



# MERRIST WOOD COLLEGE SCOTLAND FIELD TRIP PRESENTATION



## Scotland Southern Highlands Wildlife Expedition



**GLOBAL** reach. **ADVENTURE** for all. **PROJECTS** to inspire.

# ABOUT US:



## GAP Africa Projects

- We are a specialised travel company that offers academic trips and volunteering opportunities for groups and individual travellers in a number of locations worldwide
- We pride ourselves on curating experiences which are personalised to your needs and requirements
- Our first project travelled in 2012
- Full ATOL Bonding for overseas trips
- Working with 55 Colleges and Universities around the UK
- A small dedicated team in the UK and South Africa





# ABOUT SCOTLAND

Project overview and  
location



# ABOUT SCOTLAND



## Your Conservation Field Trip Explained

- A unique academic conservation experience in Scotland
- 5 Day (4 Night) highland adventure with dedicated local ecologist host
- Visit wildlife parks and community woodlands
- Take woodland walks and hikes
- Stay in hotel accommodation on the banks of a Scottish loch
- The opportunity to experience hands on wildlife conservation in the UK
- Focus on education and field based studies

# LOCATION



## Scottish Highlands Wildlife Expedition – Location





# ABOUT THE PROJECT

Your expedition and conservation work in more detail



# PROJECT DETAILS



## Your Conservation Programme

- Camera trapping and tracking techniques for small mammals
- Owl spotting
- Animal behaviour research and data recording
- Learn techniques for monitoring elusive species
- Lectures on human – animal conflicts
- Wildcat breeding programme
- Wildlife hike along an old railway line
- Wild animal rehabilitation
- Learn about rewilding and repopulating mammals in the Scottish Highlands
- Conservation and management of the red squirrel population
- Monitor feeding activity and behaviour of red kites from an animal hide
- Animal management for endangered animals within a wildlife park

# ABOUT YOUR PROJECT



## AQUILA WILDLIFE & NATURE : Our Ecology Partner & Your Project Host

Based in the beautiful surroundings of St Fillans

Through their network of experienced and qualified Associate Ecologists they undertake ecology survey work throughout Scotland and other parts of the UK

Their passionate team are your dedicated guides and educators

Andrea Hudspeth

Director, Tour Guide & Principal Ecologist



Studied at Bishop Burton College and the University of Hull, she has a degree in Wildlife and Countryside Conservation. She has worked for the RSPB, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and Edinburgh zoo



# ABOUT YOUR PROJECT



## Wildlife Walks and Studies

- Discussion on Feral Goats and their impact
- Invertebrate studies
- Look for raptor species flying above mountain ridges
- Visit a community woodland at Comrie, owned by Comrie Development Trust



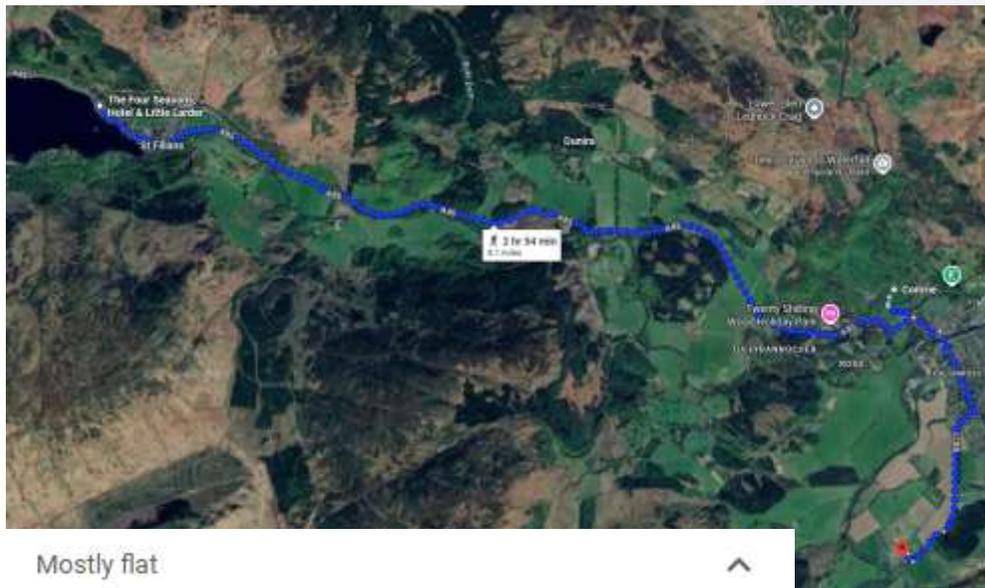
# ABOUT YOUR PROJECT



## Walking Map

Walking the old railway line:

St Fillans -> Comrie -> Cultybraggan -> Transport back to accommodation



Mostly flat

↑ 138 ft · ↓ 240 ft



# ABOUT YOUR PROJECT



## Camera Traps and Review

- Set up camera traps
- Hotel grounds, near the loch and surrounding areas
- Review and discuss camera footage the following day
- Understand how the information is used in real life ecological surveys



# ABOUT YOUR PROJECT



## Beaver Translocation and Studies – Argaty Estate

Tour and presentation of the local beaver relocation and rewilding centre



# ABOUT YOUR PROJECT



## Red Kites – Argaty Estate

Central Scotland's only red kite feeding station



# ABOUT YOUR PROJECT



## Red Squirrels Safari

- Conservation and management of the red squirrel population
- Talk on Saving the Red Squirrel project
- Comrie Croft has 230 acres of protected woodlands



# ABOUT YOUR PROJECT



## Hogscroft Hedgehog Rescue

- Small, local Hedgehog rescue centre
- Just under 200 hedgehogs in 2023



# ABOUT YOUR PROJECT



## Camperdown Wildlife Centre

- Rewilding
- Wild Cat Breeding programme
- Rehabilitation
- Nutritional science
- Welfare and ethics
- Genetic diversity and biology
- Behavioural studies
- Enrichment techniques
- Wildlife rehabilitation



# ABOUT YOUR PROJECT



## Itinerary

- **Day 1 – Monday 23rd February** – Depart from London Kings Cross at approximately 08:30 hrs. Arriving Dunblane train station at approximately 14:00 hrs. Transfer to St. Fillans. Arrive at Four Seasons hotel mid afternoon with welcome talk and introduction to the week ahead. Local walk late afternoon to take in the area, habitats, history and management. Dinner and free time.
- **Day 2 – Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February** – Morning at a wildlife centre to visit the wildcat breeding programme and hear from the on-site experts; packed lunch at park (if dry); afternoon tour of Hogscroft Hedgehog Rescue Centre; pre-dinner presentation on reintroduction programmes in Scotland. After dinner set up wildlife camera traps around hotel grounds
- **Day 3 – Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February** – After breakfast review camera trap footage. Visit to Argaty Red Kites to see a working farm that is rewilding and managing a visitor attraction and is home to a family of beavers; packed lunch in visitor centre with a talk on human-wildlife conflict and the beaver family that were relocated to Argaty in 2021. Viewing the feeding kites in the hide. After dinner walk around the hotel environs looking and listening for owls using thermal aids with talk enroute.



# ABOUT YOUR PROJECT



## Itinerary

- **Day 4 – Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February** – After breakfast walk to Comrie along the old railway line and look for signs of species using the line, also look for raptor species along the mountain ridge – discussion on life cycles, ecology and behaviour en route. Packed lunch in Comrie then walk to Comrie Community Woodland. Learn about the woodland project so far and try out some species ID and recording apps. Transport back to St. Fillans for dinner. After dinner, take part in some fun learning activities based on the events of the week. Say goodbye to the Aquila team.
- **Day 5 – Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February** – After breakfast visit Comrie Croft to learn about a sustainable business and how to integrate activities with nature. Wildlife spotting with Colin. Lunch at the café before the coach transfer.
- Depart Comrie Croft at 14:00 for Dunblane train station for the train home, departure at approximately 15:00 and arriving at Kings Cross during the evening.





# ACCOMMODATION & LIFESTYLE

Details on accommodation  
and meals



# ACCOMMODATION & LIFESTYLE



## St. Fillans and The Four Seasons Hotel

You will be accommodated in comfortable rooms which can accommodate 2 – 4 people with ensuite bathrooms

The hotel is located at the edge of Loch Earn with stunning views over the Loch and the hills beyond



# ACCOMMODATION & LIFESTYLE



## Food at the Project

Three meals a day will be provided. Breakfast and dinner will be provided at the hotel; a daily packed lunch (except Friday) will be provided for you to take on your activity.

## Dietary Requirements

Provision can be made for Vegetarian & Vegan diets and for those who have a medical condition such as Coeliac disease that requires a Gluten Free Diet and for those with severe allergies to dairy, eggs or nuts.



# ACCOMMODATION & LIFESTYLE



## Travelling by train\* (\*not included in cost)

Travelling by train gives you the opportunity to see some of the beautiful scenery as you travel North through England to Scotland.

The journey is direct from London Kings Cross to Edinburgh Waverley with a change there to the local service to your final stop at Dunblane.

Costs around £160 – £200\*

Do not book  
your  
train ticket  
yet

OUT Mon 23 Feb 2026 London Kings Cross to Dunblane		RETURN Fri 27 Feb 2026 Dunblane to London Kings Cross	
Earlier		Earlier	
Standard	1st class	Standard	1st class
07:30 → 13:06 London Kings Cross → Dunblane 5h 36m, 1 change	£49.20 Limited availability	£121.40 Limited availability	
07:33 → 13:38 London Kings Cross → Dunblane 6h 5m, 2 changes	Tickets coming soon		
08:30 → 14:05 London Kings Cross → Dunblane 5h 35m, 1 change	£71.70 Limited availability	£150.10 Limited availability	
		14:55 → 21:02 Dunblane → London Kings Cross 6h 7m, 1 change	£75.10 Only 4 left
		15:25 → 21:11 Dunblane → London Kings Cross 5h 46m, 1 change	£84.30 Limited availability
		16:24 → 22:01 Dunblane → London Kings Cross 5h 37m, 1 change	£87.50 Limited availability

London North Eastern Railway	GR614000
4 bike spaces • <a href="#">Reservation required</a>	
<b>08:30</b>	<b>London Kings Cross</b>
4h 7m	<a href="#">View stops</a>
<b>12:37</b>	<b>Edinburgh (Waverley)</b>
29m transfer time	
ScotRail	SR712500
4 bike spaces • <a href="#">Reservation required</a>	
<b>13:06</b>	<b>Edinburgh (Waverley)</b>
59m	<a href="#">View stops</a>
<b>14:05</b>	<b>Dunblane</b>



# BOOKING YOUR ADVENTURE

The next steps to this amazing and unique experience



# WHAT'S INCLUDED



## What is Included?

- Transfers to/from project from Dunblane
- Accommodation
- Three meals per day (except Friday)
- Coach transport for activities where applicable
- All activities as part of the project
- 24/7 support

## NOT Included

- Return train journey to/from Dunblane\*
- Personal Travel Insurance \*
- Meals on travel days – before arriving & after departing from project and lunch on Friday
- Any activities not specified as part of the project

\* We recommend that you take out personal travel insurance as soon as your booking is confirmed.

# THE NEXT STEPS



## Project Dates & Key Deadlines

### Confirmed Travel Dates:

Monday 23rd February 2026 – Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2026

### Trip Cost:

£1045.00\* Based on a group of 17

### Key Deadlines are:

- Return online booking form by 10/11/2025
- 50% Deposit payment by 17/11/2025
- Balance payment to be paid by 29/12/2025
- 02/02/2026 Final documents will be issued

# BOOKING YOUR ADVENTURE



## Booking Form

- Please submit by 10/11/2025
- No deposit required at this stage of booking

## Key deadlines are:

- 50% Deposit payment by 17/11/2025
- Balance payment to be paid by 22/12/2026

**GAP Africa Projects**

AFRICA REGIONAL PROJECTS | SOCIAL AND DIGITAL PROJECTS | AFRICA REGIONAL PROJECTS | WHO WE ARE | BOOK | GET IN TOUCH

CALL: +44 (0)207 1937819 | EMAIL: INFO@GAPAFRICAPROJECTS.COM

### BOOKING FORM

(NB: Your name should be given as displayed on your passport)

Title \*

Name \*

Date of birth \*

Address \*

Telephone \*

Mobile \*

Email 1 \*

Email 2 \*

(NB: Please note that all booking correspondence will be sent via Email)

Passport no.

Passport Issue Date



# BOOKING YOUR ADVENTURE



## Group Web Page

<https://gapafricaprojects.com/26-4816/>



## Booking Form

<https://gapafricaprojects.com/booking-form-26-4816-mwa-sco-merrist-wood-college/>



**BOOKING FORM**

Your Global Adventure Starts here!

Please use the form below to submit your provisional booking to your selected project. You have the option to pay your initial deposit with the submission of your booking form, or we will contact you for payment once your project placement has been secured.

If you'd like to contact us to ask any initial questions or find out more about what project you'd like to go on and when, you can get also get in touch using our short enquiry form, or by calling +44 (0) 207 193 7819.

(NB: Your name should be given as displayed on your passport)

Title \*

Name \*

Date of birth \*

Address \*

## Suggested kit list

- Long-sleeve shirts/T shirts
- Trousers
- Hiking Boots/comfortable walking shoes – must be worn in
- Waterproof jacket – essential
- Waterproof trousers – essential
- Sweatshirt/Fleece (Winter months pack plenty)
- Thermals
- Padded parka jacket/windbreaker – warm
- Daypack rucksack
- Walking socks
- Hat for sun protection
- Warm Hat (all year)
- Gloves for warmth (all year)
- Changes of casual clothes for evenings
- Underwear

- Comfortable shoes to wear for evenings
- Toiletries
- Personal medical items
- Tick / insect repellent
- Swimwear – you may want a dip in the loch!
- Torch or head torch

### Other useful items:

- Binoculars
- Water bottle
- Camera
- Spare batteries
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Bag for any wet clothes on journey home



**GLOBAL** reach. **ADVENTURE** for all. **PROJECTS** to inspire.

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