

Wildlife training workshops 2008



Putting your training into practice

The Wildlife Trust runs a comprehensive programme of wildlife training every year, actively supporting the personal development of its volunteers but also encouraging those new to natural history to join in and learn more about their local wildlife. The Trust also provides the opportunity to put the skills you acquire to good use by joining the Wildlife Trust Ecology Groups, teams of locally based volunteers who want to actively support their local wildlife and their habitats. The challenge for the Ecology Groups is to help improve habitat management on our nature reserves, through monitoring, combining the skills of natural history with existing ecological knowledge and a scientific approach. The result is local people working together, to support the enhancement of our natural environment. Both beginners and experienced naturalists are welcome to join the Ecology Groups; all you need to bring is your enthusiasm and a willingness to learn. To find out more about Ecology Groups, check out our website or contact Henry Stanier via email ecologygroups@wildlifebcnp.org

NEW WORKSHOPS FOR 2008

'Beginning with' workshops:

The natural world is full of an amazing variety of wildlife and learning to identify just some of the species can be an exciting and rewarding experience, but perhaps you don't know where to start? Perhaps you've never been on one of our training workshops before and don't know which one to choose? Why not try one of our new 'Beginning with' events?

As well as a general introduction to the topic, we cover examples of the local wildlife that you will encounter when out exploring. Easing you into the natural world, these are an excellent start before moving on to our other, more detailed workshops, if you wish to do so.

This year in addition to our many weekend events, we are providing more evening workshops and also some on weekdays, making it easier for you to learn with us. So, if you are a fledgling birdwatcher, want to discover the nocturnal world of bats or want to investigate wildflowers or insects, then we have something for you to discover. (see dates and venues for each workshop overleaf). **Note these workshops are £15 each for non-professionals.**

Beginning with bats

Introducing bats, what are they and where are they? Explore the world of bats, their place in our local environment and how they live. Includes an evening guided bat walk to detect and observe local species. (at Burghley House and Cambourne)

Beginning with birdsounds

Take the first steps to developing your ability to identify birds by their calls. This series will cover the songs and calls of garden birds and the typical spring and summer migrants visiting our woodlands at this time of year. Primarily using recordings but there will be some opportunity for fieldwork. (at Old Sulehay)

Beginning with insects

Do you know the difference between a bee and a wasp or a beetle and a bug, or a moth and a butterfly? What makes an insect an insect? For those who want a beginner's guide to the insect world, including how to use an identification key and information about other resources available to help you learn. (at Totternhoe, Cambourne, Woodwalton Fen and Old Sulehay)

Beginning with wildflowers

Do you know the difference between a daisy and a dandelion or a thistle and a knapweed? Do you know the parts that make up a flowerhead? Learn how to use identification keys and other resources such as floras. (at Cambourne, Stockgrove Country Park and other venues to be announced)

Beginning with reptiles

This workshop will introduce participants to identification of reptiles in the field, demonstrate where to look for them and show how to encourage them to occupy favourable habitats. It is hoped that participants will come to appreciate and understand reptiles rather than fear them. (at Kingscliffe)

Beginning with trees

This workshop is intended to familiarise all students and beginners with most of the native and commonly naturalised broad-leaved tree and shrub species, and with a few of the commonest native conifers. There will be a brief introduction to the structure of a tree and its biology and then most of the day will be devoted to recognition and identification of tree and shrub species, using plant specimens, identification keys and handouts. Useful books and other resources will be recommended. (at Clophill Community Tree Nursery)

Full Weekend Ground Beetle Workshops

Spend a full weekend with Brian Eversham getting a wide-ranging introduction to this charismatic group of beetles.

SPRING Fri-30-May – Sun-01-Jun-08
Old Sulehay

AUTUMN Fri-19-Sep – Sun-21-Sep-08
Old Sulehay

Note that these weekends are £50 for non-professionals, £230 for professionals

This leaflet can be downloaded from our website at www.wildlifebcnp.org

Booking Form

Please fill in the county code, number of places, name, date and price of each workshop for which you would like to book, continue on a blank sheet if necessary

County code	No of places	Workshop Name	Date	Cost*

*Workshops are free for Trust volunteers – see note below

DATE Amount enclosed £

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

TEL: (day) (eve)

e-mail:

WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR INFORMATION POSTED OR E-MAILED?

FORMAT FOR E-MAIL, eg pdf, rich text

LIFT SHARING – are you happy for your telephone details to be passed on to another participant?

Yes No

Are you a member of the Wildlife Trust? Yes No

Are you a volunteer for the Wildlife Trust? Yes No

If a volunteer, in what capacity?

Is your employer paying for your attendance on this workshop?

The Wildlife Trust may use your contact details to send you information about other workshops/events, membership details or other offers that may be of interest to you. We may also share your contact details with natural history societies/recording schemes in our area.

Please tick here if you DO NOT wish us to use your details in this way

This form is also available to download from our website.

Contact details and booking information

Note that most workshops incorporate an indoor session and a field trip to a nature reserve or other suitable site. If you have any reservations regarding the amount of walking or terrain, please contact the Wildlife Training Workshops Officer before booking.

To book onto a Wildlife Trust training workshop first contact the Wildlife Training Workshops Officer on 01604 405285 (Tues, Wed, Fri) or e-mail trainingworkshops@wildlifebcnp.org to check whether spaces are available.

Then send a cheque payable to The Wildlife Trust, *along with the completed booking form*, to: Wildlife Training Workshops The Wildlife Trust, Lings House, Billing Lings, NORTHAMPTON NN3 8BE

FEES If you are a Wildlife Trust Ecology Group member, Watch Leader, Reserve Warden or a key regular volunteer, these workshops are free of charge, but please complete a booking form.

For non-professional participants or if you work for another Wildlife Trust, the cost is **£25**. The cost for the 'Beginning with' workshops for non-professionals is **£15**.

If you are using our programme for professional training, the standard fee is **£115** per workshop (eg environmental consultancies, statutory nature conservation organisations etc).

Once received you will receive confirmation immediately and a programme and location details 2 weeks prior to the workshop.

If you wish to book onto a **Dragonfly workshop**, then please contact The Dragonfly Project, 23 Bowker Way, Whittlesey, Peterborough PE7 1PY, telephone 01733 204286 or e-mail courses@dragonflyproject.org.uk.

Contents

Workshops are arranged under the following headings:

- Botany
- Lower plants and fungi
- Vertebrates
- Practical skills
- Invertebrates
- Community
- Basic ecology skills

County Code:

- B = Bedfordshire
- C = Cambridgeshire
- N = Northamptonshire
- P = Peterborough

Workshop details

Workshops that are already fully booked have been omitted from the following, updated list.

☑ Water Voles – survey, ecology and status

Cambourne 12-Apr-08 10am-4pm
Ruth Hawksley and Iain Webb

A workshop to introduce participants to the natural history and field signs of the water vole. What caused their decline and what can be done about it? Plus a field visit to look for evidence of water vole activity in the Cambourne area.

☑ Beginning with Reptiles

Kingscliffe 13-Apr-08 10am-4pm
Brian Laney

☑ Beginning with Wildflowers

Lings Tuesday 15-Apr-08 10am-4pm
Gill Gent and Nathalie Hueber

☑ Crayfish

Hitchin area 20-Apr-08 10am-4pm
Nina Fielding

This workshop will introduce the different species of crayfish in the UK focusing on their ecology and habitat requirements. There will be the opportunity to identify some of these specimens indoors. The workshop will also include a field trip to examine the extent of non-native signal crayfish invasions in the river and their impact on other freshwater invertebrates.

☑ Beginning with Wildflowers

Lings 26-Apr-08 10am-4pm
Gill Gent and Nathalie Hueber

NEW WORKSHOP

B Pond Dipping for Dragonfly Larvae

Flitton Moor 27-Apr-08 10am-4pm
Steve Cham

This stage of their life cycle is not often seen yet confirms that they are able to breed at a particular site. This workshop will give participants the opportunity to explore the ponds of Flitton Moor looking for larvae of Dragonflies and Damselflies. There will also be a chance to examine the larvae in more detail during the day using a microscope.

N Using Bat Detectors

Barnwell Country Park 10-May-08
4.15pm-10.30pm
Bob Cornes

This workshop will cover the essentials of bat detector use with enough theory to explain why some bats sound different from others on a bat detector, and introduce bat detector survey techniques. There will be an opportunity to practise identifying bat calls using recordings and at one of Northamptonshire's best bat sites.

N BES Habitat Management Policy and Practice: Wetland

Lings House 11-May-08 10am-4pm
Brian Eversham and Jane Pearman

Particularly suitable for nature reserve wardens, habitat management team volunteers and Ecology Group members, this workshop explains the reasons behind how and why we manage our nature reserves.

C Using Bat Detectors

Wimpole 24-May-08 4.15pm-10.30pm
Bob Cornes and Chris Vine

This workshop will cover the essentials of bat detector use with enough theory to explain why some bats sound different from others on a bat detector, and introduce bat detector survey techniques. There will be an opportunity to practise identifying bat calls using recordings and at one of Cambridgeshire's best bat sites.

N Ground Beetles Weekend

Old Sulehay 30-May-08 – 1-Jun-08
7pm-10pm Fri, 9.45am-4pm Sat and Sun
£50 for the weekend/£230 for professionals
Brian Eversham

Limestone grassland supports a rich set of specialist ground-beetles (Carabidae), which will be useful in monitoring habitat restoration and management. Most species are more active in the spring or autumn than in high summer. A good site might produce 15-20 species in an hour's searching. With practice, most can be identified accurately in the field with a hand lens. This workshop will show you where to start.

We will spend Friday evening looking at the ecology and anatomy of ground-beetles, and setting some pitfall traps. Direct searching at dusk will also reveal many species. Saturday will be a mix of microscope work with identification keys indoors, and checking traps and direct searching outside. By the end of Saturday, participants should recognise many of the more distinctive genera of ground-beetles. Sunday will concentrate on identifying species with a microscope, and recognising them in the field with a hand lens.

N Beginning with Bats

Burghley House 31-May-08 4.15pm-10.30pm
Henry Stanier and Chris Donnelly

N Hoverflies

Lings 7-Jun-08 10am-4pm
John Showers

This one-day course will introduce you to Hoverflies, their biology and their identification. Hoverflies are attractive insects whose identification is relatively straightforward with readily available keys. No previous experience with identification of flies is assumed. We will spend some time in the field looking at collecting hoverflies and will take some specimens back to demonstrate mounting and setting. Some prepared specimens will be provided to practice identification. A projection microscope will be used to show course members the key identification features used. Some guidance on equipment will be provided.

B Beginning with Insects

Totternhoe Quarry 7-Jun-08 10am-4pm
Ed Turner

C Beginning with Bats

Cambourne 7-Jun-08 4.15pm – 10.30pm
Henry Stanier and Chris Donnelly

B Solitary Bees and Wasps

Cooper's Hill 8-Jun-08 10am-4pm
Adrian Knowles

An introduction to the identification and ecology of solitary bees and wasps. The indoor introductory session will look at the major groups of solitary bees and wasps, using slides and mounted specimens. The equipment, books and other literature needed to identify species will be discussed and attempts made to key out species at least to genus, but microscopic study will be kept to a minimum. In the afternoon, the outdoor session will focus on searching for nesting and foraging habitats, looking for active bees and discussing their habitat requirements and conservation.

B Beginning with Insects

Totternhoe Quarry
Wednesday 11-Jun-08 10am-4pm
Ed Turner

B Beginning with Wildflowers

Stockrove CP 14-Jun-08 10am-4pm
Phil Irving

C Dragonfly Larvae Identification for Beginners

Wicken Fen 15-June-08
The Dragonfly Project

The aim of this course is for participants to be able to identify larvae to genus and understand the basic steps of "keying out" to species. Book through The Dragonfly Project see under Contact Details.

C Beginning with Wildflowers

Cambourne Wednesday 18-Jun-08 10am-4pm
Karen Buckley

C Beginning with Wildflowers

Cambourne 28-Jun-08 10am-4pm
Karen Buckley

N Longhorn Beetles

Old Sulehay 28-June-08 10am-4pm
Brian Eversham

Ancient forests and parklands are especially important for their dead-wood microhabitats and the insects, which live there. Of these, the beetles whose larvae live in dead wood are among the best known and most reliable in site assessment. When they are adult, most of these beetles visit flowers for nectar and pollen, when they are much easier to find and identify. This course will look at flower-visiting woodland beetles, especially those on three of the best nectar sources, hawthorn, dogwood and hogweed, and other conspicuous flowers such as bramble and dog rose. It is hoped these may form the basis for a new monitoring method for ancient woodlands.

C Introducing Dragonflies

Wicken Fen 5-Jul-08
The Dragonfly Project

Specifically designed for the beginners, this course includes dragonfly biology, ecology and identification. Book through the Dragonfly Project see under Contact Details.

C Adult Dragonfly and Water Plant Identification for Beginners

Wicken Fen 6-Jul-08
The Dragonfly Project

The aim of this workshop is for participants to be able to identify common species of adult dragonflies and water plants. Book through the Dragonfly Project see under Contact Details.

B Ants – Identification and Ecology

Totternhoe Quarry 6-Jul-08 10am-4pm
Brian Eversham and Ed Turner

A small but ecologically vital group of distinctive insects. Only about 20 species have been recorded in our area and it should be possible to learn to identify all these on the course. Ants are fascinating in their own right and are also useful in habitat monitoring; they are most sensitive to micro-climates and illustrate the success of grassland and heathland management.

C Identification of Willows, Sallows and Osiers

Cambourne 12-Jul-08 10am-4pm
Brian Eversham

Willows are our most important family of wetland trees and shrubs. Often considered a difficult group, a single day is sufficient to become familiar with the principal species and common hybrids in our area. By looking first at samples of each distinctive species, before considering possible complications, a simple-to-use key to the local species should enable participants to identify most species quickly and easily.

NEW WORKSHOP

N Identification of Flowering Grasses

Old Sulehay 13-Jul-08 10am-4pm
Lynne Farrell and Liz Blackman

The aim of this workshop is to be able to identify common grasses in the field using basic characteristics. Participants will be encouraged and helped to use keys and books in the classroom for some of the grasses collected.

B Arable Plants

Barton Gravel Pits 20-Jul-08 10am-4pm
Graham Bellamy

Arable plants are an important element of biodiversity within the farmed environment. Largely hugging the field edges they are susceptible to loss through fertiliser and herbicide use as well as conversion to grassland. The Bedfordshire chalk has arable plant communities that are of national importance. We will explore the arable plants on site in the afternoon after a morning considering what species we have and what can be done to conserve them.

N BES Evaluating Habitats

Old Sulehay 26-Jul-08 10am-4pm
Brian Eversham and Philip Precey

A brief introduction to the main habitat types in the three counties, the National Vegetation Classification and other ways of describing habitats. How do we assess the relative value of different habitats? How do we set priorities for management within a habitat or a nature reserve? How do we recognise ancient woodland or distinguish between newly-sown grassland and an old hay meadow? And how does size, location and surrounding landscape affect the value and the management of a habitat for wildlife?

B Butterflies and Day-flying Moths

Totternhoe Quarry 27-Jul-08 10am-4pm
Ed Turner

Day-flying moths and butterflies are one of the most charismatic groups of insects and are particularly important in ecological monitoring. This is because they are a well-known group and can be used to assess changes in the environment brought about by farming practices and climate change. Different habitat requirements of adults and larvae may also make them particularly sensitive to environmental changes. This training workshop is aimed at the beginner and will concentrate on the identification of the commoner species and surveying methods. We will end by using the butterfly transect technique to compare different types of habitat.

C Introducing Dragonflies

Wicken Fen 27-Jul-08
The Dragonfly Project

Specifically designed for the beginners, this course includes dragonfly biology, ecology and identification. Book through the Dragonfly Project see under Contact Details.

N Beginning with Bats

Burghley House
Thursday 31-Jul-08 4.15pm-10.30pm
Henry Stanier and Chris Donnelly

C Beginning with Insects

Woodwalton Fen
Wednesday 6-Aug-08 10am-4pm
Brian Eversham

N Identification of Yellow Composites

Old Sulehay 9-Aug-08 10am-4pm
Neil Crossman

The aim of this course is to enable participants to identify the yellow all-ligulate composites to species level, other than microspecies in the

notorious genera Hieracium (Hawkweeds) and Taraxacum (Dandelions). Yellow composites have a reputation of being a difficult group of plants yet the identification of many of the species can be surprisingly straightforward. Basic botanical knowledge will be assumed, so this course is not suitable for beginners.

B Beginning with Trees

Maulden/Clophill 16-Aug-08 10am-4pm
Colin Carpenter

C Beginning with Insects

Cambourne 17-Aug-08 10am-4pm
Brian Eversham

N Beginning with Insects

Old Sulehay Wednesday 3-Sep-08 10am-4pm
Henry Stanier

N Grasshoppers and Bush-crickets

Old Sulehay 6-Sep-08 10am-4pm
Brian Eversham

The 20 or so local species are almost all easy to identify and, by the end of the course, people should be able to recognise all of them by sight and many by sound. Ideal insects for monitoring they help to indicate several aspects of vegetation structure and management. They are an important part of the fauna of calcareous grassland, heathland and open, early successional habitats.

N Water Beetles – Identification and Anatomy

Barnes Meadow 13-Sep-08 10am-4pm
Richard Chadd

With about 250 species the water beetles are very diverse, ranging from familiar diving beetles to minute scavenger and vegetarian water beetles. The AIDGAP identification key is one of the most straightforward ever written, so this is an ideal group for anyone with access to a microscope. Many rare species live in the three counties and they are excellent indicators of water conditions.

N Beginning with Insects

Old Sulehay 13-Sep-08 10am-4pm
Henry Stanier

N Ground Beetles Weekend

Old Sulehay 19-21-Sep-08
(see previous description)
7pm-10pm Fri, 9.45am-4pm Sat and Sun
Brian Eversham

C Community Involvement Skills

Cambourne 4-Oct-08 10am-4pm
Erin Vos

This interactive workshop will introduce participants to the principles of environmental education and community involvement, focusing on how to interact with casual visitors, school groups, volunteers and other community members in local greenspaces. Participants will develop a foundation of skills in raising awareness of conservation issues, encouraging positive action, planning successful events and safely managing groups outside. The group will discuss challenges in getting people involved, receive an introduction to educational resources and practise some activities suitable for groups of all ages.

C Indoor Invertebrate Techniques

Note that this date has changed
Cambourne 19-Oct-08 10am-4pm
Brian Eversham and Richard Chadd

So, you've caught your invertebrate specimens, now what do you do with them? This workshop will cover such subjects as naming the parts of invertebrates, using keys, how to make and keep a collection, getting the best out of your microscope and ancillary equipment, how to dissect specimens, what equipment to buy and how to use it, and an overview of available literature. Both terrestrial and aquatic invertebrates will be covered.

C Fungi and Foray

Gamlingay Wood 25-Oct-08 10am-4pm
Peter Walker

The indoor session will include an illustrated talk on fungi and their biology. During the field trip specimens will be collected and identified and fungi habitats will be examined.

NEW WORKSHOPS

N Building Field skills: Shortcuts to Species Identification

Old Sulehay 8-Nov-08 10am-4pm
Brian Eversham

Conservationists, ecologists and naturalists all need to name species; and being able to do so adds hugely to the fun of a walk in the countryside. But at first, it may seem a daunting task. This workshop offers 'short-cuts' to identification of plants and animals: which groups to look for in which habitat; what books to use; why knowing 10% of the species can be a breakthrough - if it's the right 10%; recognition versus identification; translating keys into plain English; knowing which species to expect; making the most of a collection. Examples will be taken from a wide range of plants and animals, and the skills should be applicable to almost any group of organisms.

N Drystone Walling

TBA 9-Nov-08 10am-4pm
Ray Summers and Lisa Adams

A chance to learn the ancient skill of drystone walling using limestone. These walls form an excellent habitat for a variety of plants, lichens, invertebrates, amphibians and reptiles.

N Coppicing

Short Wood 16-Nov-08 10am-4pm
Ray Summers and Lisa Adams

This workshop will examine the theory and practice of coppicing. The day will be spent at the wood looking at coppicing, layering and ride-widening and how these activities can benefit the flora and fauna of the wood.

N Hedgelaying

Ditchford 7-Dec-08 10am-4pm
Ray Summers and Lisa Adams

Hedgelaying maintains the density and structure of hedgerows thereby benefiting both the hedge and the plants and creatures that depend on it. This practical workshop is suitable both for beginners and for those wishing to improve or revive existing skills.