



NATURAL  
HISTORY  
MUSEUM  
OF THE LESVOS  
PETRIFIED FOREST

## Application of the Natural History Museum of the Lesvos Petrified Forest for cooperation at the Erasmus program

### **THE PETRIFIED FOREST OF THE LESVOS – A PROTECTED NATURAL MONUMENT**

On the western part of Lesvos Island, remains of fossil plants appear within volcanic rocks. The fossils comprise the well-known «Lesvos Petrified Forest», which covers an area of 15,000 ha. Within this area, several unique palaeobotanical sites showing high concentrations of fossilised tree-trunks have been discovered.

The region of the Petrified Forest is characterized by impressive volcanic geotopes, result of the intense volcanic activity of the past. This region could be characterized as a window on the geohistoric development of the Aegean over the past 20 million years.

Scientists researching and studying the Petrified Forest speak enthusiastically of the rarity and great scientific value of the monument and repeatedly emphasize the uniqueness of the site.

The Petrified Forest constitutes an entire forest ecosystem that was fossilised on the spot because of intense volcanic activity. The large number of fossilised trunks that have remained standing upright, with their root system fully developed, confirms that the trees were fossilised in their original position, thus this is an autochthonous fossilised forest.

The fossilised trees and the parts of the plants have been preserved in excellent conditions up to the present. The age of the forest and the great variety of fossilised plant species that have been found contribute to its great scientific value, whereas the composition of the fossilised flora is a particularly important guide to the climatic conditions, the environment and the geological conditions at that period.

At the Petrified Forest, we can gather information regarding the plant species which constituted the island's flora, findings of the oldest known land mammal in Greece, *Prodeinotherium bavaricum*, the climatic and geological conditions that prevailed in the Aegean area 20 million years ago. In other words, the Petrified Forest constitutes a unique "testimonial" of the geological history of the Aegean basin over the past 20 million years.

## **NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF THE LESVOS PETRIFIED FOREST - GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

The Natural History Museum of the Lesvos Petrified Forest is a legal entity established in 1994 for the benefit of the public, under the supervision of the Greek Ministry of Culture & Tourism. The Museum's objective is to study, research, promote, preserve and conserve the unique Petrified Forest of Lesvos, a designated Protected Natural Monument of particular environmental, geological and paleontological value.

The main activities of the Natural History Museum of the Lesvos Petrified Forest are towards the protection, conservation and promotion of the geological heritage and natural environment. Parallel to this the Museum hosts exhibitions, organizes several cultural events, and is strongly involved in the sustainable development of Western Lesvos. Since 1996 the Museum conducts educational programs in co-operation with schools and Universities from Greece and European countries.

Every year the Museum collaborates with the universities and institutes in carrying out student practice programs.

The Museum has experience in participating and coordinating Greek and European projects, programs and networks. In 2004 UNESCO included the Lesvos Petrified Forest Geopark in the UNESCO Global Geoparks Network. As a member of the European Geoparks Network and the Global Geoparks Network of UNESCO the Lesvos Petrified Forest collaborates closely with other Geoparks in the world in terms of personnel exchange, know how transfer and exchange of exhibitions.

The Museum won the Eurosite Management Award for the year 2001, as a recognition, encouragement and reward to best considered practices in managing natural sites. In 2006 won the Skäl International Award and in 2009 the protected area of the Petrified Forest is the European Tourist Destination of Excellence for Greece – EDEN.

| <b>INFORMATION</b> |   |
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| Organisation name  | <b>Natural History Museum of the Lesvos Petrified Forest</b>  |
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## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MUSEUM - DESCRIPTION**

The Museum accepts students who wish to do their practice in one of the following sectors depending on the period of the year that it will take place the practice:

- Public sensitisation activities on the Earth heritage, the Petrified Forest and the natural environment of the region, either in the Museum or in the parks and the fossil sites.
- Fossil conservation and restoration activities including excavation, conservation, restoration, recording and labelling of fossils.
- Environmental education programs of the Museum for young visitors, such as "The Young Palaeontologists" program in which kids discover, clean and identify findings of the Petrified Forest, the "Volcanoes" program which focuses on the volcanicity of the Aegean and its relation to the Petrified Forest of Lesvos, the Earthquake simulation activity which informs people on natural disaster protection and earthquakes.
- Visitors satisfaction research by quantitative questionnaires on the activities, services, information and promotion of the monument, personal comments and ideas for action in specific areas in the future and evaluation the Museum and the parks.
- Recording natural resources in the protected region of the Lesvos Petrified Forest. The data to be recorded may be geosites, fossils or contemporary flora and fauna species.

The Natural History Museum of the Lesvos Petrified forest intend to receive up to 6 trainees which are going to work at the field at the protected area of the Petrified Forest and/or at the Museum.

The Museum is going to prepare a placement programme for each beneficiary and assign to the trainee tasks and responsibilities to match their knowledge, skills, competencies and training objectives and ensure that appropriate equipment and support is available.

The programme of the each trainer will include information about the Lesvos Petrified Forest and the natural heritage of Lesvos Island, the activities of Museum, the culture and mentality of Lesvos and the trainer's activities. Also includes tour at the Parks of Lesvos Petrified Forest, the natural monuments of the Lesvos Island and the exhibition rooms of the Museum. The main part of the programme will include practice at the Museum, the Petrified Forest Parks and the Lesvos Geopark.

During the training period the Museum will identify a tutor from the Research Department. During the training the beneficiaries will be supported from the tutor with advice, information, practical support and monitoring their training progress.

The Museum also can provide to the trainers accommodation, 1 coffee or juice and 1 sandwich every working day, the transportation from Mytilini (the capital of Lesvos Island) to Sigri at your arrival and Sigri to Mytilini at departure.

## **TRAINEES SKILLS - DESCRIPTION**

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| <b>Linguistic skills:</b> |
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The Museum accepts students of Science, Environmental, Social and Economic Faculties, Departments of Geology and Marine Geology, Environmental Studies, Conservation, Librarianship and Archivism, Photography, Museology, Cultural Technology and Management.

**Linguistic skills:**

English

**Computer skills:**

WINDOWS XP

MS-OFFICE 2003 (Word, Excel, Access, Power Point)

E-mailing - Internet

**Preferable date of the traineeship:**

1 May - 30 October