



Laurie Campbell

Upland Research Unit, Upper Teesdale, North Pennines

Student Placement 2012/2013

Background

The Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust is an independent wildlife conservation charity. Its 60 scientists carry out research into game, associated species and habitats, from its HQ at Fordingbridge, Hampshire and at out-stations throughout the country. The Trust's main areas of interest encompass farmland, moorland, woodland and river management for game and other wildlife.

The Placement

Our Upper Teesdale outstation is a base for research work on many aspects of upland ecology, with the primary focus being the ecology and management of grouse populations, their habitats and associated moorland species. Six staff are based at the station permanently, but the seasonal nature of this research means the number of staff based at or using the station during the summer months can be up to ten.

The placed student will be able to gain valuable and extensive experience working with a variety of projects operating from the base throughout the North Pennines and Northumberland. The student will primarily be involved in assisting with data collection for long-term monitoring and research projects including host-parasite cycles and black grouse ecology. Seasonally, work also includes bird and vegetation surveys and the opportunity to shadow on farm and estate advisory visits if desired. There may also be opportunities to "student swap" for a period of time with our Highlands Office based at Dalwhinnie (where research also focuses on red deer and capercaillie). Some of the activities for this year will include:

- i) To assist with the capture, handling, tagging and tracking of study species, mainly grouse.
- ii) To conduct habitat surveys on study sites
- iii) Prepare and maintain in the laboratory, samples of strongyle worms and caecal samples for further analysis.
- iv) Development of new research initiatives involving grey partridge nutrition and breeding success.

There will also be ample opportunities to develop aspects of research of particular interest by carrying out a personal research project with co-supervision from base staff. Training will be given in all aspects of fieldwork and data entry into databases.

We are seeking someone with an appetite for fieldwork and a clean driving licence. As well as training and work experience, we can offer accommodation close to the outstation and a moderate salary / living costs (£89 per week). This placement will commence at the beginning of August 2012 until end July 2013.

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