Volunteers to map out current state of UK's crucial



People, Ponds and Water Project will help train thousands of volunteers across the country as 'citizen scientists'

Ponds and coastal environments are some of our most valuable habitats and countless species rely on them to survive. Yet we lack critical information about how abundant they are and, in many cases, why they are at risk.

A recent WWF report highlighted the stark state of our ponds in particular when it revealed that freshwater plants and animals have drastically declined by 75% since 1970.

HLF has supported two projects that will recruit volunteer armies to help gather information and shed light on the state of wildlife living in these crucial habitats.

The Freshwater Habitats Trust has been awarded £1.3million for their 'People, Ponds and Water Project' which will help people survey the state of the ponds near to where they live. It's looking to build up a national picture of where the best and most degraded freshwater areas are located, helping to inform future conservation strategies.

'Capturing our coasts', led by Newcastle University, has received initial support for a £1.7m project that seeks to monitor the abundance and distribution of marine life around the entire UK coastline. 3,000 volunteers will be trained as experts in identifying five species each, ensuring accurate data is gathered.

Everyone is invited to take part and get involved in these projects that will make a real difference to understanding of the current state of our ponds and coastlines.

HLF Trustee Dr Tom Tew said: “Helping people across the country to reconnect with nature - through recording the wildlife associated with our coasts and ponds - will make a really positive long-term difference both to people's enjoyment of the countryside and to the state of nature.”