



CASE STUDY

As part of the commitment of Making the Most of Masters (www.mastersprojects.ac.uk) at the University of Aberdeen bringing external organisations in contact with academia, we organised a series of speakers for the MSc Ecology & Environmental Sustainability programme, including Stephen Reeves from the National Trust for Scotland. Stephen is based at Crathes Castle, and kindly gave up his time to give a talk about the work rangers undertake on a day to day basis, as well as three case studies: **(1)** Bats and the extensive conservation work and surveys that are undertaken throughout the year, **(2)** Castle Fraser project where a new pond has been created to ensure a safe future for the numerous Dragonfly and Damselfly species, and **(3)** the Red Squirrel conservation programme at Crathes and Drum including the issue of Grey Squirrel control.

PROJECT SUPERVISOR



Toni Watt, The National Trust for Scotland Project supervisor

“The student was excellent ...a good communicator, keen and got on with the project. She was and is also very good at keeping us informed of progress and results. A pleasure to work with. She produced a report for us to read and also thoughts for the future of the project which will help as we take the overall project further. This has helped us with work we do not have time / resources for ourselves and helping us to plan/adapt the project for the next few years”.

DAMSELFLY HABITAT AND CHANGES TO THEIR HABITAT WITH WOODLAND MANAGEMENT

A primary aim was to allow students to develop a relationship with relevant organisations and to allow a student led research project to develop. This is a great way to develop a student’s skills and employability, and one project developed in this way was The National Trust for Scotland’s project titled ‘damselfly habitat and changes to their habitat with woodland management’, which was suggested and coordinated by Toni Watt of the National Trust for Scotland .

STUDENT FEEDBACK

Jennifer Aungier, MSc Ecology & Environmental Sustainability on Stephen Reeves talk:

“The external speaker session was really one of the most useful/interesting parts of the course, and I appreciate your efforts in organising them”.

Nicole Pearson, MSc Ecology & Environmental Sustainability on Making the Most of Masters project:

“I realised I could gain more experience by working with an outside employer. I was allowed free reign to design the project myself but I had to keep in mind that it [also] had to be to the benefit the NTS”.

