

Placement year inspires Leeds student's appointment to the BTO youth advisory council

Friday 17 September, 2021

Aspiring conservationist Elizabeth Fitzpatrick has been appointed to the youth advisory council of the British Trust for Ornithology, utilising her passion and practical experience to inspire the next generation of birdwatchers. The 21-year-old University of Leeds student has just completed her placement year with the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT), in which she assisted the organisation's PARTRIDGE project in the Scottish Lowlands.

Elizabeth, who is in her final year studying Biology, has a long-held passion for conservation, but her focus has shifted since she began working with the GWCT. "From a young age I loved watching David Attenborough documentaries, and developed not only a love for tigers but an understanding of the threats our biodiversity faces", she says. "Before my placement, I was not entirely sure which direction I wanted to go in. It's safe to say that my year with the GWCT has solidified my decision to aspire to a career in conservation: specifically, farmland conservation. Working with the brilliant people at the PARTRIDGE project has demonstrated to me how important farmland conservation is for protecting biodiversity as a whole. Whilst there may not be tigers in Scotland, I've learnt that species such as the grey partridge are just as important in their own right!"

In her first year at Leeds, Elizabeth became Green Representative for her university halls and treasurer for the Marine Science and Conservation Society – positions that allowed her to share her enthusiasm for the natural world.

Elizabeth applied to join the BTO youth advisory panel after it was recommended to her by the GWCT's head of GIS, Julie Ewald, and the Scarborough-based student is grateful to the organisation for developing her conservation skills. "My incredible supervisor Fiona Torrance and fellow placement student Tamara Spivey helped me to learn so much," says Elizabeth. "This was particularly the case for bird ID, something I was keen to improve from the outset. Despite beginning a complete novice, Fiona's skilful teaching and practice in my own time mean I can now consider myself a confident birder. This is a skill I'm really excited to take forwards working with the BTO."

The GWCT has a long-running association with teaching in UK universities and accepts undergraduate, Masters and PhD students every year, hosted at its Hampshire headquarters in Fordingbridge and various research sites across the country, in Scotland, Teesdale, Dorset and at its Leicestershire demonstration farm, the Allerton Project. For more information, please visit www.gwct.org.uk/placements.

Media:



Related Sectors:

Charities & non-profits ::
Education & Human Resources ::
Environment & Nature :: Farming
& Animals ::

Related Keywords:

Birdwatching :: Wildlife :: Birds ::
University :: Placement :: Leeds
:: Scarborough :: Student ::
Conservation :: Biology ::

Scan Me:



Company Contact:

Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust

E. press@gwct.org.uk

W. <https://www.gwct.org.uk/>

[View Online](#)

Additional Assets:

Newsroom: Visit our Newsroom for all the latest stories:

<https://www.gwct.pressat.co.uk>