



# Grassroots Challenge

## Award activities for wildlife and the environment

The Grassroots Challenge programme supports young people to complete sections of their Award through activities that benefit wildlife and the environment.

*"The truth is the natural world is changing. And we are totally dependent on that world. It provides our food, water and air. It is the most precious thing we have and we need to defend it."*

Sir David Attenborough

## VOLUNTEERING SECTION – BRONZE, SILVER AND GOLD



**Award Group Volunteering Projects** - Look around to see what can be done in your area to benefit wildlife and the environment. It could be making and putting up bird boxes, planting trees, creating a wildlife garden, cleaning up a local beach or linking in with what other organisations are doing locally. If you aren't sure what you'd like to do the Grassroots Challenge DofE Project Officer can provide ideas for you to consider. Register your project with the Grassroots Challenge and your group will get:

- £100 towards the costs of your chosen volunteering project.
- Access to online resources and practical guidance material
- Advice, support and, if desired, a visit or two from the Grassroots Challenge DofE Project Officer.

**Volunteer placements** – Ulster Wildlife will begin working with a range of organisations across Northern Ireland to develop wildlife and environmental volunteering opportunities. Contact the Grassroots Challenge DofE Project Officer to find out what individual or group based opportunities are currently available in your area.





## SKILLS SECTION - BRONZE, SILVER AND GOLD



**Skill Starter Packs** - Ulster Wildlife will begin to create *skills starter packs* to provide young people with the equipment, knowledge and information needed to develop a particular wildlife or environment related skill. Packs will be available from September onwards and will include the following themes:

- Bird Watching
- Nest and Habitat boxes
- Minibeasts
- Shoreline ecology
- Wildlife photography and filming

Young People can request a skills pack by completing a Grassroots Challenge registration form. Training sessions linked to these packs will also run from time to time. If a young person doesn't know of someone who can act as an **assessor** for their chosen skill then the Grassroots Challenge team will link them up with someone that can.

### Skills for wildlife and the environment

All sorts of different skills can be used in promoting and protecting wildlife and the environment. It doesn't always have to be an outdoor practical activity; it could be about developing a skill such as drama, journalism, film making, creative writing, drawing and painting etc. If a young person can show how practicing their chosen skill can benefit wildlife and the environment then they are welcome to register it with the Grassroots Challenge and apply for up to £50 towards any relevant equipment or resources.



## EXPEDITION - BRONZE, SILVER AND GOLD



**Wildlife and Environment Expedition Packs** – If your Award Group chose to have a wildlife or environmental aim for their expedition then you can register it with the Grassroots Challenge and Ulster Wildlife will send you a special expedition pack. This contains activity ideas, information and equipment to help you observe and record flora and fauna during an expedition. As well as a general pack, we are also developing specific packs for some of the most popular expedition locations including:

- Mourne Mountains
- Sperrins
- Coastal paths
- Antrim Hills
- Wicklow Hills
- National Cycle Network routes

Submitting record cards of what your group saw will provide Ulster Wildlife and others with useful data. When an Award Group makes a presentation about their expedition, Ulster Wildlife can present personalised Grassroots Challenge certificates to participants.

**GOLD AWARD RESIDENTIAL** - Once a year we plan to run a “Grassroots Challenge Week” that fulfils the requirements for a Gold Award residential. It will be held at a Northern Ireland outdoor centre and will combine practical conservation work, wildlife tracking and adventurous activities. For dates, location, costs and other details contact the Grassroots Challenge DofE Project Officer for details.

**OTHER BENEFITS** - Every young person completing an Award section through the Grassroots Challenge will get:

- A personalised Grassroots Challenge certificate and Limited edition enamel Badge.
- Invitation to the Annual Grassroots Challenge Celebration Event.
- Entry in to the Annual Grassroots Challenge Youth Awards that give recognition to the best projects, activities and individual achievements.

**For more information:**

[www.ulsterwildlife.org/grassroots](http://www.ulsterwildlife.org/grassroots)

**Contact: John McLaughlin – Grassroots Challenge DofE Project Officer.**

**john.mclaughlin@ulsterwildlife.org T: 02890 463101 M: 07816065923**