

# The FISC at Natural England

Alex Prendergast, Botanist, Natural England Field Unit

*"My FISC score gives me confidence in the ecological advice I provide"*



Natural England began providing the FISC (Field Identification Skills Certificate) in 2015. The FISC is a test of botanical skill resulting in an industry recognised certificate. In 2017 we began opening spare spaces to consultants, community groups and recorders. We now offer consultants FISC events commercially at £120pp which offsets associated costs, contributes to our conservation work and allows us to provide FISCs free to student botanist groups. We plan to continue to expand our FISC offer including into Scotland and Wales.

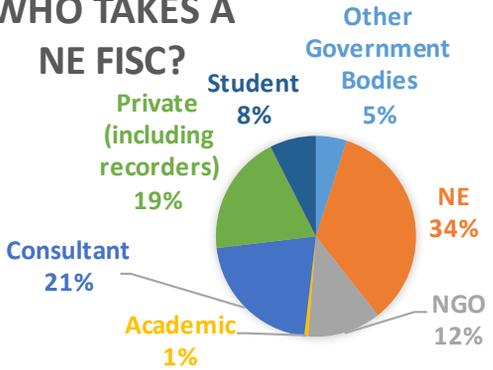
It has proved popular with NE staff and ecologists at partner organisations, and feedback shows it supports skills development and confidence. It is reassuring that many of the 'Level 6s' identified in the 10 years of the FISC are current or former NE ecologists.



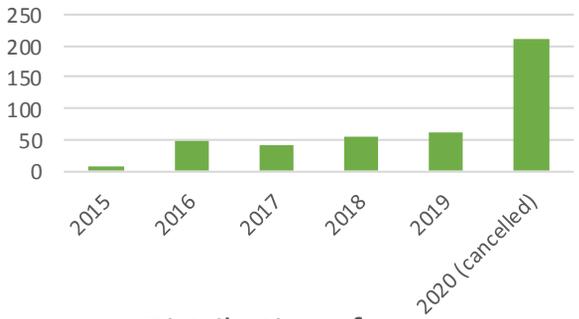
*"The FISC helps me consolidate and progress my learning"*

← NE FISCs are based at offices and NNRs throughout England

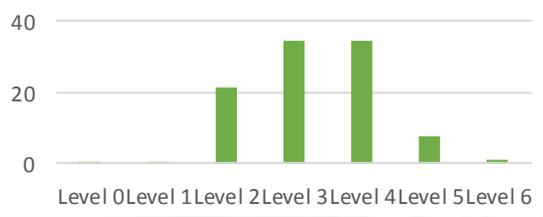
## WHO TAKES A NE FISC?



Numbers of People Taking NE FISCs



Distribution of scores attained at NE FISCs (%)



To host a NE FISC please contact [Andrea.Perkins@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:Andrea.Perkins@naturalengland.org.uk)  
 Thank you to BSBI and FSC, especially Sarah Wild, Sue Townsend and the Training & Education committee, for your support of the FISC & NE's adoption of it.

↑ Revenue from FISCs helps us cover costs & support student groups