Bioscience Careers Day

Speaker: Lowri Watkins
About me

Education

• BSc Zoology (2005-2008) – recession!

• MSc Ecology, Evolution & Conservation (2009-2010)

• LEMUR+ Ecological Surveys Trainee (2016) – L3 OCN in Biological Field Survey & Botanical ID

Employment

• Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (2011-2015) – project work

• Short-term contract/part time volunteering – local Wildlife Trust/lots of job applications! (2015-2016)

• Gwent Wildlife Trust (2016 – present)
Traineeship

- 9-months
- NLHF-funded
  - bursary
  - training allowance
  - Equipment allowance
- Based with organisation – Gwent Wildlife Trust
- Classroom & field-based training – botanical ID & survey skills - OCN
- QGIS & FSC grasses, sedges, rushes course
- Shadowing staff
- Get involved with everything
Present

• Employer: **Gwent Wildlife Trust** – SE Wales conservation charity

• Roles:
  ▪ **Assistant Conservation Project Officer** 2016-2017
    Magnificent Marshy Mammals Project (NLHF funded)
  
  ▪ **Conservation Project Officer** 2017-2018
    Magnificent Marshy Mammals Project (NLHF funded)
  
  ▪ **Conservation Monitoring Officer** 2018-present
Conservation Monitoring Officer

- Plan and coordinate nature reserves monitoring (species + habitats)
- Train and support volunteers
- Protected species – water voles, hazel dormice
- Data management, analysis & report writing
- GIS mapping
- Support organisation with data needs
- Engagement – talks, walks and training
- Lots more!!
Huge variety of jobs in conservation charity Sector

Our small charity of c.30 people has jobs like:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reserves Officer</th>
<th>CEO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Coordinator</td>
<td>Education Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Survey &amp; Monitoring Officer/Ecologist</td>
<td>Project Development Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Officer (various)</td>
<td>IT Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning Officer</td>
<td>HR &amp; Admin Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Landscape Manager</td>
<td>Finance Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media &amp; Communications Officer</td>
<td>Marketing &amp; Membership Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wild Health Officer</td>
<td>Fundraising Officer</td>
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Well-known charities in the sector:
Qualifications & experience required

• Specific licences
• Species ID/survey/ecology knowledge
• Relevant degree
• Project coordination - similar
• Volunteer coordination
• GIS software
• Driving licence
What to expect from this career path

• Rewarding
• Passionate co-workers & strong sense of team
• Challenging
• Good training opportunities
• Learn on the job - room to grow skills
• Shorter career paths – slower progression
• Surrounded by all things wildlife
• Lower salaries
• Fewer employee benefits
Working practices and conditions

- Outdoors - all weathers, challenging terrain
- Offices & equipment – fairly basic
- Some weekend/evening work
- Flexibility
- Autonomy
- Responsibility
- Strong cross team-working
Career development opportunities

- Small charities = fewer opportunities for promotion
- May only be one or two roles above
- Lots of learning on the job & encouragement
- Lots of training internal/external – annual personal training budget

My experience:
> trainee
> assistant
> officer
> ???
Skills required for a successful career

• Communication skills – wide range stakeholders, important messages
• Survey & identification skills
• Attention to detail
• Data handling & analysis
• GIS applications
• Report-writing
• Time-management
• Flexibility
• Team working
Salaries (estimated!)

Range: £15,000 - £50,000

- Assistant level – £17k – £22k
- Officer Level- £22k - £26
- Senior/Manager level - £26+
- CEO - £40k+

This would vary across the 46 Wildlife Trusts of the UK and between different types of conservation charities
Any questions?