

Project Volunteer – Barn Owl Box (BOB) Monitoring and Ringing Volunteer

The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) is looking for 1 volunteer to join our Barn owl monitoring and training project, across the central area of the National Park. The barn owl is a Schedule 1 priority species and is amber listed. The project provides much needed nesting sites in suitable habitat and monitors the population. A licence to disturb is required to approach a box used by nesting owls and you will be covered on our bird ringer's licence.

Training will be provided by the licenced BTO (British Trust for Ornithology) bird ringer on how to use a ladder safely, signs of Barn Owl activity, recording any signs, eggs or birds. Barn owls are a protected species, so once you have been trained you would be added to the BTO Ringer's licence, authorising you to disturb a nest site. You would also need to be trained to safely drive a SDNPA vehicle to access the various box sites across the area.

The training will be completed over 3 years, with a series of (approx. 8) training dates and monitoring activities taking part over each season, and once completed allow the participant to progress from a 'T' (Trainee) ringing permit holder to a 'C' ringing permit holder. *A 'C' permit holder is still responsible to their trainer and has been trained to operate unsupervised.*

All volunteers are expected to adhere to South Downs National Park Authority volunteer policies and procedures. Our volunteers play an important role in fulfilling our purposes and volunteers are key ambassadors for the work of the Authority.

Compulsory Training:

SDNPA induction, Training from BTO ringer, Ladder training, on and off-road driver training, other relevant SDNPA policies and procedures.

Equipment Provided:

Vehicle, ladder and any other relevant equipment required for the task

Transport: The ability to travel to the Central Ranger Office in Singleton, and then to access a range of designated sites using a SDNPA vehicle.

Responsible to:

Area ranger:
Volunteer Support Officer:

Preferred/Est. Hours:

Approx 8 sessions per year for a training period of 3 years. Thereafter enough sessions to enable monitoring of approx. 10 boxes per year.

First training day is Monday 2 June, thereafter training and practical days will be on Thursdays.



Role Description:

- Working in pairs, driving to several sites and using a ladder to access barn owl boxes, roughly 3m off the ground, either in barns or trees
- Accessing sites with barn owl boxes, climbing a ladder and checking for occupancy
- You will be checking for presence/absence of owls, recording whether there are eggs and leaving site swiftly if occupied
- There is the opportunity to come back and watch the ringing take place when the chicks are old enough

Key Skills:

- Interest in birds and wildlife
- Ability to work with others
- Comfortable with heights

Key qualities: Friendly, reliable and self-sufficient, willing to accept direction/guidance

