

Volunteering Opportunity in Germany - Center for Ecological Conservation at Castle Heynitz



26 weeks during the period Mai 2015 to October 2015

We are looking for volunteers from different European countries to create a intercultural group over six months. We would be pleased to receive one volunteer from Austria.

Organisation

The Center for Ecological Conservation at Castle Heynitz is a station of the regional group Meißen of the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU) of Germany. Our conservation educators offer a broad range of activities to school classes in environmental education, nature preservation, and farm experience. We are engaged in landscape conservation and habitat preservation with the goal of protecting the rare and endangered animals and plants native to the southern part of Meißen district.



The Center for Ecological Conservation is located on the castle complex in Heynitz, where ecological agriculture has been practised since before the Second World War. Along with the historically valuable buildings, it's the beds of flowers and herbs, the meadows for bees, and the educational nature trail which attract visitors to Heynitz today. Not far from the Castle are found the organic farm Mahlitzsch, the organic honey farm Heynitz, and the organic fruit-processing house Gohla. These are all involved in our program of environmental education.



The Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU) is one of the largest organisations for nature conservation in Germany. In the state of Saxony there are currently 12 ecological conservation centers and over 70 groups engaged in nature conservation projects and environmental education. The primary activities of our regional group Meißen are carried out exclusively by volunteer members and include monthly lectures, conservation field trips, and works in landscape conservation.

Project environment



Castle Heynitz is located in middle Saxony between the small towns Nossen (8 km) and Meißen (10 km). The small village Heynitz, directly adjacent to the castle, is surrounded by landscape of loess hills. The valleys nearby are characterized by the nature reserve Triebischtäler (FFH), the hills are characterized by technology-oriented industrial agriculture. Between these areas a few of organic farms are founded, which are influencing our social surroundings essentially. The engagements in landscape conservation and habitat preservation will be carried out by volunteer members all ages of our regional group Meißen. In addition to the Center for Ecological Conservation seminar rooms, music rooms, and apartments are located on the castle complex Heynitz. Even the European volunteers will be accommodated in the historically valuable building. The next airport is located in Dresden (30 km), reachable by car or by bus and train.

Activities

1. Environmental education

The volunteers will be involved in our program of environmental education for elementary schools. The arrangements will be prepared and carried out together with competent conservation educators of the center. In addition to that the volunteers are invited to create by himself new educational projects and organic farm experience. Especially on holiday the children are happy about new programs and special days.

2. Garden work

On the castle complex Heynitz the volunteers are invited to care the beds of flowers, herbs, and vegetables organically grown. The beds and meadows for bees and other insects are involved in our program of environmental education. Further there is enough place in castle courtyard for new ideas like a dye plants garden or a medical herbs garden. There are many possibilities and choices depending on personal interests and specific skills of the volunteer.

3. Works in landscape conservation

The work will be done in a group of volunteers, instructed by experts from our regional group Meissen. The manual activities are different depending on the season. To care the meadows for bees and the fruit-bearing trees along the lanes and streets, eliminate bushy trees on meadows with rare or endangered butterflies and cleanup courses of streams are typical tasks in our region.



Volunteer profiles and recruitment process

Basically, the volunteers should have interest in nature conservation projects and environmental education. We don't expect any specialist knowledge, although our volunteers should like to do physical work outside in the nature. A basic level of German will be helpful for working together and working with school children.

If you are interested in coming to join our project, please write us a detailed text (an informal style is very acceptable!), in which you are describing yourself and your motivation. Then we can check by e-mail or telephone whether you would be suitable as a volunteer.



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