

Role description:

The Volunteer Hills Ranger role is available to BHP volunteers who have shown particular commitment and dedication to the Belfast Hills Partnership. A Volunteer Hills Ranger acts as the 'eyes and ears' of the BHP at the various sites within its operational boundary, from Slievenacloy to Carnmoney, and will report anything of importance on their designated site.

Purpose:

The sites in the hills are large and need a lot of attention. Volunteer Hills Rangers help site managers and the BHP by reporting any issues or points of interest on their specifically assigned site in the hills. The purpose of this is to help site managers and BHP to care for the Hills and assign management resources appropriately.



Greater Butterfly Orchid

Tasks and duties:

Patrol site

- At least twice a month, preferably more
- Look for issues (vandalism, damage, erosion) and things of particular interest (eg rare plant species)
- Use GPS handset or mobile phone app to pinpoint issues and interest so they can be re-located by site managers or BHP
- Pick up any litter you come across and leave at designated spot, pre-arranged with site-manager. BHP will provide equipment.

Report

- Once a month via email using the report sheet provided by BHP, also found on the Volunteer section of the website
- Reports should compile information from your patrols, including a map or GPS co-ordinates to re-locate the issues or interest
- You may also suggest any volunteer tasks for the sites which result from your patrols. The Volunteer Officer (VO) will take these suggestions into consideration when organising the task timetable.

Interact

- With members of the public when on site. It is likely you will be approached by the public whilst carrying out this role. You represent the BHP when carrying out your Volunteer Ranger patrols. *Please refer to our Lone Working Volunteer Policy with regards to public interaction when volunteering alone.*
- With site managers and BHP. The VO will arrange an annual meeting between the Volunteer Hills Rangers and the site managers. These are important so site managers can let Volunteers know what is needed and what works, and vice versa.

Get involved!

When:

All year round – Volunteer Hills Rangers are expected to send a report once a month, even if all is well and there is nothing to report, so there is a record of Volunteers having carried out their role.

Location:

The Volunteer will be assigned a site within the Hills: we try to match the site to be convenient to you.

Why volunteer:

- Help protect your local environment
- Gain responsibility for an area
- Keep fit without the gym
- Learn new skills
- Gain valuable experience
- Feel a sense of ownership to your site

Who will you volunteer with:

The Volunteer Hills Rangers are managed by our VO. You are required to carry out your duties alone or in pairs. There is a Lone Working Volunteer Policy which is followed by the BHP and volunteers who work alone.

Becoming a Volunteer Hills Ranger:

To be considered a Volunteer Hills Ranger, you will:

- Be expected to attend either 5 consecutive Thursday conservation tasks or 5 consecutive Big Saturday Tasks (or a combination of the two) so the VO can observe and assess you.
- Be trained in basic GPS use and mapping, we can provide this training.
- Need to have a reasonable knowledge of wildlife and plant identification. BHP will provide you with a basic ID sheet. BHP also runs training courses.
- Need to be comfortable with walking large sites either alone or in pairs.
- Be committed to your role, see section below re commitment.

**Support, supervision and training:**

As part of your support, you will receive regular meetings with the VO to discuss your role as Volunteer Hills Ranger. The meetings will cover how you are getting on and if you have any issues or training needs. It will also give you the opportunity to request training or let us know if anything can be improved or changed to make the experience as a Volunteer Hills Ranger the best possible. Volunteer feedback and input is always welcome and is treated with respect and enthusiasm by the VO. You may also request a reference from our Volunteer Officer.

Get involved!

Commitment:

To be considered a Volunteer Hills Ranger, you will have already attended 5 consecutive Thursday or Big Saturday conservation tasks as a Conservation Volunteer. As a Volunteer Hills Ranger, you will need to be able to commit to walking your assigned site at least twice a month, though you can decide when. You will also need to write a monthly report and send it to the site manager and BHP. If Volunteer Hills Rangers are finding the role difficult, they will be able to discuss this with the VO who will do their best to support them. If a volunteer finds they are no longer able to continue their role, they must let the VO know and their post will be re-opened for replacement. If volunteers have not been able to carry out their role for a period of 3 months they will be asked to give up their role for a new volunteer (exceptional circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis). This is to ensure the ranger role is continuous and runs smoothly.

What to bring:

As a Volunteer Hills Ranger, you will need to be prepared for all weather possibilities. You must wear clothing suitable for all weathers, layers and waterproofs are essential. A rucksack with a personal first aid kit, water, a map of the site, charged mobile phone with a mapping app or a GPS handset if you own one, if not, we can provide one to loan for your ranger duties.

We provide:

- Litter picker and bin bags
- After 3 consecutive reports, each Volunteer Hills Ranger will be given a jacket, emblazoned with the Belfast Hills Partnership logo on the chest. It will also have 'Volunteer Ranger' embroidered across the shoulders, so that you may be clearly identified
- GPS handset (loan) for your ranger duties, to be returned on arranged dates
- Basic ID sheets
- Basic site map

Although we would like to, we currently cannot afford to cover expenses for volunteers. Volunteers will be notified of any future changes to this policy.

Insurance:

As a volunteer you will be covered under Belfast Hills Partnership Employer's Liability insurance whilst actively engaged with a Belfast Hills Partnership task or activity.



Get involved!



Making notes

If you are interested in the role, have the necessary skills and are able to commit to the role, or would like to find out more, please contact:

Email our Volunteer Officer at:
lisa.critchley@belfasthills.org

Or call:
02890 603 466



Get involved!