



## Voluntary Officer 2016/17

The Natural History Society of Northumbria is a small regional charity based in the Great North Museum: Hancock in central Newcastle. You can find out about the Society and our work at [www.nhsn.ncl.ac.uk](http://www.nhsn.ncl.ac.uk)

The Society is run on a day-day basis by a small team of staff and a lot of help from volunteers. We have grown in recent years and are looking for a volunteer who can support our staff on a wide range of tasks. We are looking for someone who can commit at least 2 days per week for a 6-month period. In exchange we will provide on-the job training.

This opportunity is open to anyone but would especially suit a graduate or college leaver who is looking to gain experience for a career in the environment/charity/heritage sectors.

You would be helping with and gaining experience of:

- Marketing & Communications
- Charity administration
- Nature conservation
- Heritage management

### 1. Examples of tasks to be undertaken\*:

#### Marketing & Communications

- Revising website content.
- Researching opportunities to promote the Society and its work.
- Desk-top publishing of leaflets, newsletter and promotional information.
- Distribution of flyers and information leaflets.
- Help to promote the Society and its work through social media.
- Sourcing news and images for our website, newsletter and email updates.
- Researching press opportunities and drafting press releases.

#### Charity Administration

- Processing applications for membership and education courses.
- Responding to enquiries.
- Helping with mail-outs.
- Answering telephones and dealing with visitors.
- Setting up rooms/facilities for events.

#### Nature Conservation

- Practical work managing habitats and visitor facilities at Gosforth Park Nature Reserve.
- Assisting in responding to planning applications and campaign work.
- Assisting with environmental education activities or helping with school visits.

- Inputting species records into the database for the Environmental Records Information Centre North East.

#### Heritage Management

- Assisting with the care of the Society's natural history collections and archives held in the Great North Museum: Hancock.
- Assisting museum staff with events and general museum operations.

[\* These tasks are indicative and it may not be possible for you to undertake all of them]

## 2. Commitment Required

You must be able to commit to at least 2 days per week for a 6-month period (if you wish then you could volunteer for more days or for longer in order to gain more experience).

We understand that during this period your circumstances might change and you may no longer be able to keep this commitment but you must be in a position to make the commitment when you start.

You can volunteer anytime between 10am – 5pm Mon-Fri and occasionally we may also ask you to help out on a week-end or evening. If you want to do practical conservation work at our nature reserve then you will need to volunteer on a Wednesday morning.

You will be based at the Society Offices in the Great North Museum: Hancock in central Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 4PT. You may also be required to volunteer regularly outdoors at Gosforth Park Nature Reserve, just north of Newcastle.

## 3. Skills/Experience/Abilities Needed

- Enthusiasm and positive outlook.
- Confident in the use of IT, internet, email, telephone, etc.
- Willingness and ability to learn.
- GCSE or equivalent in English and Maths (grade A-C).
- Interest in the natural world.
- Able to carry out physical work outdoors.
- Degree/college qualification in a relevant subject (desirable but not essential).

## 4. Skills & Experience You Can Gain

- Gain new skills and knowledge through on the job training and development.
- A reference from a respected organisation.
- Experience of working in the Charity/Nature Conservation/Heritage sectors.
- Sense of satisfaction from helping a local charity.
- Improve confidence and employability.

## 5. Expenses & Benefits

- Any costs incurred carrying out your work for the Society will be reimbursed.
- Reimbursement of reasonable costs in travelling to our work sites.
- Membership privileges for non-members (includes free access to nature reserve, field meetings and lectures, copies of newsletter and Northumbrian Naturalist).
- Free access to exhibitions/planetarium in the Great North Museum.

## **6. Application Process**

Please submit your CV and a short covering letter that explains:

- why you want to be our Voluntary Placement;
- what you hope to get out of the experience;
- any relevant skills or experience you have and why you would be a good Volunteer Placement;
- how many days you could volunteer and which ones.

Suitable applicants will be invited to an informal interview so that you can be sure that this is the right volunteer placement for you and we can be sure that you are the right person to volunteer with us.

Closing date for applications is 1pm on Thurs 18 Aug 2016.