

WBP ACADEMIC/VOLUNTEER RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL

*N.B. Please expand as required and provide data within **all** fields. Contact for advice as needed (below).*

Project title:	Study of rabbit populations on Merthyr Mawr Warren National Nature Reserve		
Lead Organisation:	Natural Resources wales	Project leader:	
		Duncan Ludlow	
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Collaborating institutions:	Merthyr Mawr Estate		
Location:	Merthyr Mawr Warren National Nature Reserve		
Start date:	ASAP	Completion required by:	Initial survey to be completed by winter 2016/17 Ongoing commitment in future years to monitor rabbit populations Initial restocking feasibility study to be completed by winter 2016/17 and then monitored in future months / years for success
Project rationale/ What is the specific question being asked?			
Aims:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To determine the status of the rabbit population at Merthyr Mawr Warren NNR (size and distribution) To determine the size and distribution of rabbit population needed to provide a sustainable grazing regime for the maintenance of the dune grasslands in favourable condition. To monitor the long term rabbit population dynamics To determine the feasibility of rabbit restocking at Merthyr Mawr Warren NNR (numbers, suitable locations, and logistics) and to monitor the success of any restocking implemented. 			
Can this project be divided into more than one project? If yes, specify below.			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Rabbit restocking feasibility study Surveillance and long term monitoring of the rabbit population dynamics and their effects upon the dune grasslands 			
Scale of project?	Site-specific? Name site & any designation.	Range of sites? Name sites & any/ designation.	Suggested site/s/locations?
	Merthyr Mawr Warren	Could be extended to other Welsh	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Nature Reserve • Site of Special Scientific Interest • Special Area of Conservation 	sand dune sites eg. Kenfig NNR, Oxwich NNR	
Access to previous data/reports on site?	Yes	RA ¹ attached	Yes
Will logistics be managed by Lead Organization or Researcher?	Researcher		
Opportunity for follow-on student placement ² with Lead Organisation?	NO		
Training element/skills required (specify): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant ID skills (for monitoring effects upon the dune grasslands) • Plant surveying skills (for monitoring effects upon the dune grasslands) 			
Expected deliverables (specify): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report including - Maps of rabbit population locations and densities on the reserve, details of size of rabbit population • Feasibility report detailing recommendations for scale and location of rabbit restocking • Details of population dynamics (long term) 			
Resources required/ resources available (specify): <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport to and from site • Access to GIS mapping software (preferably ArcGIS) • GPS • Digital camera • Spotlight – if required for spotlight survey • Binoculars <p>Available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Reserves Manager will be available to provide guidance and advice if required • Historical reports , maps and surveys of the NNR 			
Any special considerations? (specify): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will require an element of lone working in a remote location with the possibility of some night time work. • Survey work is in an area with challenging terrain and may be physically demanding. 			

¹ RA: Risk Assessment for sites specified, or type of work to be undertaken as available from Lead/collaborating partners

² *Please consider whether you are able to offer a work placement. This can be with lead/collaborating partners, or with a data end user e.g. Local Record Centre, Local Authority*

Return completed form to: MorrisA18@cardiff.ac.uk Tel: 029 2087 9662