



Nature | Conservation | Training

Nature Conservation Experience; 12 week placement

Introduction: The Ambios 12 week nature conservation experience provides you with the foundation skills required for a career in nature conservation along with a comprehensive insight into working in the sector. You will gain practical skills in wildlife survey and land management techniques. This 12 week placement provides you with training based at Lower Sharpham Farm on the stunning Sharpham Estate, as well as across the South Devon landscape, understanding better the unique habitats and conservation pressures facing our native flora and fauna. Alongside the practical work, trainees also focus on one of our applied research projects, which may include looking at the control of the reservoir of bovine tuberculosis in the wild Badger (*Meles meles*) population, spatial and temporal use of the farm by bat populations, habitat creation, management planning and using trail cameras for public engagement.



Live and work: whilst with Ambios you will live with a team of motivated fellow trainees, long term volunteers and staff all with a keen interest in nature and wildlife, with personal experiences and skills to share. You will be based at our organic farm which offers you a unique and inspirational learning environment from which to begin your career in the sector. You will have your own space in our bunkhouse, as well as sharing communal living and training with students from UK and abroad. You will eat food from the farm that you will help grow whilst with us, creating an absorbing placement where your time will be full.

Trainee feedback: *'These 12 weeks have been wonderful; I gained a lifelong experience and lasting knowledge about the scientific world and the personal side of life too'.*

Outcomes: Whether you're looking for a learning experience to broaden your horizons or focused on the career path you want and in need of experience to get you there this training is for you. The aim of this training placement is to help you gain the skills needed for a career in the nature conservation sector. Employers have identified the skills gap in students coming out of university. They lack necessary species identification and survey skills as well as vital employability skills such as team work, project planning and negotiation skills. This training aims to tackle this



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issue by providing varied practical tasks as recognition via a Europass Supplement. This is a form of certificate that mirrors a UK vocational qualification and describes practical work undertaken and learning achieved.

Trainee feedback: *'I learnt a lot about UK practical conservation techniques, about different and interesting species, and I also grew as a person.'*

Community engagement: There is a strong community element to our live-in placements. Alongside fellow trainees you will be joining a local team of conservation volunteers tackling practical tasks on the farm, on the Sharpham Estate and in the wider community. You will be working alongside Robert Owen Communities (ROC) who support people with learning difficulties, gaining important skills in team work, community engagement and social interactions. We recognise that education and inspiration are crucial elements of work in the nature conservation sector, and provide training and experience of working with the community throughout the placement. This work will manifest in a number of ways; public engagement events at our farm; visiting university group stays in our communal yurt; educational visits and classes with local schools and groups.

Who is this training for? We operate an open recruitment and welcome applications from anyone. Our experiences suggest that graduates looking for crucial experience, career changers who are looking for a way into working in the nature conservation sector or those who are inspired by the natural world and want to broaden their horizons benefit from these placements; whether you are aiming to be the next Director of the country Wildlife Trust or the Environment Minister; a teacher, support worker, countryside ranger or researcher; tree surgeon, biologist, consultant or farmer this experience will set you on your way.

Trainee feedback: *'The language courses were FANTASTIC ... Things I've learnt here and the people I've met have really changed the way I see things.'*

How does it work? If your application is successful you will start your placement alongside other trainees from UK and Europe. Your initial days will involve site familiarisation and getting to know your fellow trainees. You will be fully inducted into the role and we will share our expectations of you and visa versa, as well as running through the important health and safety aspects of your placement. You will meet the Ambios team as well as staff from ROC and the people they support so that you are clear about the set up and your role. Food will always be available, sourced either from the farm or locally/from sustainable sources with day to day tasks shared amongst all trainees (cooking, washing up, drying up, cleaning, fire wood preparation etc.)

Places available: there are 8 places available per cohort

Who is delivering the training? Ambios are a team of professional scientists and nature conservation educators with a track record dating back to the 1980s. The team working at Lower Sharpham Farm has a range of skills that will support your placement, train you and share your learning experience.

How to apply and dates: Complete our on-line application form by the closing date as stated on our website. Course start dates in March, June and September 2020.



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Location: Lower Sharpham Farm, Ashprington, Totnes. TQ9 7DX. Totnes is an alternative bohemian market town, with a strong independent feel and a recognised cafe culture. The Transition Town movement spawned from Totnes, and you will find inspirational courses and programmes that you can be part of whilst staying with us. Totnes is a 10 minute bike ride from the farm along a picturesque cycle track.

Trainee feedback: *'I enjoyed the hedge laying and working with tools... It was the best 3 months of my life.'*

Accommodation: Our 'nature lodge' has 8 single bedrooms with 2 toilet/shower rooms and a kitchen with a large comfortable lounge and woodstove. The accommodation is part of our working farm, managed for biodiversity and learning. It is comfortable and sits amongst the trees, hedgerows and spectacular views to the River Dart and is surrounded by idyllic countryside. This is a secure and tranquil place for relaxing between learning sessions. All meals are provided from local produce (direct from our farm where possible) and special dietary requirements can be accommodated. Free Wi-Fi is available within the training spaces.



Travel & logistics: We can collect you from Totnes Railway Station (4 miles from the farm) on your day of arrival. Alternatively you can make your own way from the station or direct by car to TQ9 7DX. The course content and example 12-week placement can be found on the Ambios website.

Price: £1100 per month (£3300 total)

Trainee feedback: *'I spent wonderful time as a participant, learnt a lot and these experiences will help me in my future work'*

Footnote: Ambios Ltd is a not-for-profit organisation providing opportunities for learning involving wildlife, technology and skills. Any surplus generated by our activities subsidises training programmes such as the LEMUR project (projectlemur.org) which is training the next generation of wildlife professionals.

Trainee Feedback: *'THANK YOU for the opportunity; great company, beautiful place and atmosphere.'*