

BioLinks soil mesofauna course FSC

The Field Studies Council (FSC), is set to begin an exciting project, BioLinks, thanks to £1.2million raised by National Lottery players.

The Field Studies Council (FSC), an environmental education charity with a 74-year history of inspiring and teaching people about the natural world, will involve existing and new biological recorders in its five-year project. It hopes to extend not only the number of active natural history observers but also increase their age range and diversity.

Vanessa Harbar, Head of HLF West Midlands, said: “With this support from National Lottery players, BioLinks can strengthen biological recording data and engage a younger generation with the UK’s valuable natural heritage. We’re delighted to support this project in providing fantastic volunteer and learning opportunities and developing new resources for the future.”

Working across three regions

BioLinks will take place across the West Midlands, London and South East and engage with 2,500 volunteers, delivering 480 training courses and 33 events.

Valuing 'uncharismatic' species

[quote=Sue Townsend, FSC Biodiversity Manager]“Receiving this support from the National Lottery is fantastic news for FSC and the whole sector."[/quote]

Following an 18-month consultation phase which HLF supported with a £41,000 development grant, FSC found volunteers wanted more structured learning. As a consequence, BioLinks will help beginners and experts to make progress in their ability to identify and understand invertebrates. The project will be a focus on harder to identify species such as beetles, snails, true flies, ants and wasps.

Activities

There will also be a number of complementary activities: community ‘bioblitzes’; visits to national collections; traditional days out; and knowledge sharing events.

Sue Townsend, FSC Biodiversity Manager, said: “Receiving this support from the National Lottery is fantastic news for FSC and the whole sector. Having more active, skilled biological recorders will increase the quality of biodiversity data being submitted to our national biodiversity datasets which help inform decisions over the conservation of our natural world.”



Participants in an entomology study

More training opportunities for biodiversity volunteers