

Job Description

Job Title:	Nature Reserves Apprentice (1x northern, 1x southern)
Weekly Hours:	Full time, 35 hours per week. Flexible working, but generally core hours of 9am to 5pm. Occasional weekend and evening work opportunities.
Commitment:	18-month apprenticeship from October 2026 to March 2028 (start dates flexible). We allow flexible leave to be taken with notice and the placement duration may be shortened as long as placement requirements are met
Based At:	Northern reserves (1 apprentice) based from Gosling Sike, Carlisle, CA3 0LD Southern reserves (1 apprentice) based from Plumgarths, Kendal, LA8 8LX
Reports To:	Reserves Officers

Job Purpose:

To support the Nature Reserves team working on the Trust's nature reserves and community sites, through practical conservation work and habitat management, species monitoring, managing conservation volunteers, and engaging with people and communities through our work.

Special Features of the Role

This role is part of the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust's Rural Apprenticeships programme and will include paid time off to complete a Level 2 Countryside Worker apprenticeship at Craven College and other work-related training. There is an annual training budget of £3,000 plus additional financial support for equipment and appropriate travel expenses.

Some evening and weekend working may be required. This year, we will offer two apprenticeships, one in our northern reserves team area and one in our southern reserves team area.

Our apprenticeships aim to give a diverse and exciting opportunity to champion nature reserves and important habitats across Cumbria. You'll develop practical skills to support and deliver important conservation works to enable nature's recovery. You'll gain skills and experience in habitat management whilst exploring and learning on a variety of sites, from the remote to popular visitor areas.

Alongside accredited training courses, ongoing training will be given to carry out tasks including practical site management, species surveying, data analysis using GIS, and supporting volunteer activities. A full induction will be provided. The apprentices will also have opportunities to gain experience supporting partners and other teams across the Trust.

Due to the nature of the role, an independent and self-reliant style of completing tasks is required. The opportunity will involve walking and undertaking practical work over rough terrain and uneven ground. **A full, valid driving licence and access to a vehicle are essential due to the remoteness of the sites.** We will consider applicants who are currently learning to drive or those who have a license but do not have access to their own vehicle. We offer flexible working from home or in our office based at Plumgarths or Gosling Sike. Applicants will need to be able to travel across Cumbria. The Trust has a number of fleet vehicles available for use, but apprentices may occasionally be required to use their own vehicle, for which mileage expenses will be paid.

Apprentices must also attend sessions at Craven College in Skipton, usually once every two weeks, depending on the college schedule. Mileage expenses will be paid for the travel.

The northern and southern teams each have some specific work areas and conservation focuses, but all apprentices will have the opportunity to work together across Cumbria. Please see below for more details.

Main Responsibilities and Accountabilities:

- **Habitat management and facilities maintenance:** Carry out practical habitat management work and site maintenance tasks, working in a variety of habitats. Gain skills and experience supporting and managing our teams of volunteers. Ensure that all equipment, tools and vehicles are properly maintained and fit for purpose. Ensure that all records of maintenance checks are kept up to date and in accordance with Cumbria Wildlife Trust codes of practice. Ensure Health and Safety standards are met.
- **Survey and monitoring:** Assist with systematic monitoring of nature reserves which could include bird surveys, butterfly transects and vegetation monitoring. There may be opportunity to get involved in other Trust-wide initiatives such as marine and peatland surveys too.
- **Staff and volunteer responsibilities:** Support the development of volunteers and help to maintain effective volunteer groups across our reserves through supporting and supervising conservation days. Develop good working relationships with groups, communities, visitors and volunteers and work in compliance to our volunteer and equality and diversity policies.
- **Administration:** Respond to telephone calls, e-mails and other enquiries. Support data input, reporting and creation of site management plans with support. Ensure all Cumbria Wildlife Trust documentation is completed.
- **Team working:** Actively support and shadow the Nature Reserves team of 12 staff members. Work alongside other apprentices, placement students, volunteers and wider Cumbria Wildlife Trust staff members.
- **Promoting the work of the Trust:** Opportunities to support the delivery of events at our nature reserves and other sites. This could include guided walks for local groups, fundraising events, activities for families and young people or large promotional events. There will also be opportunities to help produce social media content, blogs, newsletters and other publications.

- **Other work:** Any additional duties as outlined in the Trust Work Plans or that may reasonably arise from time to time. All tasks and responsibilities to be carried out in accordance with the Trust's policies and procedures.

Specific features of each team:

- **Northern reserves**

Based from Gosling Sike near Carlisle, the northern role will work on reserves between Penrith, Carlisle and across to the west coast, including important sites like Drumburgh Moss, Eycott Hill and Eskmeals Dunes. Habitats include lowland raised mire, species-rich grassland, sand dunes and wet woodlands. Working closely with volunteer teams, the apprentices will help manage and restore a wide range of sites, and support the delivery of larger-scale restoration projects. There will also be opportunities to support practical conservation tasks, visitor engagement and survey work at our Cold Springs Community Nature Reserve in Penrith.

- **Southern reserves**

Based from Plumgarths near Kendal, the southern role will work on a collection of reserves between Kendal and Ulverston, including important sites like Hutton Roof Crag, Lowick Common and Brown Robin. Habitats include ancient woodland, species-rich grassland, limestone pavements and wetlands. Working closely with volunteer teams, the apprentices will help manage and restore a wide range of sites, and support the delivery of larger-scale restoration projects. There will also be opportunities to support practical conservation tasks, visitor engagement and survey work at our flagship Foulshaw Moss and South Walney nature reserves.

There will also be opportunities to work collaboratively across both area teams, as well as attend training courses and meetings together.

Please note: Due to the remote location of our nature reserves, applicants will ideally have their own transport or access to a vehicle; travel expenses will be reimbursed. We will consider applicants who are currently learning to drive or those who have a license but do not have access to their own vehicle. This apprenticeship would suit a person who has an interest in nature and experience of working outdoors. Good organisational skills and an ability to work and communicate with people of all ages are also important.

To apply please visit <https://www.ydmt.org/apprenticeships>

The deadline for applications is **26th July 2026**. Interviews will be held during August or September.

For further information regarding the placement roles please contact Lucy Hammond - YDMT Apprenticeships Co-ordinator for an informal chat on 015242 51002

Person Specification

Post Title: Nature Reserves Apprentice

1. Qualifications and Experience

The post holder will be expected to have qualifications and recent and relevant experience in the following areas:

	Activity	Essential	Desirable
1.	No specific qualifications or experience are required for this role, just an interest in working in nature conservation		

2. Knowledge & Skills

The post holder will have the following knowledge and skills:

	Activity	Essential	Desirable
1.	Good communication and interpersonal skills	✓	
2.	Full driving licence and access to own transport (or currently learning, or has a license but no access to own transport)	✓	
3.	Use of Microsoft Office Word, Excel and Outlook	✓	

3. Personal Qualities:

The post holder should possess the following:

	Activity	Essential	Desirable
1.	Interested in working outdoors and helping wildlife	✓	
2.	Ability to work well on own initiative and co-operatively as part of a team	✓	
3.	Ability to be flexible and respond to changing situations		✓
4.	Tact and diplomacy		✓
5.	Ability to work effectively under pressure		✓
6.	Good organisational skills		✓
7.	Confidence in dealing with a wide range of people		✓