







Laurie Campbell

Student Placement 2027/2028
Wader Conservation & Predation Research

The Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust

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 outstations throughout the country. The Trust's main areas of interest encompass farmland, moorland, woodland, and river management for game and other wildlife.

The Placement

In 2027/2028 we have one student placement available, based at Fordingbridge. The placement will be with the Trust's Predation team. This is a unique opportunity, combining intensive field research, data management, laboratory work, and mapping. Existing bird handling skills would be useful, but training will be provided if needed.

The Predation team, headed by Mike Short, is currently seeking to understand why we have so many generalist predators in Britain, and their impact on breeding waders. A key objective is to provide wildlife managers with research-based knowledge to mitigate predation risk. Our core study area is the New Forest National Park where the team is currently working with breeding Oystercatchers. Fieldwork activities typically include nest and chick monitoring, use of trail cameras, and radio-telemetry equipment during the spring and summer. In the winter, the successful applicant will be involved in camera image identification, data processing and mapping. GWCT research has shown that predation control can improve the productivity of wild game and threatened ground-nesting bird populations.

Students should be proficient in Microsoft Office software for report-writing and data manipulation (Word, Excel, etc.). Training will be given in GIS software (QGIS). Experience with this software, as well as statistical analysis or computer programming (e.g., in R, Python), would be an advantage but not mandatory. The successful candidates are expected to work to a high standard, with attention to detail being very important. A full driving licence, prior to starting the placement, is required for fieldwork which includes regularly driving a GWCT truck during field season. Candidates must be able to work long hours in the field, often in inclement conditions, and so are expected to have suitable outdoor wear. Chest waders are provided and training on working in the intertidal environment by foot and kayak will be given.

The benefits of a placement

In return, accommodation will be provided on-site, at Fordingbridge, in **free** student cottages, as well as a stipend of £131 per week to cover basic necessities. Each placement is a great opportunity, offering a unique insight into conservation and wildlife management. Each student will get involved in the day-to-day work required of the team, but they will also be engaged in several additional projects that arise during the year. This placement would suit someone who wishes to pursue a career in ecology, providing experience in radio tracking, the use of trail cameras, the use of AI for data processing, and the field skills necessary for a post-graduate education.

To Apply

To apply please send a CV and letter explaining why you are interested in the placement and arrange to have your tutor send a reference to the contact below by the 10th January 2027. Interviews will be held online from the 18th to the 29th of January 2027.

Contact

Rosa Hicks (she/her)
Research Assistant
Email: rhicks@gwct.org.uk

Game & Wildlife CONSERVATION TRUST

www.gwct.org.uk