Bird Field Surveyor
Environmental Farming Scheme
British Trust for Ornithology
‘A WORLD INSPIRED BY BIRDS AND INFORMED BY SCIENCE’

BTO harnesses the skills and passion of birdwatchers to advance our understanding of ornithology and produce impartial science, communicated so that it can be of benefit to everyone.

OUR GOALS
BTO increases knowledge of birds and other wildlife, and their relationships with the environment and people, by:

● Enabling more people to learn about birds and science and grow through participation in environmental discovery.
● Delivering impartial, impactful and relevant science.
● Inspiring and empowering people with an understanding of birds and the importance of knowledge.

OUR PRIORITIES
We will reach our goals by:

● Providing more and better opportunities for people to contribute to our work.
● Monitoring the status of species, researching their ecology and understanding how they respond to change.
● Communicating great stories that bring to life the long-term data, information and knowledge that we hold.

OUR IMPACT
Our surveys, monitoring schemes and research programmes are designed by expert scientists to answer some of the most pressing questions affecting birds and their habitats. Because of our independence we are able to share our data, expertise and knowledge to inform decision-makers, educate the public and support conservation action. Our long-term datasets provide a measure of change and enable us to look for impacts and test solutions. Our vibrant volunteer network makes us highly effective and ensures that our work reflects the interests of those for whom birds and wildlife are important.

OUR FOUNDATIONS AND VALUES
The success of BTO is based on firm foundations that include: motivated and skilled staff and volunteers; a strong reputation; a robust business model and effective governance systems and processes.

We are:

● Inclusive and supportive
● Impartial
● Passionate
● Collaborative and open to new ideas

BTO is a Registered Charity Number 216652 (England & Wales), SC039193 (Scotland).
ABOUT THE ROLE

Up to 10 contract fieldworkers are required to join a BTO-RSPB-KRC Ecology team from April 2021 for an initial duration of 4 months to carry out bird surveys, in Northern Ireland, of farmland managed under the Environmental Farming Scheme (EFS). Locally based surveyors are sought to survey the abundance of breeding waders, granivorous birds and upland birds. Each position will be based in one of these regions: north-east Antrim, north and central Armagh, south and west Fermanagh, north Tyrone, west, north and south Derry, and east Down.

These roles will be local to target regions and home-based (although occasional overnight stays away from home may be needed), and reporting locally to Dr Kendrew Colhoun (KRC Ecology) and, ultimately, to Dr Gavin Siriwardena (Terrestrial Ecology Team, BTO) and Dr Gillian Gilbert (Conservation Science, RSPB). Contracts will be provided on an hours-worked basis, with claims submitted monthly, or work can be undertaken as a subcontract to the BTO, so applications from suitably qualified self-employed individuals are welcome. The work is expected to be unaffected by Covid-19 restrictions, and BTO health and safety procedures take account of Covid-19 risks. The time commitment is expected to be approximately half-time, but may vary regionally and is negotiable. This is year one of a six-year project that includes annual winter and spring surveys; repeat contracts are likely in future years.

WHAT YOU WILL DELIVER

- To undertake bird surveys in a designated region, according to protocols provided by the BTO/RSPB project team.
- To revise and to adapt field schedules in order to meet project objectives, in collaboration with the BTO/RSPB project team.
- To summarise and prepare data from the above projects for analysis. Training will be provided as necessary.
- To liaise with other fieldworkers on the project as necessary.
- To liaise with landowners as necessary, in particular to arrange field visits.
- To undertake other duties as required.

This is not an exhaustive list; the successful applicant will agree objectives with their line manager.
ABOUT THE ROLE

WHAT YOU’LL BRING TO THE ROLE

ESSENTIAL

• Excellent fieldwork and bird identification skills (both visual and aural) are essential.

• Experience in recording basic habitat information according to standardised protocols.

• The ability to work in the field on an out-posted basis with a minimum of supervision.

• The ability to collect, to record and to process data in a meticulous manner.

• The initiative to deal with types of problems that may routinely arise during the course of fieldwork.

• An ability to learn and implement new field techniques.

• An ability to understand the underlying rationale for approaches adopted in the field.

• Good interpersonal skills (e.g. in dealing with landowners, farmers, gamekeepers and other fieldworkers).

• A current driving licence and access to a vehicle are essential.

• Some fieldwork will need to be undertaken very early in the day, at some remote locations and within some challenging terrain. As such, an ability and willingness to work flexibly, often at unsociable hours, and an appropriate level of fitness is essential.

DESIRABLE

• Familiarity with transect or Breeding Bird Survey methods is highly desirable.

• Good electronic data management skills, including experience of inputting and manipulating spreadsheets would be desirable, although field skills are of prime importance.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE ROLE

For an informal chat about the position please email gavin.siriwardena@bto.org.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Salary: hourly rate of £10.33

Fieldwork will be local to target regions, with employees being based at home and using their own cars for fieldwork, although expenses will be covered. The work is for a variable but a limited number of hours between April and July inclusive, on a fixed-rate basis, probably part-time. Applications to work on a subcontract basis are welcome.

This is year one of a six-year project that includes annual winter and spring surveys; successful candidates are likely to be invited to take repeat contracts in future years.
MAKING AN APPLICATION

For further information and to apply visit our website: www.bto.org/vacancies

Closing date: 1 pm Wednesday 10 March.

Interviews are likely to be held remotely on 15 March.

If you have a disability or long-term illness that otherwise prevents you from meeting any of the essential criteria, please contact us to discuss whether a reasonable adjustment could be made.

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