



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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**Vital traditional heritage skills receive £331,600 boost**

Vital traditional heritage skills, such as species identification, are disappearing fast because they are not being passed down through the generations. As climate change brings the potential loss of key species and habitats in the future, it is essential to invest in ensuring heritage skills survive today! In response to this crisis, the **Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)** has today announced that it has awarded the **Herefordshire Nature Trust** and its partners, Ambios Ltd in Devon and the Sheffield Wildlife Trust, a further sum of £331,600 to continue running its heritage training project called LEMUR. This is in addition to the original grant of £704,000 it received in 2006. Starting in April 2010, 18 apprentices will learn vital heritage skills whilst working alongside highly experienced wildlife experts from local conservation organisations including: Herefordshire Nature Trust, Worcestershire Wildlife Consultancy, the Wye Valley AONB and Warwickshire County Council.

LEMUR (Learning Environments in Marine, Urban and Rural Areas) is a nationally run heritage training programme that offers on-the-job work placements to passionate and enthusiastic individuals who are intent on making a career in nature conservation.

Joe Taylor, Chair of Lantra Environmental Industry Group explained: "Nature conservation is losing its skill base, especially those fundamental hands-on field skills such as species identification. The ability to make correct species identifications so that habitats can be monitored and managed favourably is vital, if we are to protect our ever more threatened wildlife today and into the future. Without such skills and knowledge we run the risk of not being able to interpret the natural environment and therefore to manage, learn and appreciate it".

"Thanks to the Heritage Lottery Fund this project can continue to invest in the next generation of wildlife professionals and help increase the numbers of skilled workers that are in high demand within the heritage sector" added Phil Burton, Learning Manager of the Herefordshire Nature Trust. "It will help tackle the skill shortages needed to conserve England's rural, urban and coastal natural heritage. Following in the footsteps of the projects previous 36 apprentices, the next 18 apprentices will have a massive advantage in securing that crucial first step on the ladder to a career in the highly competitive nature conservation industry".

**ENDS**

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## Notes to the Editors

1. The trainees gain key skills in species identification, habitat survey techniques, habitat management and heritage interpretation along with more generic work skills such as project management and computer skills. The placements in Devon have a marine theme linked to coastal habitats. Herefordshire have a rural theme linked to woodlands, wildflower meadows, rivers, orchards and agriculture. Sheffield placements will have an urban theme linked to habitats within urban wildlife corridors.
2. Since the start of the LEMUR Project which was launched in 2006, 36 trainees have passed through the programme of which 95% have successfully gained employment within the conservation sector. To date, through a variety of other training projects, the partnership have trained in excess of 300 trainees.
3. Herefordshire Nature Trust, Ambios Ltd and Sheffield Wildlife Trust have been delivering and supporting work-based training since 1999 and have been highly successful in getting trainees into paid conservation work.
4. LANTRA is the Sector Skills Council for environmental and land-based industries and works with 17 industries across the whole of the United Kingdom. As a Sector Skills Council, Lantra is passionate about helping people working in the sector to have the right skills and knowledge to carry out their
5. Website: [www.projectlemur.org](http://www.projectlemur.org).
6. LEMUR Film can be viewed at [http://www.projectlemur.org/lemur\\_film.html](http://www.projectlemur.org/lemur_film.html)
7. Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment, skills and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported more than 28,800 projects, allocating over £4.3billion across the UK. Website: [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk). For bursaries: [www.hlf.org.uk/hlfbursaries](http://www.hlf.org.uk/hlfbursaries)
  - Images are available on request.

### ***For further information***

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