Lodge Estate
Reports to: Conservation Manager, Mar Lodge Estate	Pay Band: Grade 3 Lower £28,228 - £30,118 Per Annum
Location: Mar Lodge Estate, Braemar, Aberdeenshire, AB35 5YJ	Type of Contract: Permanent, Full Time, 40 Hours Per Week

JOB PURPOSE

Working within the Conservation Team, this Conservation Officer is central to delivering the development and implementation of the nature conservation strategy at Mar Lodge Estate National Nature Reserve. Working across habitats including Caledonian pinewoods, blanket bog, and montane plateaux, and with species including Schedule 1 breeding birds, rare invertebrates and montane plants, this post supports the delivery of the estate's diverse ecological monitoring programme. The Conservation Officer helps to deliver the scientific evidence which underpins the ongoing management of Mar Lodge Estate and ensures the estate's reputation within the conservation sector. The Conservation Officer is also pivotal in delivering communication and advocacy work to showcase the pioneering nature conservation work underway at Mar Lodge, disseminating the ecological knowledge gathered on the estate, and promoting the nature conservation successes to a wide range of partners and stakeholders.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Support the Conservation Manager in ensuring delivery and reporting of the ecological monitoring programme for the estate required to determine whether the natural heritage conservation objectives of the Mar Lodge Estate management plan are being achieved.
- Assist in the delivery of technical conservation projects, often in partnership with external stakeholders, to facilitate the successful recovery of habitats and species both on Mar Lodge Estate and more widely.
- Promote the Trust's work at Mar Lodge Estate both internally and to external stakeholders through the publication of scientific papers and articles, the delivery of presentations, radio and TV interviews and social media.
- Lead on the management the collection, storage and dissemination of biological records ensuring they are incorporated into NTS, regional and national recording programmes.
- Lead on the internal NTS carbon reporting for Mar Lodge Estate.
- Developing ecological volunteering opportunities including engaging with minority group and manage volunteer groups when on site.
- Play a key role in the development and implementation of the Estate's Management Plan, using scientific knowledge and highly developed communication skills to communicate the estate's objectives and ambitions.
- Working with the stalking team, contribute to the delivery of the estate's deer management through either monitoring and, potentially, active participation in deer stalking activities
- Working with the visitor services team, contribute to the development of the wildlife and management related interpretive material on the estate.

- Working with the visitor services team develop an annual events programme to offer visitors unique opportunities to visit the estate and learn about the management work to conserve the natural and cultural heritage.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS, SKILLS, EXPERIENCE & KNOWLEDGE

Qualifications

Essential

- Relevant degree in ecology or related subject.
- Driving license, valid for driving within the UK.

Desirable

- Qualification in identification of upland species and/or NVC surveying.
- Current first aid certification.
- Mountain leader, carbon certification

Experience

Essential

- Significant knowledge and experience of upland land management.
- Demonstrable, significant practical experience in surveying or biological monitoring in upland areas.
- Highly developed skills in identification of a wide range of upland plants and animals.
- Experience of managing volunteers.
- Highly developed communication skills. Persuasive written and oral communication skills grounded in scientific knowledge and ability.
- Competence in MS software and ability to write scientific reports.
- Ability to work unaided in remote mountain environments in all weather
- Practical knowledge of Health and Safety processes and procedures and the ability to work effectively within these processes.

Desirable

- Familiarity and experience of Scotland's natural and cultural heritage and current upland conservation issues.
- Schedule 1 bird monitoring experience.
- Experience of disseminating information in a variety of forms to diverse audiences, including scientific papers.
- GIS and recorder software experience.
- Practical deer management experience.
- Experience of the effects of grazing on upland vegetation, especially by deer and of tree establishment in the uplands.
- Social media experience in a business context.
- Experience with carbon accounting and reporting, and carbon emissions reduction activities
- Experience with community engagement activities

DIMENSIONS AND SCOPE OF JOB

Scale

- ♦ Mar Lodge Estate covers 29,340 ha with over 80% of the estate being covered by European Conservation designations, and is the UK's largest NNR. It is the largest property owned and managed by the National Trust for Scotland, and is recognized as being at the forefront of upland land management and conservation in Scotland. This post plays a key role in delivering the ecological monitoring which underpins all aspects of practical land management. Widely recognized as one of the most important sites in the UK for nature conservation, this role plays a key role in communicating the work of the National Trust for Scotland.

People Management

No formal line management responsibilities but;

- ♦ Where required, deputising for the Conservation Manager to manage contractors working on projects within the estate.
- ♦ Plays a key role in communicating and sharing learning at all levels. Must be able to be persuasive and confident in presenting at all organizational levels.
- ♦ Manage groups of 10 volunteers four times a year and individual volunteers on a regular basis.
- ♦ Manage Seasonal Ranger and Visitor Services Assistant posts when assisting with ecological work.

Finance Management

- ♦ Not a budget holder.

Tools / equipment / systems

- ♦ GIS systems
- ♦ Long term monitoring databases, fixed point photograph archives, species records

Hours and location

40 hours per week with some flexibility in times worked according to the seasonal demands of the role. The post is based full-time at Mar Lodge and accommodation may be available as part of this role.

The Key Responsibilities, Scope of Job, and Required Qualifications, Skills, Experience & Knowledge reflect the requirements of the job at the time of issue. The Trust reserves the right to amend these with appropriate consultation and/or request the post-holder to undertake any activities that it believes to be reasonable within the broad scope of the job or his/her general abilities.

How to Apply

Interested applicants should forward their Curriculum Vitae (CV) or an Application Form to the People Services Department (Applications) by email via workforus@nts.org.uk by Friday 14th November 2025.

Please ensure your CV includes your full name and contact details, the CV file sent to us should be titled your first initial and surname. When submitting your CV please state the position and job location of the vacancy you are applying for in the subject title or body of your email: For example, "Conservation Officer – Mar Lodge"