

# Young Birders Fair Isle Experience

Supported by FIBO and WMBC



## Overview

This joint fund is an exciting new scheme to facilitate visits to Fair Isle Bird Observatory (FIBO) by young birders and aspiring naturalists from the West Midland Bird Club (WMBC) region at the start of their careers, offering experience in a range of activities to develop skillsets and to support the ongoing operations of the Observatory.



## Duration and timing

Two positions are available, with successful candidates staying at the Observatory for two weeks from **6th to 20th August 2026**, covering a varied period in the work carried out by FIBO.

## Eligibility

Applications will be open to those **aged 18 to 27** and either **living or studying in full-time education in the four counties covered by West Midland Bird Club** (Staffordshire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire and West Midlands) and priority will be given to those seeking a career in a nature-based field.

## What we offer

A rare chance to visit one of the UK's premier bird observatories and get involved with all aspects of Observatory life at a heavily subsidised rate.

Joining FIBO staff during this period offers the chance to get involved with late-season seabird monitoring of Great and Arctic Skuas, Storm Petrel, Fulmar and Puffin, to accompany staff on census routes as autumn migration begins, and to join ringing activities carried out by the team. Public engagement activities can include working with the Ranger to help deliver guided walks, ringing demonstrations and other public-facing work, as well as mixing and working with engaging and adventurous people with a range of professional backgrounds and becoming part of the rich and varied experience that working at a Bird Observatory comprises.

## Costs and logistics

Successful applicants will be asked to **contribute £100 towards the cost of their visit**, with the remainder of travel to and from the isle, and accommodation and food costs at the Observatory covered by WMBC and FIBO. Travel will be arranged in conjunction with FIBO staff, with volunteers expected to travel via public transport to Aberdeen, take the Northlink ferry overnight to Lerwick with pod accommodation, followed by the short flight from nearby Tingwall Airport to Fair Isle. Full board with an en-suite room will be provided at the Obs for the two-week period.

## How to apply

Candidates should supply a short CV and one-page covering letter explaining what skills and experience they hope to gain and how the scheme will support their career ambitions. Shortlisted candidates will also be asked for an appropriate reference (ideally from a WMBC or Friends of Fair Isle member) to support their application.

**Applications should be sent to [fairisle@westmidlandbirdclub.org.uk](mailto:fairisle@westmidlandbirdclub.org.uk) by 7th April 2026.**