



SCOTTISH RAPTOR MONITORING COORDINATOR – MATERNITY COVER

ON BEHALF OF THE SCOTTISH RAPTOR MONITORING SCHEME

Background

The Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme (SRMS) is a partnership comprising nine organisations (SNH, the Scottish Raptor Study Groups, JNCC, BTO Scotland, RSPB Scotland, the Scottish Ornithologists’ Club, the Rare Breeding Birds Panel, Forestry Commission Scotland and Forest Enterprise Scotland). Since its inception in 2002, the SRMS has developed very positively in terms of: the raptor monitoring coverage in Scotland (largely carried out by members of the Scottish Raptor Study Groups); the numbers of records submitted to the Scheme annually; and the utility of the dataset for producing information on breeding raptor numbers, their productivity and trends through time. The success of the SRMS was formally recognised by IEEM with a Best Practice Award in 2010.

The SRMS makes important contributions to essential areas of biodiversity conservation, including:

- EU Birds Directive Article 12 and Habitats Directive Article 17 reporting;
- the Scottish Biodiversity Surveillance Strategy;
- the production of species trends and indicators;
- reporting on the status of populations on designated sites (SSSIs and SPAs) and nationally via contributions to SCARABBS surveys;
- informing wind farm and other development-related casework, and cumulative impact assessment, including via regional population estimates and emerging trends; and
- tackling wildlife crime by providing objective evidence of deliberate human interference.

The current Scottish Raptor Monitoring Coordinator, Amy Challis, will be on maternity leave from early March 2019 and the SRMS is therefore seeking a dynamic, self-motivated person with raptor ecology/survey/monitoring and data management experience to co-ordinate the SRMS on a full-time basis for one year in the first instance. The post holder will be supported by the Head of BTO Scotland (Dr Chris Wernham), the Research Ecologist responsible for SRMS data (Dr Mark Wilson) other colleagues at the BTO in Stirling, and the Chair and representatives of partner organisations on the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Group (SRMG; see raptormonitoring.org).

The work will involve liaising with and supporting the network of volunteers (300+) that contribute to the Scheme, maintaining the SRMS database, managing the data and annual reporting, promoting the new online recording system, encouraging more volunteers to get involved in raptor monitoring in Scotland, providing training to volunteers, and promotion of the Scheme and its outputs to users of the information. The ideal candidate will have experience of field research on birds of prey and their survey and monitoring, experience of managing large datasets, and a passion for motivating volunteers to participate fully in SRMS activities. They must be an excellent communicator, who will enjoy presenting the SRMS to a range of audiences (volunteers, scientists, policy-makers, the media), and must be competent and meticulous in data management and Scheme administration.

The post is based in the BTO Scotland offices at the Beta Centre (Unit 15), Stirling University Innovation Park, FK9 4NF, but flexible working with some days working from home would be acceptable, following an initial period of full-time attendance at the office.

Principal Responsibilities

To coordinate raptor population monitoring in Scotland for the SRMS, in partnership with members of the SRMG, and other individuals and organisations with an interest in raptors. This involves undertaking and organising all aspects of the routine operation of the Scheme, under the management of the Head of BTO Scotland and the SRMG. It includes taking responsibility for delivery and updating of the agreed SRMS work plan.

To ensure the smooth and timely delivery of annual SRMS data collation. This involves liaising with SRMG partners and volunteer contributors (particularly members of the Scottish Raptor Study Groups – SRSGs) to encourage timely data submission and effective and standardised use of electronic recording software, annual updating of coverage information, and the auditing and checking of records ready for reporting purposes.

To take responsibility for the secure storage and efficient flow of SRMS data. This involves ensuring that the master database is updated in a manner consistent with analytical needs each year and that SRMS data are shared with SRMS partners (e.g. for specific casework purposes) and third parties (including the NBN) following the terms of the SRMS Data Sharing and Use Policy, and any further licensing of use agreed by the SRMG.

To organise and undertake production of the SRMS report, with the support of editors from the SRMG, and any other annual outputs. This involves preparing data for analysis, maintaining analytical programmes, liaising with editors, production, printing and circulation to volunteers and stakeholders.

To ensure high standards of field data collection and collation, leading to robust scientific outputs from the SRMS. This involves ensuring that best practice guidance and training is available to volunteers, and advising individual volunteers on study design, field craft and data inputting as required.

To act as the main point of contact for all raptor monitoring volunteers and organisations with an interest in raptors in Scotland, keeping them motivated to support the SRMS and updated on SRMS activities and outputs. This includes dealing impartially with queries from individuals and organisations about raptors and the work of the SRMS, production of a bi-annual e-newsletter for volunteers, attendance at SRS regional meetings and Chairs meetings and the SRSGs' annual conference, and other periodic activities designed to build ownership and awareness of the SRMS amongst contributors.

To substantially increase levels of participation in raptor monitoring in Scotland, by promoting the SRMS to suitable audiences through a range of media and attendance at appropriate events. This includes planning and implementing an annual programme of promotional work and training opportunities aimed at existing and new volunteers, in agreement with the SRMG and with the assistance of BTO volunteer training staff, SRMS partner organisations and invited experts.

To ensure the SRMS has a high profile amongst its partners and 'customers' (data users, conservationists, policy makers, stakeholders) by promoting the Scheme and its outputs widely. This includes planning and implementing an annual programme of promotional work aimed at appropriate audiences via a range of media (conference talks, meetings with stakeholders, web-based materials) and ensuring the sharing of best practice (SRMS experiences) for the good of raptor monitoring in other parts of the UK and further afield.

To take responsibility for the SRMS web pages, ensuring they are fit for purpose and updated regularly. This involves reviewing them regularly, and writing and commissioning new content, in liaison with the SRMG.

To contribute to the continuing enhancement of the SRMS, to increase its coverage, effectiveness and operational efficiency, as agreed in the SRMS work plan. This includes enhancements to annual reporting outputs, web page development, the move towards on-line data submission, work to facilitate data flows, the running of an entry-level raptor recording scheme (*Raptor Patch*), collation of pre-2003 datasets, and the strategic development of raptor monitoring coverage in Scotland (including support for monitoring of SPAs, national and long-term surveys involving raptors, improved coverage of widespread species, increasing representative coverage of all species).

To act as Secretary for the SRMG. This involves preparing papers and agendas for meetings, organising venues and attendees, taking and agreeing minutes, monitoring action points, and supporting the SNH Chair of the SRMG in SRMS-related work.

Skills required

A degree or equivalent experience in biology, ecology, environmental science or another relevant discipline.

A sound knowledge of raptors and survey methods is essential, and a background in raptor ecology/population biology a distinct advantage.

Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, and the ability and enthusiasm to deal effectively and courteously with a wide range of people to promote Scottish raptor monitoring and the SRMS.

Intermediate word processing and computing skills, including a good working knowledge of Windows and the standard Microsoft Office packages (Word, Excel and PowerPoint) are essential.

Intermediate experience of the statistical analysis of data and their presentation in scientific papers and reports would be advantageous, as would knowledge of databases, GIS and statistical software (R or SAS) (but support from a BTO Research Ecologist is available).

Experience of good data management practices and electronic file management (including data security) is essential, as are methodical and accurate approaches to working with data, statistical information and Scheme administration.

A good understanding of broader issues relating to data recording (e.g. data confidentiality, ownership and sharing).

A calm, confident and friendly manner with the public, the media and other organisations, using written, oral and electronic media, and a strong ability to motivate volunteers are essential (particularly as some queries may be of a sensitive/political nature but need to be handled in an entirely objective manner).

Previous experience of motivating or training volunteers a distinct advantage.

Adaptable and conscientious: able to work as part of a team but with the motivation and communication skills needed to work on own initiative for much of the time.

Good organisational skills and personal time management are essential.

Ability to represent the SRMS externally with limited guidance from senior staff.

The flexibility to carry out some weekend and evening work, and a current driving licence are essential.

Salary and benefits

This is a full-time temporary fixed-term post to cover maternity leave for one year, with a salary of £23,222 per annum. There will be a standard 6-month probation period. The post has a leave entitlement of 25 days per annum plus bank holidays. The post-holder will be enrolled in the BTO pension scheme (11% employer contribution) and will qualify for life assurance after three months' service.

In the absence of an applicant who can fulfil all parts of the SRMC role, we would consider candidates available to work part-time only, with other parts of the role fulfilled by existing BTO Scotland staff.

Applications

Your completed application form should be supported by a CV and the names and addresses of two employment referees (one of which should be your current or most recent employer and preferably your line manager). It should be forwarded to Rebecca Cranston, Personnel Officer, BTO Scotland, Beta Centre (Unit 15), Stirling University Innovation Park, Stirling, FK9 4NF. Applications may also be submitted confidentially by email to scot.info@bto.org stating the job title in the subject line.

The closing date for receipt of applications is 5pm on Thursday 10 January 2019.

Interviews

Interviews will be held at the BTO Scotland offices, Stirling University Innovation Park, FK9 4NF, on Wednesday 23 January 2019, and you will be contacted by Friday 18 January if you are shortlisted for interview. The interview panel will comprise the SNH Chair (Andrew Stevenson), the BTO line manager for the post (Chris Wernham) and other representatives from the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Group.

Candidates will be asked to: **imagine that they are giving a short presentation to a group of raptor workers and their aim is to convince them of the value of collaborating in a modernised and inclusive monitoring scheme, with particular focus on the benefits and risks of sharing data with a range of stakeholders** (maximum 10 minutes; laptop and projector available for a presentation if desired).

For further information, please contact:

Dr Chris Wernham, Head of BTO Scotland (chris.wernham@bto.org, 01786 458021).