



Employee Volunteering Opportunities with the Scottish Invasive Species Initiative

The [Scottish Invasive Species Initiative](#) is a partnership project working with local organisations and volunteers to control invasive non-native species in Northern Scotland for the benefit of native wildlife and local communities.

We are keen to build partnerships with businesses by providing rewarding team building Volunteer Conservation Days. These days make important contributions to improve and protect Scotland's iconic biodiversity and wildlife.

Our staff are experienced and skilled in working with volunteers and leading conservation work parties.

Volunteer as a Team



Your team, perhaps a small group of 2-3 or a larger group of up to 15, will carry out practical conservation and environmental work to remove invasive species from the countryside in our **Volunteer Conservation Days**. These days connect your staff with the local environment and are ideal for building team-working skills and enhancing morale.

Your team will have fun, maybe get a bit muddy, and gain a sense of achievement through doing something worthwhile and knowing they are making a real difference to help Scotland's wildlife and iconic native species.

Our staff will share their knowledge, understanding and passion of and for the natural world around us. They will engage and inspire your team and connect them to their surroundings and natural environment.

What's involved in a Volunteer Conservation Day?

Of course, we can work with you to tailor a programme for your group or team – we are happy to discuss if you have something specific in mind.

A normal day or session could include:

- Removing invasive plant species e.g. hand pulling Himalayan balsam or digging up American skunk cabbage
- Removing invasive plant species by chemical means e.g. controlling giant hogweed or Japanese knotweed by herbicide application. This activity is suitable for smaller groups.
- Getting involved in the setting up of a mink raft or trap - a key tool in our work to monitor and then remove American mink from our rivers. You can even adopt and monitor one yourself after the day is done!
- Doing river invertebrate sampling or helping complete an electrofishing survey with our partner fishery trust
- Learning new tracks, trails or bushcraft skills to help brew up the tea and erect a rain (or sun!) shelter

Obviously, tea breaks and lunch are important parts of the day and we can make them more interesting by introducing team challenges with a real purpose e.g. learn to light the fire to make the tea or put up the shelter.



Where?

Our project stretches from the River Tay area (Perth) in the south to the remote catchments of North West Sutherland. We can offer opportunities throughout this area, including Tayside, Angus, Aberdeenshire, Moray, Inverness-shire, Highlands and the West coast.









When?

Project seasonality means that opportunities are mostly available between May – October. However, there may be the chance to get involved in our mink monitoring work outside this time.

Individual volunteering

We welcome individuals or small groups of 2-3 who want to volunteer with us and are always happy to arrange that type of contribution.

The benefits for you

-  Employees finish a **Volunteer Conservation Day** feeling re-energised, de-stressed and motivated.
-  Team building and communication skills improve as the group works together in an unfamiliar environment, strengthen employee bonding and relationship building and achieve a meaningful conservation task.
-  Employees gain self-confidence and have better morale through having fun outdoors and helping a nationally and locally important project.
-  The day will demonstrate your Corporate Social Responsibility values, build staff engagement and loyalty and enhance their (already positive!) view of their employer as they see your genuine commitment to them as individuals and the local environment.
-  Positive and beneficial publicity - we like to promote our corporate partners in the media, on our website and social media channels to celebrate the great work we have done together. Even better – we can do this jointly with you.
-  Potential to establish long term volunteering opportunities and partnerships with the project and partners.



Why do we need you?

Invasive non-native species are a major threat to the native wildlife of Scotland. Our project can use your help to build and create a long-term sustainable solution to controlling invasive species.

By recruiting volunteers, building strong partnerships and providing training, we aim to embed invasive non-native species control at a local level, within communities and local businesses and supported by local partners. That way there will be a long-term commitment to continuing the good work after the project has ended.

Costs

All we ask for is your time and enthusiasm – as much as you want to offer!

We do however need you to provide your own transport to site, make your own individual catering arrangements and, if you can, provide your team with the required personal protective equipment – usually just a pair of work gloves and boots or wellingtons each. We can help if any further task dependant equipment is needed.

Safety & insurance

All activities are risk assessed and your leader will carry out a safety briefing at the start of the day. All our staff are qualified first aiders and first aid kits will be on site. The organisation hosting the activity has the relevant insurance in place to cover your volunteering activity.

Find out more

To learn more about our project please visit our website, to discuss working with us please get in contact for a chat:

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We'd love to hear from you!

www.invasivespecies.scot

