



## Seaweed Apprentice

- Post:** BTCV Natural Talent Seaweed Apprentice
- Salary:** £12,568 (plus travel, training and equipment budgets)
- Location:** Aberdeen, Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- Duration:** 15 months
- Start date:** April 2010
- Closing date for applications:** 1<sup>st</sup> March 2010

Thank you for your interest in the seaweeds apprenticeship. Please read this document carefully and complete an application form showing how you meet the criteria outlined in the person specification. **You must include a 2 page CV to support your application.**

### Project Background

SEPA currently carries out monitoring of intertidal macroalgae (seaweeds) across Scotland for the Water Framework Directive (WFD). This comprises both rocky shore macroalgae and those growing on mudflats as a symptom of eutrophication. Macroalgae are considered to be important indicators of water quality and may be good indicators of climate change; there are also a number of invasive non-native species in Scotland. These different types of macroalgal monitoring represent different aspects of algal ecology. Additionally we are beginning a programme of seagrass monitoring, also for the WFD, which has some overlap with macroalgal blooms monitoring. Field work is carried out between late May and the end of September.

The apprentice will learn about the ecology and distribution of marine macroalgae (seaweeds) in Scotland. They will learn to identify a wide range of seaweeds, and will take part in rocky shore surveys using the method developed for the Water Framework Directive. They will also participate in surveys assessing macroalgal blooms, with potentially some seagrass monitoring. In 2010 rocky shore work will be concentrated in the south-west area of Scotland with macroalgal blooming work concentrated on the east coast; seagrass monitoring will take place across the south-west and east coast. There will therefore be field work away from home for up to five days at a time on a number of occasions. The apprentice will work as part of a SEPA team with training from SEPA specialist staff. The apprentice will be based in SEPA's Aberdeen office.

SEPA is seeking to broaden understanding of, and public participation in, science and the environment. The apprentice will work with SEPA and partner organisations on developing “citizen science” with an emphasis on rocky shore seaweed surveys. It is intended to collaborate as much as possible with partner organisations on this aspect.

The apprentice will gain valuable identification and field work skills, and also a good understanding of algal ecology and conservation aims. They will be expected to write a report on the public participation in algal recording aspect of the post.

## **Training**

The apprentice will acquire the following skills:

- The identification of marine and estuarine macroalgae
- The identification of seagrasses
- Rocky shore algal monitoring techniques
- Soft shore algal and seagrass monitoring techniques
- Risk assessment procedures
- Quality control procedures
- Specimen preservation techniques and preparation of voucher specimens
- Survey planning and logistics
- Team working
- Data handling
- Report writing
- Working with partner organisations and the public to expand public participation in science and algal recording

## **Timetable**

Host placement: Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Aberdeen Office

Principal Mentors: Dr. Clare Scanlan with Ms. Sarah Holt

Additional mentor: Mr. Lex Pearce, SEPA Edinburgh

Dates from/to: April 2010 to July 2011

The apprentice would initially be introduced to the taxonomy and ecology of the algae and the methods for surveying them, along with preliminary training. He/she will also begin liaising with partner organisations and developing ideas for public participation in science (focussing on macroalgae). Field work proper commences in June and the apprentice would accompany SEPA staff on field work. Planned sites include Loch Sween, the Solway Firth, Loch Fyne, the Inner Firth of Clyde, Montrose Basin, the Eden estuary and the Ythan estuary; the apprentice is expected to be involved in all or most of these surveys. Surveys are concluded by the end of September at the latest. From this point onwards the apprentice will be expected to review data collected, and to spend further time on the public participation aspects of the work. Depending on timings, the apprentice may be involved in the following season’s field work.

## Person specification

Essential	Desirable
<p><b>Qualifications:</b></p> <p>No formal qualifications are required, although applicants will have to demonstrate some knowledge of the natural environment and their ability to carry out this apprenticeship to a high standard</p>	
<p><b>Experience:</b></p> <p>Some knowledge and understanding of the marine environment, including legislation</p> <p>Experience in the use of identification keys</p> <p>Experience of fieldwork</p>	<p>Some knowledge and experience of the intertidal habitat in particular</p> <p>Experience in microscopy</p> <p>Experience of working with volunteers or the public</p>
<p><b>Skills:</b></p> <p>A good working knowledge of basic IT software packages, e.g. Excel</p> <p>The ability to organise and analyse data</p> <p>Excellent inter-personal and communication skills</p> <p>Be able to use identification keys</p> <p>Be willing and able to work on rocky and muddy shores</p> <p>Be prepared to work away from home for several days at a time</p> <p>Be prepared to work flexible hours as required</p>	<p>Good written communication skills</p>
<p><b>Personal qualities:</b></p> <p>The person must be able to work on their own initiative and as part of a team</p> <p>Commitment, drive and enthusiasm to undertake the different aspects of this post, and to engage with both scientists</p>	<p>Enthusiasm for the marine environment in particular.</p>

<p>and the public.</p> <p>Perseverance for learning identification and developing public participation will be necessary</p> <p>The ability to work in physically challenging environments</p>	
<p><b>Other:</b></p> <p>A practical approach to the environment with an enthusiasm for field and laboratory work will be necessary to complete the apprenticeship, as will a desire to communicate with the wider community.</p> <p>This post involves physical work, so the person must be fit to carry out field work on rocky shores and mud flats.</p> <p>The apprentice must be prepared to be away from home for several days at a time in the fieldwork season (summer only).</p>	<p>Full, clean driving licence</p> <p>Reasonable level of physical fitness</p>

**How to apply (Read this section carefully)**

**Application forms can be downloaded at <http://www.btcv.org/naturaltalent>**

Completed application forms and a 2-PAGE CV should be returned by email to [T.Burden@btcv.org.uk](mailto:T.Burden@btcv.org.uk), quoting your full name and apprenticeship applied for in the email Subject Line, or alternatively posted to:

Natural Talent 2010,  
BTCV Scotland, Balallan House, 24 Allan Park, Stirling, FK8 2QG

We will only reply to successful applicants. If you have not had a reply two weeks after the closing date, then unfortunately you have been unsuccessful on this occasion.