

Conservation and Education.

This course, or just spending time with new people in a new environment, is a good way to discover things about yourself, the environment, the skills and talents people didn't know they had and about the different educational projects in your area.

Big groups teach you how to team build and communicate in different ways to suit each personality. Having a leader is always good, but you learn every one is helping someone else, whether it's making food so that people aren't working on an empty stomach, helping carrying something that's too heavy for one, or just giving advice.

Being outdoors teaches you about all the different flora and fauna you can find in such a small place.

You are shown the difference you can make whether you are on your own or in a group.

You learn you don't have to break your back to make an impact, the smallest thing can make the biggest difference.

Working in another country shows you new culture, from the way people live, to the differences in personality and body language. Body language is a good way to communicate when you only know a little of their language and they know little of yours.

You help lots of people and organisations, including the place you are working, the people you are working with and the organisations you are working for.

Hayley's diary.

On February 29th 2008.

14 people plus myself set off to France on a conservation and education project. Only a few of us knew one another from the preparation weekends we had gone to before the trip.

New people new places.

For some it was a whole new experience, but for other it was a chance to learn more about what they had already done.

We stayed at a place called, La Brenne, the land of a thousand lakes.

The history of the place shows you how people long before us had to work for thing we get so easily today.

some traditions never change for example, all the lakes in La Brenne were made by monks years ago to breed carp.

The lakes are still used to breed the carp to this very day.

France is a very religious culture with a strong belief in the virgin Mary.

Even if you are not religious, you can still enjoy the history of the churches.

The work we did while in La Brenne was to clear neglected heathland and woods.

Most of our work was to help butterfly's.

Lots of animals benefit from the work we did.

clearing areas in the woods gives the plants fresh air and new ground to flourish.

I felt we could have done more work but, at the end we'd done lots more than I thought.

We enjoyed meals out in local restaurant.

and used the local shops and bars to get a feel of the village life.

The meals I enjoyed the most we're the ones cooked back at the gite, we'd all gather together, some would cook, some would set the tables and others would talk about the day.

We spoke to lots of French people.

Because we had a large group I found some of the French felt quite intimidated.

We saw some great wildlife like wild boar, crane's, sand lizard, tree frog and the European pond tortoise.

The life in the lakes change throughout the year.

In the spring and summer life is more abundant.

In winter and autumn there is not as much life but there are lots of new things.

Over all I thought the hole project was a good experience for every one.

I hope it has pushed everyone in the direction they want to go.

I know it has done so much for me.