

Priority Species Student Placement Opportunity 2026/27



Responsible to: Senior Conservation Officer

Role duration: One Full-time volunteer role available

Background

Ulster Wildlife is a local nature conservation charity working to protect habitats and species for future generations here in Northern Ireland. Ulster Wildlife works for nature, people and climate. We have been part of species conservation in Northern Ireland for over 40 years and we continue to work to support local habitats and species. We have been successfully working on barn owl and red squirrel conservation, as well as a host of other species. We are expanding our work with a new 'Let Nature In' wildlife gardening campaign, including hedgehogs, and this opportunity provides you with the chance to be involved in all aspects of our work.



Purpose of role:

The main role of the placement student will be to assist with the All-Ireland Squirrel and Pine Marten Survey 2026 and the Let Nature In wildlife gardening campaign. You will work alongside the Priority Species Officer to collect data and review camera trap images. You will also assist with raising awareness of the importance of gardens for nature's recovery and help the Wildlife Gardening Officer with the delivery of the project and subsequent training. Throughout the year you will also assist the Senior Conservation Officer and Priority Species Officer with various aspects of the species projects including work on red squirrels, pine martens, barn owls and hedgehogs. This could include survey work, processing data, putting up nest boxes, pellet dissection, attending farm visits, helping at events, creating content, and producing materials.

Main responsibilities:

- Assist with the data collection for the All-Ireland Squirrel and Pine Marten Survey 2026.
- Review camera trap footage for the survey.
- Help develop bespoke learning materials in key wildlife-friendly gardening subjects.
- Help with the delivery of training, both online and in-person, in wildlife-friendly gardening topics to key stakeholder groups, for example, housing developers or community groups.
- Help collection of sightings of hedgehog, and promotion of hedgehog-friendly gardening annually through Let Nature In.
- Carry out fieldwork for the species projects, including hedgehog, red squirrel and barn owl.
- Carry out data analysis for the species projects.
- Carry out pellet dissection to contribute to a wider study of barn owl diet.
- Assist with the 2026 Barn Owl Survey.
- Help with barn owl and red squirrel events.
- Promote Ulster Wildlife and our species work.

Skills required:

- Undertaking an Environmental Sciences/Ecology/Zoology BSc degree or similar.
- Passionate about nature conservation.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- IT skills – competent in MS Office; particularly Word and Excel.
- Excellent team worker.
- Motivated and able to work without supervision.
- Well organised and competent with time management.
- Willingness to learn.
- Able to work occasional evenings or weekends.
- Use of a car/driving licence.

Desirable skills:

- Confident in/experience with GIS.
- Volunteering experience.
- Experience of carrying out species surveys.

We do not require practical conservation skills; we are happy to teach these and provide training qualifications. However, we do require the student to have a willingness to learn and is proactive about their own self development.

Placement location: Ulster Wildlife Offices, McClelland House, 10 Heron Road, Belfast, BT3 9LE

Training and travel expenses to Ulster Wildlife Offices will be provided with a daily mileage cap of 30 miles round trip @ 45p per mile.

Enquiries: Please send a CV and cover letter to volunteering@ulsterwildlife.org by **12 noon on Friday 20th March 2026**