

Volunteer Role Outline

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| Role title |
| Watts Bank Stock Watcher (West Berkshire) |
| Based at location |
| Watts Bank Nature Reserve, near Lambourn, Berkshire RG17 7LE (nearest postcode) |
| Purpose of the role |
| <p>To assist a group of volunteers and staff in monitoring the health and welfare of BBOWT's 'flying flock' of Hebridean Sheep at Watts Bank nature reserve.</p> <p>Stock watchers are a vital part of the livestock management at Watts Bank, helping to keep an eye on the small flock when they are on site and the infrastructure (e.g. fences, troughs) associated with them.</p> |
| Type of work you will be involved in |
| <p>A Stock Watcher will visit on the same day each week.</p> <p>Before a Stock Watcher starts their weekly checks, they will be given training on site by a staff member. This will involve meeting the sheep, going through the checklists, providing contact numbers and ensuring health and safety. Once they are ready, they can choose to visit solo or if they prefer, bring a colleague or partner.</p> <p>On a typical day, a Stock Watcher will walk the reserve and check that the correct number of sheep are present. They will then carry out a visual health check, ensuring the sheep are well and reporting any concerns or relaying any queries to BBOWT staff.</p> <p>Stock Watchers are also expected to report other issues to BBOWT staff, such as broken fences or gates, problems with water troughs or inappropriate behavior on site.</p> |
| Experience &/or qualifications needed |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reasonable level of physical fitness as Watts Bank is a minimum ten minute walk from the nearest car parking and the reserve is situated on a steep hillside |

- No experience is necessary, but an affinity for and understanding of sheep is desirable along with an interest in animal welfare.
- A willingness to learn about the sheep.
- A desire to visit Watts Bank in all weather conditions.
- A willingness to carry out sheep checks unsupervised.
- To have access to a mobile phone, with ability to use email and or 'WhatsApp' for the group communication.

Times/days we would like you to be available

The sheep are on site seasonally with a planned grazing rota for roughly two months in the spring and two months in the autumn. The sheep are checked every day on a weekly rota when on site. Currently, BBOWT staff check on a Monday and Stock Watchers covering the rest of the week.

Stock Watchers are expected to make a commitment to cover a particular day each week, preferably checking in the morning to give us time to respond should there be an issue that needs dealing with on the same day.

Stock Watchers should expect to be needed for two months in the spring and two months in the autumn, however they may occasionally be needed at periods outside of this time as well.

Benefits to volunteer & possible training opportunities

- Opportunities to enjoy and find out more about your local wildlife
- Opportunities to help BBOWT with its work at Watts Bank
- Fresh air and healthy exercise throughout the year

You will be responsible to

Reserves Officer

Expenses payable

N/A

Interview, References or DBS check required

If anyone is interested, an initial expression of interest with the Reserves Officer would be welcome via email on volunteering@bbowt.org.uk or by calling 01635 35157. A site visit would then be required (meeting the sheep if on site) and go through the training.

