

Marches Mosses BogLIFE Project (LIFE15 NAT/UK/000786)

About Shropshire Wildlife Trust

Shropshire Wildlife Trust is a charity dedicated to the conservation of Shropshire's native species & habitats, providing environmental awareness & involvement and undertaking environmental research.

The Trust owns/manages 40 nature reserves throughout Shropshire. In addition, The Trust manages a visitor centre which is also our Shrewsbury headquarters.

There are around 45 full and part-time staff and the Trust relies on around 500 active volunteers who are involved in every aspect of running the organisation. There is a growing membership (currently around 11,500) who support the Trust's work through their membership fees and donations.

About the project

Restoring the Marches Mosses BogLIFE project (LIFE15 NAT/UK/000786) is a five year project running from 1 October 2016 to 31 December 2022. This post will be part of a team aiming to restore Britain's 3rd largest lowland raised bog within the Fenn's, Whixall & Bettisfield Mosses and Wem Moss NNRs (and SAC) near Whitchurch, Shropshire and Wrexham in Wales. The LIFE project is a partnership between Shropshire Wildlife Trust, Natural England and Natural Resources Wales. The multi-million-pound project is supported by an EU LIFE grant and The National Lottery Heritage Fund (Restoring the Marches Mosses HG-14-03992 application).

Drained in the past to enable peat cutting, agricultural improvement and afforestation, the centre of the Mosses was rescued from near-destruction in 1990 by the Nature Conservancy Council. Although big strides have been made to repair the damage, (over the central part of the NNR bog plants and animals have returned and peat is forming again), the site continues to face a range of issues. The significant multi-million-pound investment of EU Life funding will seek to tackle these and enable the Mosses to approach favourable condition.

The objective of the Project is to restore 665ha of habitat to achieve a more sustainable, resilient and better functioning active raised bog (including the lagg zone). It will implement a large part of the LIFE IPENS Site Improvement Plan for the SAC and NNR plan.

Project actions include:

- Acquire a sizeable area of degraded raised bog & restore (incl. a scrapyard) including woodland and forest removal
- Improve the hydrological functioning – involving scrub control, water control, contour bunding, damming, installing pipes & diversion of polluted water
- Ameliorate contaminated land and pilot a Site Nitrogen Action Plan to reduce the impact of air pollution in and around the site
- Develop intellectual and physical access to the Mosses
- Disseminate bog management best practice in the UK and EU.

Integral to the project is monitoring the effects and impact of the project actions (in particular the restoration work and associated physical parameters). The results of this and the techniques used to restore the sites will be disseminated to an academic and practical bog management audience.

The project will work closely with local community stakeholders and the general public. It aims to include them in the future management of these rare but amazing habitats through the provision of information; creation and improvement of access (including developing bird watching facilities, a viewing platform and trails) and volunteering opportunities.

About the job and person

We expect this post to commence in December 2021 for nine months.

This is a traineeship that would suit:

- Someone on a sandwich period of a higher education qualification
- A newly qualified graduate with an environmental qualification
- Someone seeking a career change into nature conservation

You will be expected to be involved in all aspects of the project, working alongside experienced staff to develop a range of practical skills. This will include habitat restoration, managing volunteers and contractors, surveys and data recording, engaging with the public and special interest audiences, communicating the successes of the project through a variety of media.

A significant proportion of your time will be spent outside in all weathers and the work can be physically demanding, so fitness is vital. You will also come into regular contact with visitors and locals, so a pleasant and courteous manner is essential.

We expect you to demonstrate a commitment to an environmental career through past work, volunteering or hobbies. Specialist interests (e.g. knowledge of an aspect of natural history) will be welcomed and used in the project where possible.

You will receive training in key aspects of countryside management, dependent on your needs and activities within the project.

About the team

You will be a member of the Marches Mosses team and will receive day to day line management from the Reserve Manager (based at Manor House). This team also comprises technical officers managing habitat restoration, a monitoring officer, estate workers, community engagement officer and finance / admin support.

Shropshire Wildlife Trust is a project partner and their staff support the project, helping with communications & marketing, education, visitor services and remediation of the scrapyard. Your link to the Trust will be via People and Wildlife Manager, Helen Trotman.

The project base

You will be based in the Natural England offices at Manor House, Whixall, SY13 2PD. The project team and National Nature Reserve management team works from here. It is located on the edge of Whixall Moss and has a range of outdoor and indoor facilities. The base is not accessible by public transport.

Shropshire Wildlife Trust is based on Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury. You will be expected to attend occasional staff meetings and similar events to ensure your work is well integrated with that of the Trust and activity will be sustained beyond the life of the project.

Covid-19

Shropshire Wildlife Trust and Natural England are working in accordance to Government & organisational guidelines.

For an informal discussion please call Pete Bowyer Senior Reserve Manager - Fenn's, Whixall & Bettisfield Mosses NNR : Mob. 07974 784795

To apply for this post, complete the application form and return with a covering letter to (email preferred):

hr@shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk

Heather Bennett

Shropshire Wildlife Trust

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