



# MERRIST WOOD COLLEGE Q&A PRESENTATION



## Scotland Southern Highlands Wildlife Expedition



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

# LOCATION



## Scottish Highlands Wildlife Expedition – Location





# ABOUT THE PROJECT

Our conservation work  
in more detail



# ABOUT THE PROJECT



## Southern Highlands of Scotland

St. Fillans, along with Comrie, Crieff, Agarty Farm Estate and surrounding areas are where your conservation, wildlife and expedition activities will take place. This and the greater area are best described as the Southern Highlands of Scotland.

St. Fillans is on the eastern boundary of the Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park. It sits on Loch Earn, where you'll be staying; the freshwater banks of the loch boast beautiful and picturesque views up to the heights of the Southern Highland mountains.

Global Adventure Projects has partnered with Aquila Wildlife & Nature CIC, a local independent company from St. Fillans. They want to share their knowledge and enthusiasm with others who visit the area. The overall vision is to show the wonder of nature and the beauty of a range of habitats to create lasting memories.



# ABOUT THE PROJECT



## Southern Highlands of Scotland and Loch Earn

- Loch Earn and St Fillans is on the Eastern point of Loch Earn and Trossachs National Park.
- Comrie, Crieff and Comrie Croft for fantastic hiking, including a red squirrel trail
- Argaty Farm Estate has a spectacular set-up for viewing Red Kites and has recently translocated beaver populations onto their ground
- Camperdown Wildlife Centre is part of the RZSS partnered programme for conservation of the Scottish Wildcat
- Hogscroft Hedgehog Rescue a hedgehog rescue and rehabilitation centre run by volunteers



# 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



## Itinerary

- **Day 1 – Monday 23rd February** – Depart from London Kings Cross at 08:30 hrs. Arriving Dunblane train station at approximately 14:05 hrs. Coach 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 Camperdown 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. Assist with removing tree shelters from young trees.
- Lunch at the café (own expense) before the coach transfer.
- Depart Comrie Croft at 13:30 for Dunblane train station for the train home, train departs at 14:30 and arrives at Kings Cross at 20:11.





# ACCOMMODATION & LIFESTYLE

Details on accommodation  
and meals



# ACCOMMODATION & LIFESTYLE



## St. Fillans and The Four Seasons Hotel

You will be accommodated in comfortable rooms or chalets 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



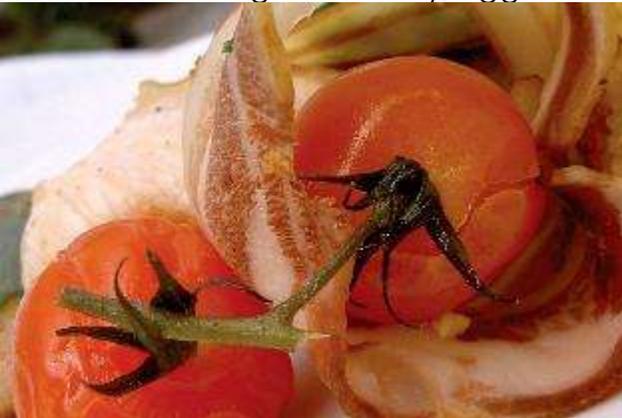
## Food at the Project

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.

You **must** have picked your dinner options before arriving.

## 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.





# PRE DEPARTURE INFORMATION

Travel details



# TRAVEL INFORMATION



## Departure from London | Arrival to Dunblane

### Travel Dates

23rd February – 27th February 2026

### Train Journey:

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026 – London Kings Cross – Edinburgh (Waverley) – Dunblane

27<sup>th</sup> February 2026 – Dunblane – Edinburgh (Waverley) – London Kings Cross

### Outward Journey

Departure from London Kings Cross at 08:30 hrs.

Arriving Dunblane train station at approximately 14:05 hrs.

Coach transfer with J. Docherty & Sons to St. Fillans.

Arrive at Four Seasons hotel late afternoon.

The coach will be waiting for you outside Dunblane station

### Return Journey

Depart Comrie Croft at 13:30 for Dunblane train station

Coach transfer to Dunblane train station

Train departs at 14:30 and arrives at Kings Cross at 20:11.

# TRAVEL DOCUMENTS



## Travel Documents

Final Documents Issued  
09/02/2026

Emailed to your personal  
and/or college email  
address

Merrist Wood  
Travel Plan



26/02/2026	Arrive Durban Airport Transfer to Four Seasons Hotel to check in	18.00
	Dinner self and cash amount remaining card Dinner at hotel	28.00
26/02/2026	Breakfast at hotel	10.00
	Depart for coach for morning at Comptonville Wildlife Centre Wildlife Campground	19.00
	19.00	19.00
	Afternoon at Phippsville Redwing Reserve (Dinner)	1.00
	Transfer back to hotel	28.00
	Dinner at hotel After dinner set up wildlife camera trap	19.00
26/02/2026	Breakfast at hotel	10.00
	Booked hotel for Ngqulu Wood Hotel Arrive Ngqulu Transfer back to hotel	10.00 10.00 10.00
	Dinner at hotel	10.00
	After dinner review camera trap footage and walk using binoculars and (weather permitting)	25.00
26/02/2026	Breakfast at hotel	10.00
	Walk to Centre	20.00
	Coach Transfer back to hotel	10.00
	Dinner at Four Seasons Hotel	28.00
	After dinner fuel binoculars/flashlight and set up with Apollo	25.00
27/02/2026	Breakfast at hotel	10.00
	Check out of hotel Transfer to Durban Airport	19.00/10.00
	Site visit and conservation walk Lunch in cafe (cash required)	25.00
	Transfer by coach to Durban Airport Train to airport Durban	25.00

## Group Web Page & Travel Documents



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



# USEFUL INFORMATION

What's Included and  
recommended kit list



## 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

# USEFUL INFORMATION



## Climate

22	23	24	25	26	27	28
3° 0°	6° 2°	5° -2°	3° -2°	3° 1°	5° -1°	5° -2°

# USEFUL INFORMATION



## Climate

The landscape around St Fillans and Loch Earn at this time of year can be atmospheric, with the surrounding hills possibly still snow-capped and the bare trees just beginning to hint at the coming spring. It's still very much winter weather—cold, wet, and requiring waterproofs and warm layers—but the worst of the dark winter days are beginning to pass. You might catch occasional brighter spells between the rain showers.

**Temperature:** February is the coldest month for daytime temperatures, with average maximum temperatures around 6°C, though nights remain cold with lows often dropping to around 1°C.

**Rainfall:** February remains wet, though not quite as saturated as January. You should still expect frequent rain showers and damp conditions throughout the month.

## Phones & Internet

Mobile phone coverage is likely to be variable and operator-dependent around St Fillans. While 4G is common, 5G may be limited.

The Four Seasons Hotel, St Fillans provides free WiFi for guests.

# USEFUL INFORMATION



## Trip Clothing

Online shop available for trip clothing:

GAP Trip Hoodie

GAP Africa Polo Shirts

GAP Africa Caps

GAP Africa Beenie

GAP Africa 500ml Bottle



<https://hyvfsu-vu.myshopify.com/>



SIZES	XS	S	M	L	XL	XXL	3XL	4XL	5XL
A - Half Chest	49	51	56	61	65	69	73	78	83
B - Body Length	64	67	70	73	76	79	82	86	90
C - Sleeve Length	57.5	59	60.5	62	63.5	65	66.5	68.5	70.5

All garment measurements are shown in centimetres (cm). Garment sizes are approximate and for guidance only.

SIZES	XS	S	M	L	XL	XXL	3XL	4XL	5XL
To Fit Chest Size	34 inch	36 inch	40 inch	44 inch	48 inch	52 inch	56 inch	60 inch	64 inch



# USEFUL APPs



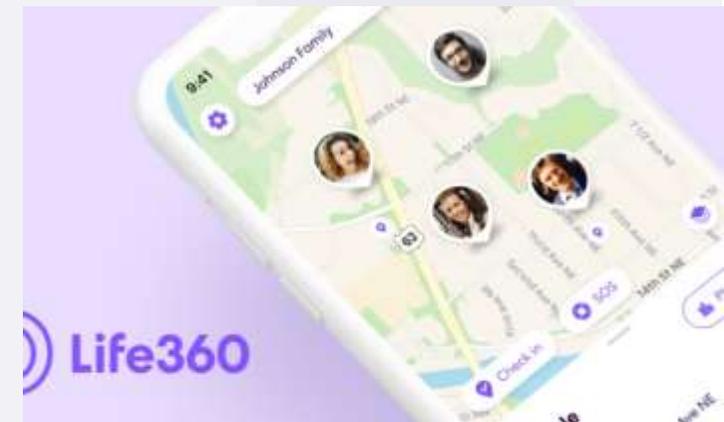
## Useful Apps for Next of Kin

We recommend that Next of Kin also download and set up the following app, we have found this to be useful in knowing where are students whilst on the trip!

Flightradar24 – very useful for tracking flights, showing departure times, any delays and flight location in travel.

Life360 – is great for following them on their journey.

Merlin Bird App





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

Explore our network of Global Adventure Projects:



[GLOBALADVENTUREPROJECTS.COM](http://GLOBALADVENTUREPROJECTS.COM)

