



**Research Placement Opportunity  
2025-2026**

**Organisation's Contact Details:**

Dartmoor Zoological Society  
Sparkwell, Plymouth, PL7 5DG  
01752 837645  
[www.dartmoorzoo.org.uk](http://www.dartmoorzoo.org.uk)

**Name and Job Title of Main Contact:**

Louise Cox – Research and Welfare Officer

**Organisation's main activity:**

Hidden on the borders of the Dartmoor National Park, Dartmoor Zoo boasts a wonderful 33 acres of woodland, celebrating a wide range of exotic and native animals, including the biggest variety of big cats in the Southwest of England. Dartmoor Zoological Society is a charity which aims to promote the conservation, care and breeding of wildlife and endangered species. We encourage and develop public interest and awareness of the importance of ensuring the survival of species and diversity of life.

We achieve this through operating the zoo in a unique way. Not only do we educate public visitors through talks and educational literature, but we have an extensive education programme for schools, colleges and placements for children ranging from pre-school age through to university undergraduates. We are continuously undertaking research onsite to improve our animal welfare, whilst also sharing this knowledge with other animal charities and organisations around the country. We promote the charity through our social media channels, of which we have over 100,000 followers. We also host a range of events from fundraising days to corporate away days and weddings.

**Brief Job Description – duties and responsibilities:**

Dartmoor Zoological Society is seeking placement students for the role of 'voluntary research assistant' for the 2025-26 academic year. Candidates must be undertaking an animal or zoo-related degree, environmental science or psychology degree, be highly motivated and forward thinking.

In return you will gain experience within a BIAZA and WAZA accredited zoo research department, receiving regular tutorials from professional zoo staff.

The main responsibilities for this role include:

- Assisting the research department and representing the zoo in a positive, forward-thinking manner that will enable the department to be highly productive.
- To conduct, analyse and write up at least one research project whilst at the zoo with the guidance of the Research and Welfare Officer.
- To be trained to collect data for any ongoing research projects currently being carried out by the research department.
- To present your research to staff at Dartmoor Zoo.
- You may have the opportunity to represent Dartmoor Zoo at relevant zoo conferences and present your research findings.

Current and previous research topics include assessing the impact of visitor talks on animal behaviour, determining whether an overnight feeder is beneficial for cloud rats, evaluating auditory enrichment for otters and birds, evaluating enrichment for tapir and assessing an enclosure move on the behaviour of an iguana.

**Salary / Remuneration – Living / Travel allowance:**

Reimbursement for work expenses only. Volunteers are provided polo tops and fleeces and a discount on food in the zoo restaurant.

**How many placement slots are available:** 2 or 3

**Length of placements available:** 9-10 months, depending on course requirements.

**Start Date:** September 2025

**Application Procedure:**

Please submit a CV and covering letter to [research@dartmoorzoo.co.uk](mailto:research@dartmoorzoo.co.uk)

**Closing Date for applications:**

9<sup>th</sup> December 2024

**Proposed Interview Date**

Early January 2025.