



Red-billed Chough Field Programme

The chough project, managed by **Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust**, is part of a wider programme called **Birds On The Edge** which aims to restore Jersey's coastal lands. You can find monthly blogs of the project on the website at the link above.

Interns on the chough programme will have the best of both worlds, working partly at the release site on Jersey amazing north coast, and the rest of the time learning captive husbandry skills of threatened bird species (not just choughs) alongside expert staff at Jersey Zoo. A broad spectrum of skills in captive husbandry and release can be attained on this internship, preparing an early career conservationist for a career in species restoration.



What would you be doing (these tasks are variable according to the season and time spent in the department)

Activity	Understanding/Knowledge gained
Diet preparation	Understanding nutritional requirements of species and how to prepare captive feeds for choughs
Insect care and breeding	How to care for insects used for feeding
Feeding birds and wild bird food preference	How to provide food to captive birds and provision of supplementary feeds to the wild birds as well as recording wild diets
Target training	Techniques used to call birds back from wild to field station
Cleaning aviaries and public areas and release aviary for wild birds	Improve cleaning technique and attention to detail. Understanding importance of good hygiene, attention to detail and techniques for preventing spread of disease and zoonosis.
Maintenance of aviaries	Hands on practical skills to maintain aviaries in a remote site- health and safety techniques
Gardening	Mowing aviaries to increase insect availability for wild birds
Record keeping data entry and reporting	How to collect and record data accurately and be able to interpret this data to further knowledge of



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	reintroduction for this species and communicate information to the field manager effectively
Monitoring health (behaviour, veterinary perspective, collecting faecal samples)	Identifying individuals and checking for signs of ill health. Understanding of basic anatomy and moult patterns. Observation of avian veterinary techniques, e.g. blood sampling, anaesthesia, and gain experience in faecal analysis.
Identifying individuals	Learning how to identify and record wild bird species using their tags
Census techniques	Learn how to carry out native bird censuses (point counts and transects)
Seasonal tasks	
Capture and handling skills	Understanding of capture and restraint techniques in wild and captive birds to replace rings
Nesting behaviour	Understand signs of behaviour for nesting, learn how to find and monitor nests.
Quarantining animals	Care for animals under strict biosecurity measures before release into collection or wild.

Would I make a good Internship student for this programme?

Students should be studying/or have studied a relevant degree or diploma and have an interest in reintroductions or field based programmes and captive animal care and is looking to advance their skills in this area. There will also be lots of opportunity to gain training with the bird team within the Zoo. Good verbal and written communication skills in English is required.

You will require a high level of health and fitness as there will be a lot of walking and carrying involved on variable terrain. Working with animals is hard, dirty and smelly and working as a field scientist can be challenging particularly in coastal areas in inclement weather. Enthusiastic students with have a love of working outdoors and with animals and will find being part of this exiting project extremely rewarding.



Driving license requirements

As a Chough Intern you would be required to travel to and from our release site aviaries to feed and check the birds daily. This journey may often need to be made without the Field Manager. Whilst this journey is possible on a bike for an experienced and competent



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cyclist (45 minutes one way on variable terrain) the journey is best done by car, particularly in inclement weather. Therefore, a basic requirement of this placement is a **full driving license**. The Intern would therefore need to bring their own car (with insurance) to the island for this purpose. It is possible to do this by travelling to the island by boat from Portsmouth and Poole.

Alternatively, an Intern could be provided with the Programme vehicle. To be eligible to drive this vehicle the Intern would need to be over the age of 21 years and have experience driving a car (a minimum of 6 months). Please be aware that any damage to the car where the driver is held accountable would require a premium payment of £400 for those aged 20-25).

Below is a list of the species that we currently work with in the Bird Department. More information on the work we carry out with these species in the wild is on our website www.durrell.org. Perhaps look up a few of them on the IUCN Red Data List and found out how threatened they are <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>

Species latin name	Species Common name	Male:female:unknown	Total
<i>Margaroperdix madagarensis</i>	Madagascar partridge	0.2.0	2
<i>Arborophila gingica</i>	Collared partridge	1.2.0	3
<i>Lophura edwardsi</i>	Vietnam pheasant	5.4.0	9
<i>Polyplectron napoleonis</i>	Palawan peacock-pheasant	4.4.0	8
<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>	White-faced whistling-duck	2.1.0	3
<i>Thalassornis leuconotus</i>	White-backed duck	5.6.0	11
<i>Branta ruficollis</i>	Red-breasted goose	21.19.0	40
<i>Anas bernieri</i>	Madagascar teal	7.5. 0	12
<i>Anas melleri</i>	Meller's duck	6.8.2	16
<i>Aythya nyroca</i>	Ferruginous duck	9.5.3	17
<i>Marmaronetta angustirostris</i>	Marbled teal	3.2.0	5
<i>Nettapus auritus</i>	African pygmy goose	1.0.0	1
<i>Spatula hottentota</i>	Hottentot teal	6.5.0	11
<i>Asarcornis scutulata</i>	White-winged duck	3.1.0	4
<i>Phoenicopterus chilensis</i>	Chilean flamingo	38.41.0	79
<i>Caloenas nicobarica</i>	Nicobar pigeon	8.6.0	14
<i>Chalcophaps indica</i>	Emerald dove	5.12.0	17
<i>Gallicolumba crinigera</i>	Mindanao bleeding-heart	4.3.0	7
<i>Antigone vipio</i>	White-naped crane	2.1.0	3



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Species latin name	Species Common name	Male:female:unknown	Total
<i>Streptopelia risoria</i>	Ringed turtle dove	10.7.0	17
<i>Nesoenas mayeri</i>	Pink pigeon	19.13.2	34
<i>Balearica regulorum</i>	Grey crowned-crane	1.0.0	1
<i>Grus paradiseus</i>	Blue crane	1.1.0	2
<i>Geronticus eremita</i>	Northern bald ibis	17.13.2	32
<i>Lophotibis cristata</i>	Madagascar crested ibis	4.0.0	4
<i>Scopus umbretta</i>	Hamerkop	1.1.0	2
<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	Black-winged stilt	1.1.0	2
<i>Rhabdotorrhinus corrugatus</i>	Wrinkled hornbill	3.4.0	7
<i>Cissa thalassina</i>	Javan Green Magpie	1.2.0	3
<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i> **	Red-billed chough	11.19.13	43
<i>Hypsipetes leucocephalus</i>	Black bulbul	8.3.0	11
<i>Irena puella</i>	Asian fairy-bluebird	2.2.0	4
<i>Garrulax bicolor</i>	Sumatran laughing thrush	2.2.0	4
<i>Leucopsar rothschildi</i>	Bali starling	4.4.0	8
<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>	White-rumped shama	4.4.0	8
<i>Cossypha albicapilla</i>	White-crowned robin chat	2.1.0	3
<i>Dryonastes courtoisi</i>	Blue-crowned laughingthrush	6.8.0	14
<i>Aplonis panayensis</i>	Philippine glossy starling	7.0.0	7
<i>Leiothrix argentea</i>	Silver-eared mesia	1.1.0	2
<i>Leiothrix lutea</i>	Pekin robin	2.2.0	4
<i>Liocichla omeiensis</i>	Omei Shan liocichla	3.3.0	6
<i>Trochalopteron milnei</i>	Red-tailed laughingthrush	5.4.0	9
<i>Niltava sundara</i>	Rufus-bellied niltava	1.0.0	1
<i>Foudia madagascariensis</i>	Madagascar fody	36.19.0	55
<i>Lonchura oryzivora</i>	Java sparrow	10.0.1	11
<i>Icterus oberi</i>	Montserrat oriole	6.3.0	9
<i>Geokichla dohertyi</i>	Chestnut-backed thrush	2.2.0	4