

MELTING POT!

The Global Birdfair is a recipe for opportunities for all – none more so than our team of volunteers who mix in their talents to create this unmissable annual festival!

I started going to Birdfair in the early noughties. We started off going for just one day but soon realised that one day wasn't enough. The next year we went for two days but this still wasn't long enough – only the full three days would suffice!

Quite early on I observed what a lovely team of people the volunteers are and decided that this was a 'band' of people that I wanted to be part of. I therefore enquired about becoming a volunteer and the rest, as they say, is history.

Over my years of volunteering, I have been lucky to have a go at most of the roles but, for the past several years, have become a regular Green room host.

I feel so proud to wear my volunteer t-shirt. Global Birdfair volunteers are an amazing team of people who all have a common passion and work together to ensure that the fair is a fantastic day out for everyone.

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I can honestly say that volunteering at Global Birdfair is an absolute privilege and is a highlight of my year, and I hope I can continue for many years to come.

Tracey Barber



What - to use the word of the day - are you passionate about? For me it has always been birds. As a birding volunteer it is soon obvious that birds and other wildlife are not doing well in the wider world.

Volunteering raises awareness of environmental threats and the danger to life on our wonderful planet.

GBF gives volunteers the opportunity to meet people from all walks of life who are similarly passionate about protecting the extraordinary creatures that inhabit our globe.

“It brings us all together: the importance of conserving our environment ...”

GBF enables its volunteers to meet others from across the world. It brings it all together: the importance of conserving our environment and the understanding that this is not a little local issue but one that affects our whole planet.

Yes, GBF is a serious event but it is also huge fun and enjoyment. It's a celebration of many different people coming together to give their time, skills and energy for the creatures we care about.

Carol Debney

People volunteer for their first Global Birdfair for different reasons. I wanted to see what was involved behind the scenes in creating this magnificent event and, in a small way, help it to be successful. However, once you volunteer, you quickly become part of the Global Birdfair Family that makes you want to return in subsequent years. Not only do other volunteers become friends during the event, so do some of the exhibitors.

Tim, Penny and their Team make you welcome from the moment you arrive. The most noticeable aspect is that they make it clear that the volunteers are a key part to making the Global Birdfair a success. Volunteers are appreciated by speakers, exhibitors and those attending the event. Come and join us – you won't regret it!

Michael Hinks



Why do I volunteer? My journey began post-pandemic. In 2022, I was drawn to Rutland Water for the first time, where I found not just a vast reservoir but a sanctuary abundant with life and promise.

My experiences in a professional sense enabled me to join the site services team and I witnessed firsthand the magic that unfolds throughout the public visitor days when dedicated individuals unite for a common cause.

But why is volunteering important? For me, it transcends mere physical activity and the simple act of lending hands (though my step-count over three days was unbelievable).

“Volunteers infuse the event with energy, expertise, and a contagious enthusiasm...”

What do we gain from volunteering? Beyond the tangible rewards lie intangible treasures – a sense of fulfilment, community, camaraderie, and a deeper understanding of the impacts we can have on nature. Global Birdfair reaps abundant rewards from this symbiotic relationship. Volunteers infuse the event with energy, expertise, and a contagious enthusiasm that transcends boundaries, elevating it to a celebration of not just birds but the human spirit itself.

Glen Pasco



Birdfair is a melting pot. Celebrities, exhibitors, organisers, vendors, visitors and experts come together to learn, buy, sell, eat, drink and most of all, enjoy themselves. All are welcomed and respected as equals, regardless of role.

“... volunteers often amaze us with what they can do and sometimes amaze themselves ...”

As a volunteer you can choose from a wide range of tasks, making your existing expertise available to others or taking on new challenges to develop your skill set. Please join us! New volunteers often amaze us with what they can do and sometimes amaze themselves by doing things they never tried before.

David Scott

As a wheelchair user and owner of an assistance dog, finding volunteering opportunities can be scarce, especially outdoors and linked to nature. Then there's the issue of standing out, which, being autistic, can be catastrophic. But ever since I was a child my Dad took me to Birdfair. It was amazing. I had to get involved.

Not many volunteers will have experienced it as an able-bodied and disabled person, but I have. And my worry of standing out? Not a problem – I've never felt out of place.

“You won't feel out of place even if, like me, you have a disability of any kind.”

I've been a volunteer when the weather has given us bright sun and the good old British rain. Neither have got in my way, even in my wheelchair. So I can say whether you do or don't have a disability, hidden or not, the Global Birdfair is the place to volunteer.

You'll laugh, fit in, be treated extremely well and be warmly welcomed by everyone.

I have found a place to have fun, learn about all things conservation, meet new friends and I know however long or short a shift I do, as a volunteer at the Global Birdfair I will have made a big difference. And that's the main thing, helping improve, protect and save our glorious wildlife.

Henley Hughes

We have known and loved Birdfair for decades, from earliest times when it was barely more than a two-man tent and a table to the huge but also intimate event into which it has evolved.

Over the years we have seen it from many angles, as volunteers, representing a company and on the Osprey Project stand masterminding the hilarious pop-up events where youngsters interviewed conservation celebrities.

“You never know who you will meet next and what you will learn ...”

So when Tim phoned (just 20 minutes after our registration forms were submitted) asking us to consider the role of Volunteer Coordinators for the new GBF, it really did not take too much thought.

GBF works on so many levels for so many people. The networking; the chance conversation that led to funding for an entire children's osprey-based summer school; lectures that have so improved our knowledge; the meeting that led to us travelling to Gambia and becoming involved with the education of young conservationists.

On another level it is the people, new friends, interesting 'characters', diversity and attempting multilingual conversations. You just never know from one hour to the next who you will meet, what you will learn and become involved with. Who would not want to be involved in such an event?

Jackie and Peter Murray

Photos by Pete Murray