

## Ouse Burn Ecologist Recruitment Pack

Would you love a job where every day is focused on expanding your knowledge of the diversity of wildlife, among a community of naturalists, and inspire a wide range of people to notice, enjoy and care for wildlife in their community on Tyneside?



Do you have naturalist field skills in either plants, birds, insects or mammals?

Would a job based on a SSSI nature reserve on Tyneside excite you?

Do you seek a busy schedule engaging people to inspire wonder in urban wildlife?

If your answers to all three questions are 'yes', then please read on....



# How to Apply

For an informal discussion about this role, please email **Ellie Davison**, Urban Naturalist [urbannaturalist@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:urbannaturalist@newcastle.ac.uk).

Informal drop-in session in the Council Room at Great North Museum: Hancock, Newcastle city centre, 1 – 4 pm on Friday 9 January 2026. An opportunity to meet Ellie and other team members and hear more about the Ouse Burn Way.



*Gosforth Nature Reserve, an oasis in the heart of urban Tyneside*

Please submit your CV and a covering letter that includes:

“Why I am the best candidate for the Ouse Burn Ecologist”

Use the numbered requirements of the Person Specification, with your examples, maximum 1000 words. Deadline: **midnight, Sunday 18 January 2026**. Applications will only be considered if you include the numbered bullets from the Person Specification in your covering letter.

Interviews will be held at Gosforth Nature Reserve, Salters Lane, Gosforth NE3 5EP on **Tuesday 27 January 2026**. No interviews by video will be available as this will be a valuable opportunity to meet the team and tour Gosforth Nature Reserve. Contribution to travel cost available.

# About NHSN and the Ouse Burn Ecologist

Over 100 years ago, William Edward Beck, a businessman, local naturalist and NHSN member, made a significant and positive difference for local nature and people. He secured the rights to manage land for wildlife that is now NHSN's Gosforth Nature Reserve. It's an inspiring story that reveals how one person can truly make a positive difference. Thanks to funding from the Reece Foundation, in this new role for NHSN, as Ouse Burn Ecologist, you can sustain Beck's legacy by empowering people to enjoy nature and leave their legacy for the next 100 years.

NHSN is a local independent charity established in 1829, operating across North East England bringing people together to inspire and share each other's enjoyment, skills and knowledge in a wide range of natural history topics. We are likely to be the oldest active natural history society in the UK and remain owner of the Great North Museum: Hancock and its natural history collections in Newcastle upon Tyne. Our purpose then was to rely on the museum to bring people together to grow a scientific understanding of nature locally and beyond. Today our focus is on growing and widening the engagement of people with nature, wherever they are, to enjoy, learn and care for nature, especially in response to the climate and ecological crises.

As our Ouse Burn Ecologist you will play a significant role in delivering the ambitions of the Reece Foundation's Ouse Burn Way and NHSN's Restoring North East Nature. Centred on Gosforth Nature Reserve you will develop the role of the site through NHSN's 'reserve without walls' approach, based on eco-museum thinking, raising community awareness, understanding and appreciation of nature and wilder spaces throughout neighbouring urban wildlife corridors.

You will be helped by a supportive community of people passionate about a wide range of aspects of natural history; from geology to botany, from the social history of local naturalists to the arts and stories captured in nature journals. Your role is to help mobilise people through Gosforth Nature Reserve, citizen science, magazine and journals, social media channels and more.

You will be a crucial part of NHSN small team of paid staff, who live a culture of enthusiasm, flexibility, agility and continuous improvement in their work and passion for nature. Your schedule will be busy in order for you to maximise community involvement in noticing urban wildlife and learning to get involved in biological surveying. There is lots of scope to bring your own imagination and initiative to the delivery of this work and learn alongside a community of naturalists.

You will bring good knowledge and passion in one or more of the topics of plants, birds, insects or mammals, along with genuine enthusiasm and interpersonal skills to engage a wide range of people, of all abilities in natural history.



Please [see here](#) for more information about the Ouse Burn Way

# Ouse Burn Ecologist Job Description

**Responsible to** Urban Naturalist

**Responsible for** Volunteers

## **Working Hours**

The post-holder will work 37 hours per week, over five days. NHSN operates a flexible working policy, and the post-holder can agree their times and days of work with the Director. We're open to flexible working hours and full or part-time applications, as long as your working hours are predominantly based in and around Gosforth Nature Reserve. Due to the nature of this role some weekend / evening working will be needed throughout the year for which time off in lieu is given.

**Salary** £26,500 - £28,500 dependent on skills and experience

**Contract type** Fixed term, three years, full time. Continuation subject to funding.

## **Job Purpose**

NHSN's new Ouse Burn Ecologist will deliver ['Wildlife Ways'](#) a new project supporting rapidly growing community interest in improving the ecology, habitats and recreational value of the Ouse Burn, in line with the [Ouse Burn Way \(OBW\) vision](#).

This is an "out and about" role, working directly with community groups, residents, volunteers and partners. The post provides land management expertise, supports ecological surveying and biological data collection and visualisation, and helps to coordinate practical on-the-ground action across the Ouse Burn catchment.

The role works closely with and will be line-managed by the Urban Naturalist, with additional support from the NHSN Director and Senior Naturalist. Committed, enthusiastic volunteers are involved with all aspects of the project and NHSN's work.

## **Main Duties & Responsibilities**

Your core areas for delivery are developing, planning and delivery of Gosforth Nature Reserve Management Plan and associated activities all year round for:

### **1. Community-led citizen science and data collection**

- Develop and support community surveys habitats and species
- Provide training in wildlife recording using existing apps and platforms
- Analyse and map and visualise biological data and trends
- Capture and submit data to recording platforms such as iRecord and iNaturalist and national schemes
- Highlight the status of priority species and habitats (including otter, Biodiversity Action Plan habitats, invasive species and species at risk)

### **2. Practical environmental improvements**

- Support communities to deliver small-scale, locally led habitat improvement projects
- Provide ecological advice, suppliers and technical support.
- Help communities develop 'green loops' and improved recreational spaces linked to the Ouse Burn Way.
- Order tools and materials e.g. seeds, plug plants, bulbs and trees

### 3. Engagement, events and awareness

- Encourage wider participation in the Ouse Burn Way, including residents and local businesses.
- Support delivery of events such as Walking the Ouse Burn, Discover the Letch and
- Contribute to communications and public awareness, supported by specialist marketing input

### Impact of your work

Over three years you will help deliver:

- 10 local green ways, enabling greater public engagement with the Ouse Burn Way
- 30 improved places and spaces, through annual environmental improvements led by communities, increasing community stewardship of the Ouse Burn and improving habitats for biodiversity throughout the Ouse Burn catchment
- 62 community groups engaged, improving wellbeing and access to nature for local communities
- Increased ecological data and visualisation to inspire nature connection and inform future action
- Improved wildlife corridors and biodiversity with reduced litter

### Job Location

You will be based at NHSN's Gosforth Nature Reserve and engage with people throughout the Ouse Burn Way and adjacent wildlife corridors. Most of your week, all year round, will involve direct delivery in and around Gosforth Nature Reserve and the wildlife corridors with visits to the NHSN Office at the Great North Museum Hancock for team meetings.

### Benefits of working for NHSN

- Accredited Living Wage Employer and annual cost of living rise awarded.
- Automatic enrolment in contributory pension scheme. 5% employer pension contribution
- Flexible working
- 29 days holiday (inc. public holidays), accruing an additional one day per year of service
- Opportunity to increase your own field identification skills working with NHSN's community of North East naturalists
- Access to a wide range of education courses on topics such as botany, fungi, birds and geology
- Dedicated work laptop provided and smart phone if needed
- Based at [Gosforth Nature Reserve](#)

### Additional Information

- [About NHSN](#)
- [About Gosforth Nature Reserve](#)
- [Gosforth Nature Reserve Management Plan and the wildlife corridors](#)



# Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
<b>Personal Qualities</b>	1. Enthusiastic about connecting people and nature with a high level of initiative.	2. Flexible, agile and responsive to people needs and expectations.
<b>Education / Qualifications</b>		3. Degree or equivalent experience in ecology, conservation, environmental science or related discipline
<b>Ecological Knowledge</b>	4. Knowledge of UK habitats and species, including conservation priorities  5. Intermediate level of wildlife identification knowledge and skills in one or more of the following: plants, insects or birds	
<b>Surveying &amp; Data</b>	6. Experience using GIS, QGIS or data visualisation tools	7. Experience of ecological surveying and biodiversity recording
<b>Land Management Skills</b>	8. Understanding of habitat creation and practical conservation techniques	9. Experience of providing practical land management advice
<b>Data Handling &amp; Reporting</b>	10. Ability to analyse biological or habitat data and communicate results clearly	11. Experience contributing to environmental data platforms or records centres
<b>Community Engagement</b>	12. Ability to work confidently with community groups and volunteers	13. Experience coordinating community-led conservation projects
<b>Communication</b>	14. Enjoys communicating with people in a way which is appealing and relevant to your audiences  15. Creating and regular posting of social media material	16. Experience supporting or leading public-facing events, talks or walks
<b>Partnership Working</b>	17. Listening, understanding and responding to groups and individuals	18. Experience working with local authorities or environmental charities
<b>Practical Outdoor Work</b>	19. Enjoy working outdoors year-round, sometimes in challenging conditions	20. Driving licence / access to a vehicle
<b>Organisation &amp; Independence</b>	21. Able to plan ahead, prioritise own workload and work independently in the field	
<b>IT &amp; Recording Systems</b>	22. General IT skills and ability to learn digital recording tools	23. Experience using wildlife apps or recording software

# NHSN Social Media Channels

LinkedIn – <https://www.linkedin.com/company/natural-history-society-of-northumbria/>

Facebook – <https://www.facebook.com/NorthEastNat/>

Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/northeastnature/>

BlueSky – <https://bsky.app/profile/nenature.bsky.social>



*Local residents discovering the hidden world of bats along the Ouse Burn*

