



EcoTrain 3- Hungary

The project will send two cohorts of three volunteers out to the Barn Owl Foundation (BOF), Hungary, for 9-week placements at intervals during 2010.

Cohort 1: Mon 17 May to Mon 19 July 2010 (3 places)

Cohort 2: Mon 20 Sept to Mon 22 Nov 2010 (3 places)

Host Organisation; The Barn Owl Foundation (BOF), Hungary is a small non-governmental organisation dedicated to the sensitive management of the countryside and long-term survival of barn owls and other raptors in Hungary and all over Europe. The foundation works closely with other conservation organisations in the local area including National Parks and nature reserves.

www.gyongybagoly.hu

Travel; Ambios is committed to reducing the carbon footprint of all operations and we are therefore avoiding travel by plane wherever possible. The BOF centre is located in a beautiful rural area approx 3 hours south west of Budapest. Travel to placement will be arranged by train and you will take a taxi from the local station to your accommodation.

Accommodation and Food; Accommodation is provided in a cottage close to the BOF main site at Orosztony, a small rural village in South West Hungary near 'Little Balaton' lake. Volunteers share tasks such as cooking, cleaning etc. A small weekly allowance will be paid to volunteers as well as a budget for food contributed to a central food 'kitty' on the placements behalf. Use of a BOF vehicle and daily buses enable access to local towns and shopping. There is a small shop in the village which stocks basic food supplies.

Programme for the placement period

Volunteers will receive an introduction to the working practices of the Barn Owl Foundation (BOF) and become familiarised with local culture, geography, fauna and flora. During this time trainees will be given the opportunity to practice field techniques relevant to their placement and a basic introduction to the Hungarian language will be given. Volunteers will be expected to settle into a partly autonomous (but overseen) role for the duration of the placement. Volunteers will be expected to work the same core working hours as BOF staff (8.30 am to 4 pm each day), plus out of hours work as fieldwork requires. Cohort 1 will be taking part in a radio tracking study of local barn owls and will be working at night on a regular basis, tracking and recording locations of the owls. Weekends will normally be for leisure and cultural activities that will be the responsibility of the volunteer although some visits and excursions may be provided by the host. Some weekends may require a commitment to working hours and trainees are expected to join in fieldwork as and when required. The overall programme of fieldwork and other tasks for the training period will remain flexible because local weather conditions and the need to respond to events may mean that the precise timetable needs to be adjusted.

Tasks for volunteers

BOF staff will give full training so that the trainees can undertake tasks as part of the conservation team. During your placement you will carry out some or all of the following tasks: Carrying out radio tracking surveys of barn owls. Maintaining aviaries for rescued sick and injured barn owls. Hands on barn owl nest site conservation. Installation of nest boxes for a range of bird species in the local area (including in local national parks). Barn owl pellet analysis. Contributing to educational talks on owl conservation (in English). Establishing a programme of local dormouse population monitoring. Monitoring of targeted invertebrate populations and bat surveys in local national parks. Wetland survey and habitat management.

Mist netting and ringing of birds. Botanical surveys and practical habitat management within the local area.

Knowledge and skills to be acquired

Volunteers will gain knowledge of Hungarian culture and receive support in developing language skills as well as ecological and practical conservation techniques. They will experience and practice a range of field and practical conservation skills. Employability skills acquired will include time and financial management as well as communication skills, teamwork and the ability to be adaptable in response to changing working circumstances.

Application for a placement

Please read the 'application information' pdf and complete the application form and return to Ambios by e-mail and also by post. An interest in wildlife conservation, raptors, owls, radio tracking studies or just a desire and commitment to find out more and contribute to the great work BOF carry out in Hungary. A full driving licence and a willingness to carry out some driving in-country would be advantageous.