



BRITISH TRUST FOR ORNITHOLOGY

WORK EXPERIENCE APPLICATION PACK 2026



YOUTH



WHAT IS BTO?

BTO studies the bird populations in the UK with the data collected by tens of thousands of volunteer birdwatchers. We want to increase our knowledge of birds and other wildlife, as well as how they're linked with the environment and people. To do this, we want to enable more people to learn about birds and science and take part in our citizen science projects.

Our scientific research is carried out by expert scientists to answer some of the most important questions about birds and their habitats. Because we don't campaign or 'take sides', we can share our science to inform decision-makers (such as the government), teach people, and support conservation.

BTO Youth's vision is that of "a diverse, vibrant community of young birders supported by the BTO, with accessible, youth-led opportunities inspiring young people to engage with nature and science."

As an organisation, BTO is:

- inclusive and supportive
- impartial
- passionate
- collaborative and open to new ideas

WORK EXPERIENCE

BTO currently offers one-week (**29th June to 3rd July**) work experience placements **for GCSE and A-level students, aged 14 to 18**. These placements will follow a structured approach focusing on BTO's scientific work, as well as giving you the opportunity to engage with social science and communications. If you have any questions about the placement or the application process, please email us at youth@bto.org.

PLACEMENT STRUCTURE

When you apply for your placement, you can apply for one of three projects.* Each of these focuses on a different aspect of BTO science:

- **BTO Garden BirdWatch (GBW)**

Learn more about the importance of birdwatching and collecting data from the comfort of your own home, or local green space. Why are populations of garden birds and other wildlife changing? What wildlife uses the food, shelter and other resources in our gardens, and why?

This project will answer these questions and more.

- **BirdTrack**

Collecting data on your phone: how can this help scientists like those at BTO? In this project, you'll learn all about our BirdTrack app and the science we do with the data collected by people all across the UK and further afield.

- **BTO Surveys**

Citizen science is at the heart of BTO, and in this project you'll find out more about the people who go out to survey birds for us, and what we learn from their invaluable data. From the BTO/RSPB/JNCC Wetland Bird Survey to the BTO/JNCC/NPWS Bird Ringing Scheme, there is something here for everyone.

*These projects are subject to staff availability during the week. If required, we will ensure an alternative project is offered.

The placement will be for five working days, Monday to Friday, and the days will be from 9am until 5.30pm (5pm on Friday). Each day will follow a part of the scientific process:

Day 1: Learning about BTO and asking a research question

Day 2: Background research

Day 3: Statistics and data analysis

Day 4: Reporting on & presenting results

Day 5: Communicating what you learned

Each day you'll have the opportunity to meet staff around BTO and get immersed in the work that we do. The programme is flexible and there may be other opportunities to engage with other parts of the organisation or spend time outdoors on BTO's Nunnery Lakes Reserve - we will let you know in advance if this is the case.



LOGISTICS

We cannot guarantee that we can host your work experience. This is dependent upon the number of applications we receive. We will let you know the outcome of your application as soon as possible. Unfortunately we are unable to accommodate alternative date requests.

The work will take place at the BTO's HQ (The Nunnery, Thetford, IP24 2PU). We may, in exceptional circumstances, offer this programme virtually. If this is better for you, please email us before applying.

This year, we are able to provide local group accommodation and travel bursaries, both available on request and on a first come, first served basis. Please let us know if you require this support in your application.

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

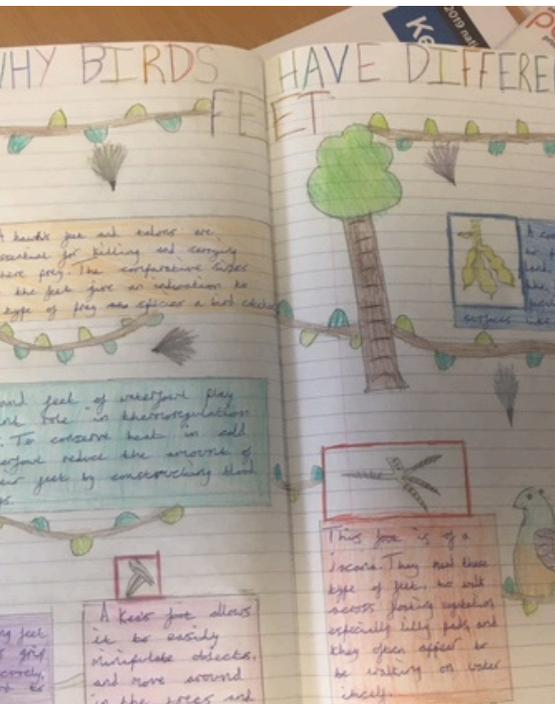
We are looking for students aged 14-18 who are:

- Enthusiastic
- Motivated to learn
- Interested in nature (bird knowledge is **not** required)
- Open to working with a wide team of people
- Creative and excited about working with different people

FIND OUT MORE

For an informal chat about work experience please contact our Youth Engagement Team (email: youth@bto.org)





MAKING AN APPLICATION

To apply for the work experience programme, fill in the application form - either via a PDF editor or by hand - and send it to youth@bto.org with "Work Experience" in the subject line. We will accept applications on a rolling basis and will aim to let you know whether you've been successful within two weeks of the deadline, and by no later than Friday 8th May.

We are an equal opportunities employer and are especially keen to encourage applications from people currently underrepresented in the environment movement. If you have a disability or long-term illness that otherwise prevents you from meeting any of the criteria, please contact us to discuss whether a reasonable adjustment could be made. If you are uncomfortable submitting a written application, please contact us at youth@bto.org for alternative options.

THE TEAM

You will be supervised on a daily basis by **Rachael Griffiths** and **Samuel Levy**, but you will meet lots of staff from across the BTO, including from our science teams and our communications team.



Rachael Samuel



As users of the disability confident scheme, we guarantee to interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for the vacancy.



YOUR APPLICATION

Fill in this form before the **deadline of 11.59pm Sunday 26th April** with your parent(s)/carer(s) and make sure you fill in all parts.

YOUR INFORMATION

Full name:

Date of birth:

Gender: Female Male Non-binary

Prefer to self-describe

Pronouns:

Email address:

Postcode:

School:

Year:

We use this information to confirm you're eligible for work experience.

Subjects you're taking:

Teacher's name:

Teacher's email:

Make sure you have their permission to give us this information.

Do you have any accessibility needs?

Do you have any other needs?

This may include religious needs, learning needs, or supporting needs.



YOUR PARENT(S)/CARER(S)' INFORMATION

Full name:

Relationship to the applicant:

Email address:

Phone number:

Consent:

By ticking the consent box I give BTO permission to store the data provided here as in line with [BTO's privacy policy](#).

YOUR WORK EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT

What is your preferred project? Please consider that these are subject to change.

GBW

BirdTrack

Surveys

Will you need local group accommodation during the week?

Yes

No

Don't know

Will you need financial support for your transportation costs?

Yes

No

Don't know

Who can we contact as a reference?

This can be a teacher or employer, but not your parent(s)/carer(s).

Name:

Email address:

WHY YOU WANT TO WORK AT BTO

Tell us why you would like to do your work experience at BTO. (100-300 words required.)

Let us know if you have any relatable education or career aspirations, or areas of BTO's work (e.g., data collection, citizen science, bird surveys) that excite you.

Is there a specific bird species, habitat, or experience that makes you passionate about ornithology or conservation science? (100-200 words required.)

What are you hoping to learn during your work experience? (100-200 words required.)

Please mention any particular skills, knowledge or experiences you hope to gain from this placement.

EQUALITY MONITORING FORM

This form is **optional** to fill in, but will help us better understand who is applying to our work experience. This information will be treated as strictly confidential and will not be stored after your placement.

Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself? Please select all that apply.

Man (including trans man) Woman (including trans woman)

Non-binary I prefer to self-describe Prefer not to say

Does the gender you live in match the gender you were assigned at birth?

Yes No Prefer not to say

Which of these best describes your ethnicity?

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Asian / Asian British - Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> | White - English | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Asian / Asian British - Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> | White - Scottish | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Asian / Asian British - Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> | White - Welsh | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Asian / Asian British - Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> | White - Northern Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Asian / Asian British - Any other | <input type="checkbox"/> | White - British | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Black / African / Caribbean / Black British - Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> | White - Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Black / African / Caribbean / Black British - African | <input type="checkbox"/> | White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Black / African / Caribbean / Black British - British | <input type="checkbox"/> | White - Roma | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Black / African / Caribbean / Black British - Any other | <input type="checkbox"/> | White - Any other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mixed / multiple ethnic groups - White and Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> | Prefer not to say | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mixed / multiple ethnic groups - White and Black African | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| Mixed / multiple ethnic groups - White and Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| Mixed / multiple ethnic groups - Any other | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

Did you come to the UK as a refugee or asylum seeker?

Yes No Prefer not to say

Have you ever been, or are you, in local authority care??

Yes No Prefer not to say

What is your age?

Did you receive free school meals at any point during your secondary education?

Yes No Don't know

Which type of school did you attend for the majority of your time aged 10–18?

Non-selective state-run or state funded school / college

Selective state-run or state funded school / college

Independent / private or fee paying school / college

Attended school outside the UK

Don't know

Prefer not to say

How do you define your sexual orientation? Please elect all that apply.

Bi/bisexual Gay/lesbian Heterosexual/straight

Queer Prefer to self-describe Prefer not to say

Do you consider yourself to have a specific learning disability, other disability, impairment, long-term illness or health condition?

Yes No Don't know Prefer not to say

If yes, please describe in the space below.

Which of the following best describes your religion, faith or belief?

Buddhist Christian Hindu Jewish

Muslim Sikh Atheist Any other

None Prefer not to say

