

## **NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE**

23 MAY 2019

### **Make a difference this summer with the National Trust for Scotland**

The National Trust for Scotland's Conservation Volunteers work all year round to support the charity's efforts to care for Scotland's natural treasures. The summer season of projects has now been announced and are open to all to take part.

Becoming a Conservation Volunteer gives participants the opportunity to learn new skills. For the Grampian-based group, tasks across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire this season range from removing invasive species at Crathes Castle, building artificial wildcat dens at Leith Hall and maintaining farmland trails at Drum. Places are available on projects from 1 June 2019 to 16 November 2019.

Volunteers will also get the chance to attend training courses and lectures to enhance their understanding of countryside skills and conservation issues.

With both one-day and weekend projects to choose from, the projects are an ideal way to become actively involved in conservation, meet new people and get some fresh air and exercise.

Julie Bond, Conservation Volunteer Co-ordinator for the National Trust for Scotland, said:

"The love for Scotland is at the centre of what we do, so we're excited to be announcing this season's outdoor programme of events."

"Our conservation volunteers make a massive contribution to the care of the Trust's 200,000 acres of countryside, historic estates and beautiful gardens. If you enjoy the outdoors and fancy doing something a bit different this summer, please get in touch – new members are always welcome."

Becoming a Conservation Volunteer costs just £25 for non-members of the National Trust for Scotland and is free for current members.

Volunteers can choose how little or often they'd like to participate in activities.

Full information about all upcoming projects are available at:  
<https://www.nts.org.uk/volunteering-jobs/conservation-volunteer-groups/grampian-conservation-volunteer-group>

## GRAMPIAN CONSERVATION VOLUNTEER GROUP SUMMER PROJECTS

### Leith Hall

Date: Saturday 1 June 2019

Time: Meeting at property at 9.30am

Work grading: Demanding level physical tasks

The area around Leith Hall is known for wildcats. During this one day project you will be using your drystone dyking skills to create artificial wildcat dens to help protect these endangered animals. There will also be an opportunity to cut back gorse and clear drainage ditches. Steel toe capped boots required.

Date: Saturday 15 June 2019

Time: Meeting at property at 9.30am

Work grading: Medium level physical tasks

The garden pond has a good population of newts. Your assistance with carrying out some important pond maintenance to help conserve the habitat would be greatly appreciated. Other gardening tasks may also feature.

Date: Saturday 16 November 2019

Time: Meeting at property at 9.30am

Work grading: Demanding level physical tasks

A key task in the gardens each year is to disinfect the greenhouses and manure the vegetable beds. It's a daunting job for a small team of gardeners, so your help with this would be welcome.

### Drum Castle

Date: Saturday 29 June 2019

Time: Meeting at Drum Castle at 9.30

Work grading: Medium level physical tasks

We're trialling different methods for suppressing bracken in the Old Wood of Drum to aid the regeneration of the woodland, including the use of a horse and bracken bruiser. This is the first of two projects this summer using bracken boards and other methods.

Date: Saturday 27 July 2019

Time: Meeting at Drum Castle at 9.30

Work grading: Medium level physical tasks

We're trialling different methods for suppressing bracken in the Old Wood of Drum to aid the regeneration of the woodland, including the use of a horse and bracken bruiser. This is the first of two projects this summer using bracken boards and other methods.

Date: Saturday 21 September 2019

Time: Meeting at Drum Castle at 9.30

Work grading: Medium level physical tasks

During this one day project you will be helping the gardeners with farmland trail maintenance.

Crathes Castle

Date: Saturday 13 July 2019

Time: Meeting at Crathes Castle at 9.30

Work grading: Medium/Demanding level physical tasks

Come along for the day and help the rangers with some footpath repairs on the wider estate. Steel toe capped boots may be required. Please check with your CV Leader beforehand.

Date: Saturday 19 October 2019

Time: Meeting at Crathes Castle at 9.30

Work grading: Medium/Demanding physical tasks

Near the Ley Pond there is a natural area of heather and Scots pine developing. We'd like to give it a helping hand by removing some of the spruce regeneration that could easily take over.

Pitmedden

Date: Saturday 10 August & Sunday 11 August 2019

Time: Meeting at property at 9.30

Work grading: Medium level physical tasks

This is a two day project with the gardeners to assist with clearing gullies and streams to help drainage. There will also be some car park and picnic area tasks. Details TBC nearer the time.

### Castle Fraser

Date: Sunday 25 August 2019

Time: Meeting at property at 9.30

Work grading: Medium level physical tasks

The Flight Pond is a nationally recognised site for damselflies and dragonflies. This annual project to cut rushes by the pond helps to improve the habitat for these amazing insects.

### Fyvie Castle

Date: Saturday 7 September 2019

Time: Meeting at Fyvie Castle at 9.30

Work grading: Medium/Demanding level physical tasks

Fyvie is a magnificent fortress in the heart of Aberdeenshire and a sterling example of Scottish Baronial architecture. You will be assisting the Gardeners to help remove trees along the lochside to open up some vistas along the waymarked trail.

### Inverewe

Date: Friday 11 October – Sunday 13 October 2019

Time: Details TBC

Work grading: Medium/Demanding level physical tasks

During this weekend project you will be working with the forester to improve an area of birch woodland, including Rhododendron control and converting it into a saleable product with a charcoal burn. In the evening there may be an opportunity to continue with an owl survey to help identify how they are using the landscape.

### Haddo

Date: Saturday 2 November & Sunday 3 November 2019

Time: Meet at property at 9.30

Work grading: Demanding level physical tasks

Put your drystone dyking skills to good use by helping to repair a retaining wall in Haddo gardens. Steel toe capped boots required.

Christmas Ceilidh – Ballinluig Village Hall, Perthshire

Date: Saturday 30 November 2019

Time: 20.00

Number of spaces: The more the merrier!

The Conservation Volunteer Christmas Ceilidh is always a great night! Mulled wine and nibbles will be available on arrival and a two-course meal will be served at 9.00pm. Tickets are priced at £14.00 and partygoers will be able to stay overnight in the village hall at no extra cost - a simple breakfast will be provided. Tickets can be purchased from the Conservation Volunteer Co-ordinator, Julie Bond. Do remember to bring along a small raffle prize and your own special beverage! Transport provided.

-ENDS-

