

Stapeley Grange Wildlife Centre

Volunteering



About Stapeley Grange Wildlife Centre

Stapeley Grange wildlife centre has been caring for wildlife casualties since it opened in 1994. Every year the centre treats thousands of animals from north-west England, the north Midlands and north Wales. Stapeley Grange complements the RSPCA's other wildlife centres at East Winch in Norfolk, West Hatch in Somerset and Mallydams Wood in East Sussex. Together, the wildlife centres fulfill the RSPCA's commitment to provide expert veterinary care and rehabilitation of wildlife casualties throughout England and Wales.



Wildlife Assistant weighing a swan © Andrew Forsyth / RSPCA Photolibrary

At Stapeley Grange Wildlife Centre we rehabilitate a whole range of animals including waterfowl, birds of prey, garden birds, and mammals such as hedgehogs, badgers, foxes and otters. We have:

- Trained and dedicated personnel with detailed knowledge and wide experience of wildlife care, rehabilitation, release and post release monitoring.
- The services of highly skilled veterinary surgeons with a wide range of experience in treating wildlife.
- An X-ray unit and fully equipped operating theatre - providing the best facilities for diagnosis and emergency treatment.
- An extensive range of large pools, pens, waterfowl paddocks, a bat flight and various aviaries that provide the right conditions and space so that animals can recover fully before they are released.
- A specially designed intensive care unit with cubicles of various sizes that can be individually controlled to provide the correct levels of heat, light and ventilation for each animal.
- A separate unit for cleaning oiled seabirds and waterfowl.
- Food storage and preparation facilities to suit the diets of a wide range of wildlife.

Volunteering

Stapeley Grange Wildlife Centre offers volunteers the opportunity to work alongside our dedicated wildlife team to contribute to the rehabilitation of the country's injured and orphaned wildlife.



Wildlife supervisor feeding magpies © Andrew Forsyth / RSPCA photolibrary

Volunteers support the centre staff in a range of activities:

- wildlife care
- education
- administration
- fundraising
- maintenance

Wildlife care volunteers are particularly needed during our busy season from May through to September. The routine jobs include cleaning out enclosures and feeding the animals regularly throughout the day. In the spring and summer months many youngsters require hand feeding from early in the morning until last thing at night. Other jobs will include washing up, general cleaning, preparing feeds, providing enrichment and restocking supplies. The work can be physically quite hard and repetitive but the reward is getting the animals fit for release.

You should be aware that we keep handling of animals to a minimum in order to keep their stress levels as low as possible and to prepare them for release. A lot of work therefore does not involve direct contact with the animals. Our main aim is to release animals back to the wild as soon as possible and long term volunteers can be involved in releases.

We also need help with other areas of running the wildlife centre. We really value help with:

- **Maintenance** work around the site - weeding, strimming, mowing, repairing enclosures;
- **Administration** work - intake of animals, answering phone enquiries, keeping records of the animals in our care, filing, photocopying;
- **Fundraising** - helping to plan and carry out fundraising events;
- **Education** activities - helping to develop and carry out education events at the centre.

Requirements:

We ask that wildlife care volunteers commit to at least one regular shift per week. We can accommodate two volunteers per shift. Shifts are either from 8am to 1pm or 4pm to 9pm, Monday to Sunday. No previous experience is required but we ask that you attend an induction day before you start. Other types of volunteering can be more flexible. For example, fundraising and education volunteers may sign up to help at occasional one-off events.

All volunteers must be aged 16 years or older and must have an up to date tetanus vaccination. Education volunteers will require a Criminal Record Bureau check.

Applying:

We accept applications for new volunteers in February each year (deadline 28th February). Applicants will be notified if they have been successful in March and will be invited to an induction day. We ask that new volunteers start in April or May and commit to a regular shift for a minimum of five months. However, of course you are welcome to stay on year round if you are happy to be involved in a variety of tasks (our hands on wildlife work decreases substantially from October to March).



If you are interested in volunteering please contact volunteer-stapeley@rspca.org.uk or call 0300 1230722 for a volunteer application pack.