

Wildlife Estates Scotland

Dee Ward of Rottal Estates, SLE Vice Chairman
Operations, explains how WES is having
a positive impact on our wildlife and habitats



WE ACT FOR BIODIVERSITY



The guardians of wildlife and habitat



To apply for accreditation, please contact headquarters on 0131 653 5400

Testimonial from WES Level 2 Accredited Estate

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The award of WES accreditation is significant testament to the hard work of all the staff across the estate. We encourage best practice in all the different aspects of estate management, but the accreditation scheme encourages us to not only set higher goals but also ensure we record and can amply demonstrate the excellent work that is already being undertaken. The conservation and habitat projects we've been working on have been hugely beneficial to both the estate and to local wildlife and we're delighted a scheme such as WES can help us document what we have been doing”

Roddy Jackson, Factor, Roxburghe Estates

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Having joined the Board of SL&E in May this year, one of my first meetings involved a discussion regarding the future direction of WES (Wildlife Estates Scotland).

I had seen WES from the outside as an estate owner in the Angus Glens. We had become Level 2 Accredited in 2015 and admired the principles of what the scheme was trying to achieve and was immediately keen to be involved in its future direction and growth.

Landowners are not always viewed favourably by the Scottish Government or, for that matter, the general public, but if you visit a sustainably managed, forward-

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thinking, proactive estate, most people would be surprised by the sheer variety of wildlife present, in particular birdlife, from waders, and song birds, to raptors and black grouse.

The variety and population counts of species arise predominantly as a result of the fact they are not managed exclusively for profit, and normally there is a sporting element, which means vermin that prey on all ground nesting birds, regardless of species, are controlled, trees and hedgerows are planted, wetland is maintained and moorland is managed.

WES grew from European routes, initially being part of Wildlife Estates Europe, which was set up and managed by ELO (European Landowners Organisation) and to this day, we work closely with our European colleagues. I have just become a member of their

Steering Committee and we try to collaborate Europe-wide to promote best practice.

WES should not, however, be a cosy arrangement between large landed estates. It is important that we actually achieve measurable results and encourage landowners (or managers), large or small, to all do their bit for wildlife and habitat management.

At WES we currently have more than 1.25 million acres of land accredited at Level 2 and this is the second-largest area of accredited land in the whole of Europe, behind Spain (refer to table right). However, we want to double this to 2.5m acres by 2023 (i.e. in the next five years).

We also want to help owners and land managers, not yet partaking in the scheme, by holding their hand through the process and giving them a level of advice and support that

Top 10 countries with WE-labelled land

COUNTRY	LAND (ha)
Spain	640,000
Scotland	508,000
Sweden	108,000
Austria	53,000
France	53,000
Portugal	45,000
Romania	39,000
Finland	33,000
England	10,000 – still in pilot stages
Denmark	8,000

enables them to achieve Level 2 accreditation.

We hope to run seminars and estate visits and encourage existing Level 2 members to share their knowledge and best practice to help the quality of wildlife management in Scotland improve.

I am delighted to announce the appointment of a new WES Project Officer, Caroline Pringle, who joined at the end of November. She will spend a good deal of her time liaising with current and potential

Level 2 members and will help to develop and update the WES accreditation process.

Caroline comes to us from ITP Energised, where she has worked as an Environmental Consultant for the last five years, and she had significant experience working with land owners and land managers.

In addition, we are in the process of assembling an Advisory Board and Technical Committee with a broad spectrum of representation from various stakeholders

including, SNH, CNPA, RSPB, GWCT, and the Scottish Government, as well as landowners and land managers. The aim is to bring a strong level of collaboration within Scotland and also Europe wide to create a credible and effective process for managing wildlife.

Anyone wishing to hear more information about WES, or if you are interested in becoming WES accredited, please contact SLE Head Office on 0131 653 5400.



Testimonial from WES Level 2 Accredited Estate:

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Glenbervie Estate is unique in many ways, given its importance in our wider manufacturing business, but that has not diminished our commitment to following the best principles of land management. The award of WES accreditation is significant testament to those who have balanced our conservation goals with the demands of a demanding farming and forestry enterprise. We encourage best practice in all the different aspects of estate management but the accreditation scheme encourages us to not only set higher goals, but also ensure we record and can amply demonstrate the excellent work that is already being undertaken.”

Alastair Macphie, Glenbervie Estate

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