

Corporate Volunteering with Earth Trust



Autumn/Winter (Sept- December)

This is a great time to volunteer at Earth Trust. There is a variety of tasks and it is not too hot to work outdoors all day. Most of the tasks would be in our woodlands or on Wittenham Clumps. Late autumn is the best season for tree-planting. Currently our tree-planting is focussed on improving and maintaining our existing woodlands rather than establishing new woods. Our largest woodland, Little Wittenham Wood is already recognised as a Site of Special Scientific Interest¹ and a European SAC. Some of our summer tasks can also run through into the early autumn (clearing tree-guards and carrying out track repairs) so we have plenty on offer to keep your team busy.

Task	What does it involve?	Why is it important?	When?	Physical difficulty: 1=easy - 5	Group size.
Ride Management	Cutting back vegetation alongside footpaths and bridleways, mostly in Little Wittenham Woods.	Helps to maintain open and inviting tracks for visitors and improve wildlife habitat.	Sept – Oct	2-3	10-20
Coppicing	Coppicing to encourage new growth on trees. It involves cutting down scrub and processing it into materials for hedge-laying.	Coppicing is a traditional woodland management technique. It maintains the woodlands and is great for wildlife, encouraging ground flora and insects by opening up the canopy to allow light in.	Sept – Feb	3	10-20
Protecting Castle Hill ramparts	Clearing and burning scrub growth from the steep slopes of Castle Hill, the more southern of the two hilltops of Wittenham Clumps.	The underlying archaeology is damaged by root growth so keeping scrub under control is really important in that regard. It also helps maintain the diverse mix of ground flora and the insects associated with it.	Sept – Oct	3-4	10-20
Tree or Hedge Planting	Planting trees into hedges or woodland to fill gaps or improve the woodland structure.	Planting is an essential part of hedge or woodland management and the range of wildlife which rely on those habitats.	Oct - Mar	3	10-15
Clearing Tree Guards	Removing tree guards from planted areas.	Tree guards are essential to ensure planted trees survive. In order to minimise plastic in the environment the guards must be removed and recycled after serving their purpose.	Apr - Sept	1	10-40
Track repair	Filling pot holes or ruts in access tracks across the farm.	Whilst less glamorous than other jobs we rely on our access tracks to undertake a variety of work across the farm and woodlands. These tracks need maintaining to allow our conservation work to continue.	June - Sept	5	10-40
Litter Picking	Collecting litter at any of our five sites: Little Wittenham, Didcot, Abingdon and Wallingford.	As we welcome over 150,000 visitors a year, litter picking is inevitable. Litter can cause wildlife any number of problems as well as being an eyesore.	All year	1	10-40

¹ SSSI is the foundation block of our UK system of designating and protecting natural habitats. SAC is the European equivalent.

Winter/ Spring (January – March)

Winter and early spring is a good time to volunteer at Earth Trust. The focus is on woodlands: coppicing and tree-planting are key tasks for the health of our woods.

Task	What does it involve?	Why is it important?	When?	Physical difficulty: 1=easy - 5	Group size.
Coppicing	Coppicing to encourage new growth on trees. It involves cutting down scrub and processing it into materials for hedge-laying.	Coppicing is a traditional woodland management technique. It maintains the woodlands and is great for wildlife, encouraging ground flora and insects by opening up the canopy to allow light in.	Sept – Feb	3	10-20
Tree or Hedge Planting	Planting trees into hedges or woodland to fill gaps or improve the woodland structure.	Planting is an essential part of hedge or woodland management and the range of wildlife which rely on those habitats.	Oct - Mar	3	10-15
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Early Summer (April – May)

Early summer is a key time for supporting our newly planted hedgerows. Healthy hedgerows are vital for pollinators. If we want our new hedges to grow in due course into beautiful habitats for flowers, bees and butterflies we need to look after them in early summer. At this time we also try to get on top of our weeding – which, as you can imagine, is on a big scale. Since we do not want to use weed-killer, pulling out undesirable species is a huge task. However, please be warned it is also a tough task as it can seem rather monotonous and has been described as ‘back-breaking’ – but it is very important.

Task	What does it involve?	Why is it important?	When?	Physical difficulty: 1=easy - 5	Group size.
Hedge Protection	Clearing vegetation from newly laid hedges.	Helps newly laid hedgerows thrive by reducing competition from other plants.	Apr – May	2	10-20
Weed Control	Clearing our wildflower meadows of undesirable species such Ragwort and Creeping Thistle.	In order to maintain the diversity of species we have to keep on top of plants which can out-compete the delicate wildflowers.	May – July	3	10-40
Clearing Tree Guards	Removing tree guards from planted areas.	Tree guards are essential to ensure planted trees survive. In order to minimise plastic in the environment the guards must be removed and recycled after serving their purpose.	Apr - Sept	1	10-40
Litter Picking	Collecting litter across the site.	As we welcome over 150,000 visitors a year, litter picking is inevitable. Litter can cause wildlife any number of problems as well as being an eyesore.	All year	1	10-40

Summer (June – August)

Many people think that volunteering at Earth Trust would be most fun in the summer – a day outdoors when the sun is shining sounds perfect. Our word of warning is that the summer tasks are pretty tough: pulling weeds all day in an open meadow under the summer sun is not for the faint-hearted. Having said that, as you can see below, we have some really important tasks.

Task	What does it involve?	Why is it important?	When is it available?	Physical difficulty: 1=easy -5	Group size.
Weed Control	Clearing our wildflower meadows of undesirable species such Ragwort and Creeping Thistle.	In order to maintain the diversity of species we have to keep on top of plants which can out-compete the delicate wildflowers.	May – July	3	10-40
Litter Picking	Collecting litter across the site.	As we welcome over 150,000 visitors a year, litter picking is inevitable. Litter can cause wildlife any number of problems as well as being an eyesore.	All year	1	10-40
Track repair	Filling pot holes or ruts in access tracks across the farm.	Whilst less glamorous than other jobs we rely on our access tracks to undertake a variety of work across the farm and woodlands. These tracks need maintaining to allow our conservation work to continue.	June - Sept	5	10-40

For further information on Corporate Volunteering please contact:

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