

Bio

I am delighted to have taken up the new post of Conservation Manager at Corroul. It is a unique opportunity to combine my passion for upland ecology, habitat restoration and applied science. I am an experienced field ecologist and botanist, having worked for the National Trust for Scotland at Ben Lawers NNR from 2013-2020. Here I carried out internationally important long-term population monitoring of some of Britain's rarest arctic-alpine plants such as snow pearlwort (*Sagina nivalis*) and drooping saxifrage (*Saxifraga cernua*). I also undertook scientific research to study the effects of pioneering restoration work on rare or threatened upland habitats including blanket bog, eutrophic tall herbs and mountain woodland. I now have a number of scientific publications in leading academic journals in restoration ecology and applied vegetation science.

Going forward, I am very enthusiastic to be part of Corroul's long-term vision for landscape-scale ecological restoration through encouraging natural processes to return and flourish. The estate is demonstrating a positive, regenerative approach anticipated to deliver a productive, structurally complex and biodiverse environment capable of supporting a range of integrated land-uses.

I am particularly interested in progressing the long-term monitoring plan at Corroul, which will be key to informing land management decisions. We have a diverse range of nationally rare and scarce species on the Estate including small cow-wheat (*Melampyrum sylvaticum*), whortle-leaved willow (*Salix myrsinites*), Rannoch rush (*Scheuchzeria palustris*), dotterel (*Charadrius morinellus*), azure hawkmer (*Aeshna caerulea*) and mountain ringlet (*Erebia epiphron*). It will be fascinating to visit populations and gain further understanding of their distribution, ecology and any threats that we need to consider mitigating. I am also very excited by the huge potential for scientific research at Corroul that will directly inform conservation management, and am keen to build research collaborations across a range of disciplines. For example, I hope to develop projects on the long-term outcomes of large herbivore reduction and habitat restoration work on natural regeneration, peatland functioning, nutrient cycling and key indicator species (such as breeding birds, tall herbs and upland trees). It is also important that we monitor the effects climate change on our assemblage of habitats and species, particularly those with a montane element.

Finally, as someone who enjoys hillwalking and spending time in the Scottish outdoors (whatever the weather!), I am definitely looking forward to embracing the remoteness of Corroul!

I am currently also researching part-time my PhD "Improving outcomes in montane woodland restoration" at the University of Stirling. This project aims to aid the development of conservation management techniques to restore healthy and sustainable upland tree populations in Britain. It investigates the influence of abiotic and biotic environmental variables, habitat type and mycorrhizal associations on the survival, growth rates and natural regeneration of two major component species of montane woodland and scrub in

CORROUR

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Scotland; downy willow (*Salix lapponum*) and dwarf birch (*Betula nana*). Corrour is a key fieldwork site for this research, which will form part of ongoing work to facilitate the long-term resilience and expansion of the treeline ecotone.

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