

## Countryside Ranger or Warden

Countryside rangers or wardens look after wildlife and prevent damage to the countryside in areas open to the public. They give information to visitors and lead guided walks. They are also called recreation rangers.

### The Work

You could be:

- helping to improve woodlands, hills or wetlands for wildlife
- monitoring and recording plants, birds and animals and controlling pests
- laying nature trails and putting up signs giving information
- repairing paths, hedges, ditches and fences and picking up litter
- dealing with emergencies such as woodland fires or flooding
- giving talks or leading guided walks for children or others
- training and supervising volunteers
- balancing the conservation of the countryside with public access and enjoyment
- keeping records, writing reports and managing a budget.

### Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

Starting salaries for suitably qualified countryside rangers or wardens is around £19,000 a year, rising to £26,000 with experience. A countryside officer can earn up to £30,000 a year and above.

### Conditions

- Much of your work would be outdoors, but you would spend some time in an office or visitor centre.
- Some of the outdoor work would be strenuous and the conditions could be wet, cold or windy.
- You might be expected to work irregular hours, including shifts and weekends.
- Some jobs are seasonal.
- You might have to travel between different sites.
- You may have to wear a uniform.

### Getting In

- Entry is very competitive so it is helpful to have a relevant qualification.
- There are qualifications in a range of relevant subjects, such as conservation, countryside skills, ecology, environmental and countryside management, horticulture and forestry. These are available at a variety of levels from NCs and NQs (SCQF Levels 4-6) through HNCs (SCQF Level 7) and HNDs (SCQF Level 8) up to

degree level (SCQF Levels 9-11).

- Entry requirements vary from no formal qualifications for some NCs and NQs up to 4-5 Highers for degree courses.
- You might get in through a Modern Apprenticeship. There is a framework in Rural Skills at SCQF Level 5 and SCQF Levels 6/7.
- Previous relevant work experience is extremely important. This does not have to be paid work; there are good volunteering opportunities with various conservation organisations.
- In many cases you will need a full, clean driving licence.
- You may need a Disclosure Scotland check, to show that you are suitable for this type of work. Contact [Disclosure Scotland](#) for details on the type you would need.
- You must be fit as there is a lot of active outdoor work and you may need some outdoor skills such as mountaineering or skiing.
- A first aid certificate would be useful.

Countryside rangers or wardens work mainly in national parks and country parks. They also work for conservation and voluntary organisations such as the [Forestry and Land Scotland](#), the [National Trust for Scotland \(NTS\)](#), the [Royal Society for the Protection of Birds \(RSPB\)](#), [NatureScot](#) and the [Scottish Wildlife Trust \(SWT\)](#).

## What Does It Take

You need to be:

- genuinely interested in the countryside, with an excellent working knowledge of habitats and wildlife
- practical and observant
- computer literate
- able to communicate with people of all backgrounds
- reliable and resourceful
- able to work alone, sometimes in remote areas
- decisive and able to take control in an emergency
- willing to carry out instructions
- willing to carry out pest control, which can be unpleasant.

## Training

- You would train and gain experience on the job.
- Many organisations have well organised training programmes which would include allowing you to study part time for relevant qualifications at NC, NQ and HNC levels.
- You might be able to study towards a relevant SVQ at SCQF Level 5, 6 or 7, such as Estate Management or Environmental Conservation, while you are working.
- You would also be able to take short training courses to keep your knowledge up to date.
- The [Scottish Countryside Rangers' Association \(SCRA\)](#) offers continuing professional development courses in a range of subjects.
- It is also likely that you would do training in first aid and possibly use of equipment, such as chainsaws.

## Getting On

- In larger organisations, and after sufficient experience, you could become a senior countryside ranger, a district ranger or a head ranger.
- You might move on to work in a Government agency such as Scotland's Nature Agency, [NatureScot](https://www.naturescot.gov.uk).
- You may be able to move into other jobs to do with the countryside, conservation and the environment.

## Contacts

### Forestry and Land Scotland

Tel: 0131 370 5541  
 Email: [enquiries@forestryandland.gov.scot](mailto:enquiries@forestryandland.gov.scot)  
 Website: [forestryandland.gov.scot](http://forestryandland.gov.scot)  
 X: @forestryls  
 Facebook: [www.facebook.com/forestryandlandscotland](https://www.facebook.com/forestryandlandscotland)

### Lantra Scotland

Tel: 024 7669 6996  
 Email: [scotland@lantra.co.uk](mailto:scotland@lantra.co.uk)  
 Website: [www.scotland.lantra.co.uk](http://www.scotland.lantra.co.uk)  
 Facebook: [www.facebook.com/lantrascotland](https://www.facebook.com/lantrascotland)

### National Trust for Scotland (NTS)

Tel: 0131 385 7490  
 Website: [www.nts.org.uk](http://www.nts.org.uk)  
 X: @N\_T\_S  
 Facebook: [www.facebook.com/NationalTrustforScotland](https://www.facebook.com/NationalTrustforScotland)

### NatureScot (formerly Scottish Natural Heritage)

Tel: 01463 725 000  
 Email: [enquiries@nature.scot](mailto:enquiries@nature.scot)  
 Website: [www.nature.scot](http://www.nature.scot)  
 X: @nature\_scot  
 Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ScottishNaturalHeritage](https://www.facebook.com/ScottishNaturalHeritage)

### Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)

Tel: 0131 317 4100  
 Website: [www.rspb.org.uk/scotland](http://www.rspb.org.uk/scotland)  
 X: @Natures\_Voice  
 Facebook: [www.facebook.com/RSPBLoveNature](https://www.facebook.com/RSPBLoveNature)

### Scottish Forestry

Tel: 0131 370 5250  
 Email: [Scottish.Forestry@forestry.gov.uk](mailto:Scottish.Forestry@forestry.gov.uk)  
 Website: [forestry.gov.scot](http://forestry.gov.scot)  
 X: @scotforestry

### Scottish Wildlife Trust (SWT)

Tel: 0131 312 7765  
 Website: [www.scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk)  
 X: @ScotWildlife  
 Facebook: [www.facebook.com/scottishwildlifetrust](https://www.facebook.com/scottishwildlifetrust)

## Statistics

Employment Status : Not available this career.

### Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.