



NORTH PENNINES

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



Volunteer Role Description

Organisation Name	North Pennines AONB Partnership
Organisation Overview	<p>The North Pennines AONB Partnership is an alliance of statutory agencies, local authorities and voluntary or community organisations which care about, and for, the area.</p> <p>The AONB Partnership is the body responsible for co-ordinating efforts to conserve and enhance the North Pennines. The AONB Partnership staff unit is based in Stanhope.</p>
Role Title	Nectarworks Volunteer Botanist
Location	Within the North Pennines AONB
Responsible to	Ruth Starr-Kedde
Purpose of role	To undertake botanical surveys of flower-rich steep banks and edges of meadows and/or flower-rich grasslands in the North Pennines landscape (i.e. meadows, edges of pastures, riverbanks and roadside verges).
Description of tasks	<p>A botanical survey takes approximately one day per site. At each site, approximately 8 – 12 quadrats (1 m x 1 m squares) are undertaken, between two to three volunteers working together.</p> <p>All plant species are recorded in the quadrat (wildflowers, sedges, rushes and grasses) and recorded onto a survey form. An estimation of percentage cover (%) is recorded onto the form.</p> <p>A previous assessment will have been undertaken by Ruth and a habitat map of the</p>

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	<p>site will have been completed – this is given to the volunteers and the quadrats are located on the map. If possible, a GPS could be used to locate the quadrats if one is available and a volunteer can use one. Additional surveys may be undertaken on roadside verges, meadows, riverbanks and pastures. In certain circumstances, soil samples will be taken.</p> <p>New and less confident botanists are paired up with experienced botanists and there are opportunities to go out surveying with Ruth in order to improve botanical skills and confidence in recording.</p>
<p>Time commitment</p>	<p>The surveys are undertaken on any day in late June to early August (this is weather dependant and the survey season could be shortened or extended).</p> <p>The minimum time commitment is one full day. Volunteers can survey from one day to however many they would like to do. The average time commitment is three – four days.</p>
<p>Skills & Qualifications</p>	<p>Botanical volunteers are expected to have an interest in botany and ecology and a willingness to learn new skills.</p> <p>New volunteers are expected to have a basic knowledge of the identification of common wildflowers and some grasses. It is advisable that new volunteers come to a minimum of one training session.</p> <p>Unfortunately we are unable to offer training for complete beginners. There are courses for complete beginners with the Field Studies Council, Ptyxis Ecology and BSBI (Botanical Society of the British Isles).</p>



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Training & Support	<p>There will be two training sessions in early to mid-June 2016. Dates and venues to be confirmed:</p> <p>Wildflower identification refresher course: This course is designed for new or less confident botanists who would like to have a refresher in wildflower identification. The morning will be spent identifying wildflowers of flower-rich grasslands. The afternoon will be spent walking through North Pennines habitats.</p> <p>Grasses, sedges and rushes refresher course plus training in survey skills: The morning will be spent identifying grasses, sedges and rushes. The afternoon will be spent surveying steep species-rich banks, demonstrating the use of quadrats (1m x 1m square), G.P.S. and a habitat mapping exercise.</p> <p>New and less confident botanists will be paired up with experienced botanists and there will be the opportunity to have an additional field training day with Ruth and/or experienced botanists.</p>
Reimbursement of expenses	Out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed: Mileage costs @ 40p per mile or public transport expenses incurred
Benefits to volunteer	The opportunity to develop skills in botany, ecology and habitat mapping and gain experience volunteering with the North Pennines AONB Partnership
Application procedure	Please email Ruth
Contact information	Ruth Starr-Keddle, Nectarworks Project Officer: ruth@northpenninesaonb.org.uk