

RIVER TWEED

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title:	Habitat audit officer
Responsible to:	Senior Biologist
Salary Band:	£30,000 – £35,000, depending on experience
Hours:	37.5 hours per week; occasional weekend or evening work may be required
Location:	Offices at Drygrange Steading, Melrose, TD6 9DJ, The Scottish Borders

Background

The Tweed and its most iconic species, the Atlantic salmon, which is now defined as an endangered species by the IUCN, is under threat from the climate change crisis and other catchment wide pressures. There is therefore an urgency to protect and restore river habitat and natural processes to help maintain sustainable populations of salmon, trout and other native fish species in the Tweed District.

The Tweed Foundation seeks to deliver a project for the Tweed District to assess habitat quality for native fish species to prioritise where management interventions need to be undertaken. We are looking for a dynamic individual to join our team to work with landowners, funders, government agencies, local stakeholders and businesses to help deliver the changes required at scale and at pace to help us maintain and restore healthy, self-sustaining populations of native fish.

Job Context

The Tweed Foundation works to advance, for public benefit, environmental protection and improvement for all native fish species and their environments in the Tweed & Eye District. It does this through the study and monitoring of aquatic ecosystems, including their fauna and flora, leading to the protection, conservation, rehabilitation and improvement of aquatic environments that fish depend upon. The Tweed Foundation also has an education remit to promote angling and a general understanding of river ecology.

The Tweed Foundation works closely with the River Tweed Commission and other management agencies to provide objective advice on the management of Tweed fish

stocks. The River Tweed website, <https://rivertweed.org.uk>, provides an overview of both organisations and their working relationship.

Key aspects of The Tweed Foundation work programme and the Tweed Fisheries Management Plan for the Tweed & Eye Fisheries District can be viewed at <https://arcg.is/SeKmb>.

Job Specification

The Tweed Foundation is seeking to employ an experienced and passionate team member to help us deliver a groundbreaking river catchment audit and restoration project for the Tweed District. This is a 3-year funded post where the main role will be to continue the development of a Geographical Information System to :-

1. Assess in-river, riparian or wider catchment habitat quality
2. Prioritise where habitat restoration can be undertaken to maximise the benefit to local fish populations
3. Share data with project partners
4. Assist with the scoping of localised and landscape-scale restoration projects with project partners

Subject to funding support, the post will be extended to continue the audit and help implement sub-catchment initiatives, ensuring that the aims of the project are delivered to the required standard and within budget. Developing effective liaison, communication and partnerships with land managers, agencies and private sector advisors will be an important part of the role.

Duties will occasionally extend to cover other aspects of the on-going catchment work of the Tweed Foundation.

Key Responsibilities

- Develop and deliver a catchment-wide audit of the health of the rivers within the Tweed District using a GIS desk-based assessment from existing datasets and walkover habitat surveys
- Carry out walkover surveys from May through to September
- Identify sites for restoration within the catchment to maximise climate resilience and habitat quality for fish
- Produce interactive, online maps using ArcGIS online Storymap to share the results with stakeholders
- Develop a programme of proposed works across the catchment with stakeholder organisations
- Scope out landscape-scale projects or programmes of work including landowner and regulatory engagements
- Where appropriate, apply to appropriate grant schemes includes Woodland Grant Scheme, Nature Restoration Fund, Water Environment Fund, private funders, etc
- Feed into the Foundation research and monitoring plans

The following are the criteria which are required for the delivery of the role and will be used to appraise applicants:

Essential Skills

- GIS competency, evidenced either through a specific degree course in GIS or practical experience in creating, managing and analysing GIS datasets
- Strong interpersonal, communication and negotiation skills, comfortable with a range of different stakeholder groups
- Experience in project management with a proven ability to plan, report and work to deadlines
- A good understanding of land management, farming and forestry practices, in particular for upland and riparian areas
- A full clean UK driving license

Desirable Skills

- Specific experience using ArcGis online
- Knowledge of Biodiversity Net Gain and habitat site condition assessment
- Training in ukhab for classifying habitats
- A degree, or equivalent in a land management, environmental management, agriculture, forestry or nature conservation discipline
- Knowledge of river processes and ecology
- Knowledge of riparian woodland and upland restoration impacts on the wider ecology
- An understanding of current funding mechanisms for ecological restoration projects and experience in preparing and submitting funding applications

Profile and Relationships

- Maintain and develop relationships with other organisations involved in catchment management and liaison with peers
- Attend meetings internally and externally, networking at conferences and representing the best interests of the Tweed Foundation at all times
- Through the RTC Head Fishery Officer, work with the RTC's staff to conduct surveys and habitat improvement (e.g. removal of obstructions)

Personal Qualities

- Team working approach and willingness to work collaboratively with others internally and externally
- Commitment to the values and ethos of the Tweed Foundation
- Willingness to work flexible hours
- Commitment to personal and professional development
- Commitment to maintaining the environment for healthy fish stocks