



EcoTrain 5- Portugal Information Sheet LIFE “Safe Island for Seabirds”, Azores, Portugal

This Portugal placement will receive two volunteers to help in the development of LIFE Project “Safe Island for Seabirds” (SPEA, RSPB and Azores Government) at Corvo Island, Portugal, for a 9-week placement during 2012.

Please note that this is a different SPEA project from the Tyto Tagus Barn Owl project which volunteers attended during 2011 and the tasks and activities as well as the location detailed in the 2011 diaries is different.

Cohort 1: Monday 4 June to Monday 6 August 2011 (2 places)

Host Organisation

SPEA is a nonprofit environmental NGO with its mission stated as to promote the study and conservation of birds in Portugal and their habitats, by promoting a sustainable development for benefit of the future generations. Since 1999, SPEA has been the Birdlife International partner for Portugal. Co-operation with this organization has played an important part in the consolidation of the Society, reinforcing its conservation work, and consequently facilitating its involvement in international activities, with increased access to resources. SPEA has a strategy which comprises 6 general objectives: (1) to promote the active conservation of birds and their habitats; (2) to gather and disseminate scientific and monitoring data in order to support bird conservation; (3) to increase significantly the number of members and its involvement in the work of the organization; (4) to promote public awareness and education concerning bird conservation; (5) to set the organization as an international reference in bird conservation; and (6) to continuously ameliorate internal management and capacity. SPEA is incorporating volunteers for fieldwork in order to conclude the alien vegetation map of Corvo Island.

Travel

SPEA is committed in reducing the carbon footprint of all operations, avoiding traveling by plane wherever possible. However the only access to Corvo Island is by plane. SATA is the airplane company responsible for all Corvo flight connections (more information at www.sata.pt). Transport will be arranged by Ambios to the Island.

Accommodation and Food;

Accommodation is provided on site, in shared 2-bed rooms with cooking and laundry facilities. A number of students and researchers are usually present. The volunteer is responsible for all food expenses. All transportations within the island will be provided by SPEA.

Programme for the placement

A mentor from SPEA will be assigned, to provide support and guidance, and a particular task will be assigned to each volunteer to work on. Volunteers will receive an introduction to the project and the Island and conservation work and familiarisation with local culture, geography, fauna and flora. Some Portuguese language skills are advantageous. Volunteers will learn

how to distinguish different plant species and some mapping software skills. The tasks will be developed from 9 am to 6 pm. Weekends will normally be for leisure and cultural activities which will generally be the responsibility of the trainee. Some weekends may require a commitment to working hours and volunteers are expected to join in fieldwork when required. The overall programme of fieldwork and the training period will remain flexible because of the local weather conditions and the need to respond to other events.

Tasks for volunteers

During the work, volunteers will receive training from SPEA staff in Corvo Island, carrying out the following tasks: mapping alien plants species, collecting seeds of endemic plants, alien plant eradication, helping at SPEA nursery plants and participating in activities of environmental education.

Knowledge and skills to be acquired

Volunteers will gain knowledge of Portuguese language and culture, as well as ecological survey, mapping and plant production. They will experience and practice a range of fieldwork and practical conservation skills. Employability skills acquired will include time and communication skills, teamwork, the ability to adapt in response to changing working conditions in an isolated environment. Volunteers will gain a perspective of environmental conservation in a different European context along with several ecological issues and species present at the site.

Information from the Corvo Island

Corvo Island is the smallest and the most isolated island from the Azores Archipelago. Corvo has one village with 400 inhabitants – Vila do Corvo. In summer the average temperatures is around 22° C. Corvo waters are considered the best waters of the North Atlantic for scuba diving and snorkelling in deep and warm waters (around 24°C). Applicants should be happy spending time in a fairly isolated destination and able to entertain themselves in the absence of usual towns and facilities. Other members of the conservation team will be on site but whilst this project is a great insight hands-on conservation methods and survey skills the location, whilst beautiful is very quiet.

Application for a placement

Please read the 'application information' pdf, complete the application form and return to Ambios by e-mail and also by post. For these placements, some knowledge of English, Spanish or Portuguese language, and an interest in wildlife conservation and seabird conservation programs would be distinct advantages. For more information we recommend to visit our blog and website. Or contact us by email: carlos.silva@spea.pt or sandra.hervias@spea.pt.

Blog: <http://lifecorvo.blogspot.com>
<http://lifecorvo-en.blogspot.com>

Site: <http://life-corvo.spea.pt>