

Apprentice Mycologist

Further Information for applicants

Role Overview

Post: Apprentice Mycologist

Salary: £12, 500 p.a.

Host organisation(s): Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE)

Location: Edinburgh

Mentor: Professor Roy Watling

Start Date: September 2007

Duration: 18 months

Closing date for applications: August 20th 2007

Role description

This apprenticeship will provide training in mycology from a field based perspective. The successful candidate will learn a suite of skills for identifying and recording fungi in the field as well as knowledge of laboratory techniques.

The apprentice will use both fresh and preserved specimens to develop their identification skills and training will be provided on the use of macroscopic, microscopic and other characters for identification. In addition, reference to the relevant literature, comparison with appropriate reference material and extensive field study should provide the successful candidate with a thorough grounding in fungi identification and recording.

Aims and objectives

The overall objective is to provide the opportunity to an interested individual to learn the basic macromorphological characteristics of the basidiomycetes both in the field and in the laboratory.

This will include:

- How to examine a specimen for the said characters. Use of cultivated material, of fresh specimens and finally dried specimens.
- To learn the basic microscopic characters which are necessary in identification and where to find them on a specimen.
- Techniques to find important micro-characters in a dried specimen
- To learn to distinguish ascomycetes from basidiomycetes, in the field and lab.
- To be able to put macro-fruited bodies into main categories.
- To learn the techniques of good collecting, description and processing for future examination.
- To undertake the above under guidance in the laboratory.

Location and duration

The placement will mainly be based at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) and will last for an 18 month period. The apprentice will work primarily with RBGE and liaise with other mycology groups regularly in the central belt. The apprentice will also work with other organisations and individuals involved in the field of mycology during this time. This will involve periods living and working in other locations.

Person specification

- Some experience of working with fungi in a field environment
- Experience of field work in Scotland
- Basic microscopy skills
- Good observation skills

Personal qualities

- self motivation is key to this post, you will have to take the lead in networking with other mycologists, working independently, arranging work with other experts and identifying appropriate training opportunities
- The commitment to undertake an intensive 18 month post in mycology shouldn't be underestimated, candidates will have to demonstrate they fully understand what the apprenticeship will entail and demonstrate they have the discipline to complete it to the best of their ability.

How to apply

Please return the completed application form together with a **1 page** CV to:

Natural Talent

BTCV Scotland

Balallan House

24 Allan Park

Stirling

FK8 2QG

For August 20th 2007. Interviews will be held w/b August 27th and the apprentice is expected to start work in late September in time for the 2007 field season.

Application forms are available from the Natural Talent website (www.btcv.org/naturaltalent), by emailing natural-talent@btcv.org.uk or send a SAE to the above address. Good luck!