



Bedfordshire  
Cambridgeshire  
Northamptonshire

2020

# Wildlife Training Workshops

Discover more about natural history and the varied wildlife and habitats of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire

# Booking form

## Before you book

- Contact Juliette Butler, Wildlife Training Workshops Officer either by phone or e-mail to check if places are available (Tues, Wed and Fri 9am – 2.30pm).
- Telephone: **01604 774031** or e-mail: **trainingworkshops@wildlifebcn.org**
- **To book onto a Dragonfly workshop please contact Henry Curry at the British Dragonfly Society telephone 01733 204286**
- Note that most workshops include an indoor session and a field trip to a nature reserve. If you have any concerns about the amount of walking involved, please discuss with the Wildlife Training Workshops Officer.

## To confirm a booking

Please send a completed booking form and either a cheque (payable to The Wildlife Trust) or telephone the Wildlife Training Workshops Officer with debit/credit card details. Address as follows:  
**Wildlife Training Workshops, The Wildlife Trust, Lings House, Billing Lings, Northampton NN3 8BE.**

## After a booking

- You will receive confirmation of booking either by e-mail or post.
- Programmes and location details are sent out two weeks before the workshop.
- Refunds are only available if cancellations are received **at least one month** before the workshop.

## Fees

£40	Standard workshops	Free	Ecology Group Members
£115	Professionals	Free	Reserve Wardens
£20	Students	Free	Watch Leaders
		Free	Key Volunteers

**Some workshops are charged at a different rate, please check event description**

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

County code	Workshop name	No of places	Date	Price
			Add donation	
			Total amount enclosed	
Title	First Name	Surname		
Address				
		Postcode		
Tel: (day)		Tel: (eve)		
e-mail:				

If you require any assistance to take full part in the workshop(s) (eg accessibility requirements) please discuss this with the training workshops officer and every effort will be made to provide assistance.

Are you a member of the BCN Wildlife Trust? Yes ☐ No ☐

Are you a volunteer of the BCN Wildlife Trust? Yes ☐ No ☐

If a volunteer, in what capacity?

Tick here if your employer is paying for your attendance in this workshop ☐

Would you like your information posted or e-mailed?

Lift sharing – are you happy for your details to be passed on to another participant? Yes ☐ No ☐

Is this your first Wildlife Training Workshop? Yes ☐ No ☐

How did you find out about this/these workshop(s)?

**The details supplied above will only be used by the Wildlife Trust and our workshop trainers to administer your workshop booking and will not be passed on to any third party without your prior consent**

**View our privacy policy at [www.wildlifebcn.org/privacy](http://www.wildlifebcn.org/privacy)**

**I am happy to be contacted** by the Wildlife Trust BCN about project updates, events and fundraising news by:

☐ Post ☐ Email ☐ Telephone  
(please tick or leave blank)

County Code:

**B** = Bedfordshire

**C** = Cambridgeshire

**N** = Northamptonshire



# Lower Plants

## **N** Introduction to Mosses and Liverworts

Mosses and liverworts are beautiful little plants which deserve close examination. This course will help you to appreciate their fine detail, and to use your observations to identify different species.

We will use hand lenses for field identification and also spend time examining a range of species with microscopes. Both beginners and improvers are welcome.

**Date(s):** Saturday 28 March 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Pitsford Water nature reserve  
**Trainer(s):** Rachel Carter

# Invertebrates

## **N** Introduction to Hoverflies **Only £60**

This 2-day course is designed to help the novice understand how to identify hoverflies. It will be taught using preserved material supplied by the tutors, although you are welcome to bring your own too.

The course will include a variety of presentations in which it is hoped that a broader understanding of hoverfly taxonomy, ecology and biogeography are better understood.

By the end of the course it is anticipated that participants will be able to find their way through to the identity of many of the commoner hoverflies and to understand some of the more challenging characters that can cause problems to the beginner.

**Date(s):** Saturday 29 February 2020  
Sunday 1 March 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm (both days)  
**Venue:** Ring Haw Field Station  
**Trainer(s):** Stuart Ball and John Showers

## **N** Introduction to Water Beetle Families

Water beetles are a great introduction to aquatic invertebrates, or recording in general, as the keys are fairly mature and very useable. With roughly 281 species and 65 families/sub-families it may seem a little daunting, but some are easily identifiable in the field and we will work through these on the day. They are a fascinating group, many of which have specific feeding and mating behaviours, with many being specialised predators. They are also great habitat indicators and can be used to monitor the health of aquatic habitats.

This workshop is aimed at the beginner, and using a new family identification guide and preserved specimens, we will work through some of the more easily identifiable families and species. There will also be an opportunity to use microscopes and keys to identify specimens caught during a field trip.

**Date(s):** Saturday 14 March 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Nene Wetlands  
**Trainer(s):** Kevin Rowley and Graham Warnes

## **B** Introduction to Solitary Bees

Solitary bees are not only charismatic; they are also incredibly important pollinators. They are very diverse and have fascinating life cycles. This course will introduce you to solitary bees and their ecology before teaching you to identify solitary bees to at least genus level.

**Date(s):** Saturday 9 May 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Cooper's Hill  
**Trainer(s):** Ryan Clark



## **B** Butterfly Identification and Ecology

Around 60 species of butterfly live in the UK and a diverse selection of them can be seen on Wildlife Trust BCN reserves. A complex life cycle means that many butterflies are extremely sensitive to environmental change and these species can act as important bio-indicators. Therefore, studying butterflies can help us monitor natural ecosystems and protect a wide array of other animals and plants.

This workshop aims to provide background information on the biology and ecology of butterflies, and will also include a field trip where you will learn to identify some of the species yourself. The site visit will take place at Totternhoe Quarry, one of only a handful of sites in Bedfordshire where the rare Duke of Burgundy butterfly holds a strong population.

**Date(s):** Saturday 16 May 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Totternhoe Quarry  
**Trainer(s):** Andrew Bladon and Matt Hayes

## **N** Introduction to Invertebrates

The day will introduce the diversity of invertebrates, and demonstrate how important they are for conservation and ecology. We will explore which kinds of invertebrate are most important in which habitats, and how their lifestyles make the different groups useful for understanding and monitoring nature reserves. You will see the sorts of features used in identifying species in different groups, and point the way to studying any chosen group in more detail. There will be a summary of the range of books, keys and websites which are available, an overview of the ways to sample and record invertebrates in the field, and a chance to practice ways of handling and examining live invertebrates.

The day will finish with the basics of photography for identification purposes, maintaining and using a reference collection of specimens, and how to use a hand lens and a microscope.

**Date(s):** Sunday 17 May 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Old Sulehay nature reserve  
**Trainer(s):** Brian Eversham

# Invertebrates

## **C** Identification of Flatworms and Leeches

Much of the invertebrate fauna of freshwaters consists of the arthropods – shrimps, spiders and insects – but there are many groups of large invertebrates, with their origins in the earliest years of life on Earth, which are also a major component of life in freshwaters. This includes flatworms and leeches.

This course will instruct, predominantly with practical work, on techniques and the use of standard guides to identify these primitive and interesting groups to family and species level, concentrating on triclad flatworms, and leeches. Participants will have access to an extensive collection of reference specimens as well as live material to identify.

**Date(s):** Saturday 30 May 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Ramsey Heights  
**Trainer(s):** Richard Chadd and Alex Pickwell

## **N** Introduction to Ground Beetles

The ground beetles (Carabidae) are an ideal group for the beginner to get to know, with around 350 species (about as diverse as birds in Britain). There are very good 'habitat indicators' in almost all habitats, from mountain-tops to sea-shores, and they are readily sampled, both by pitfall trapping and by direct searching. With practice, almost all species can be identified alive, in the field, with a hand lens.

The workshop will show participants how to recognise a ground beetle, and to place species in main groups. It will provide background in studying and identifying ground beetles, and interpreting the results of surveys.

By the end of the workshop, participants should be able to identify the most important genera of ground beetles accurately using keys and a microscope, and will be able to use keys to identify to species level.

**Date(s):** Sunday 31 May 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Old Sulehay nature reserve  
**Trainer(s):** Brian Eversham

## **B** Introduction to Spiders

The aim of this workshop is to familiarise participants with the 34 different spider families found in the UK, highlighting distinguishing characteristics observable in the field. Following an indoor session, there will be opportunities for fieldwork and demonstration of collection techniques out on the nature reserve at Cooper's Hill.

**Date(s):** Sunday 14 June 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Cooper's Hill  
**Trainer(s):** Lawrence Bee



## **N** Taking Solitary Bee Identification Further

This workshop is for people who have already had a go at identifying solitary bees, maybe by attending the earlier workshop. The focus of this session will be to practice using microscopes to identify solitary bees to species level and submit records.

**Date(s):** Sunday 5 July 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Lings local nature reserve  
**Trainer(s):** Ryan Clark

## **C** Introducing the Dragonfly

Specifically designed for the beginner, this very popular course includes dragonfly biology, life cycle, ecology and simple identification of common adult dragonflies, a video, plus dependent on the weather a field tour of dragonfly habitats on site.

**PLEASE BOOK THROUGH THE BRITISH DRAGONFLY SOCIETY.**

**Date(s):** Saturday 4 July 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 5pm  
**Venue:** Wicken Fen  
**Trainer(s):** Stuart Irons

## **B** Introduction to Grasshoppers and Bushcrickets

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.

**Date(s):** Sunday 19 July 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Totterhoe Quarry  
**Trainer(s):** Brian Eversham



## **N** Solitary Wasps

This workshop will give participants an introduction to the ecology and identification of solitary wasps.

Presentations will cover the identification and ecology of some of the more commonly encountered genera. Time will be spent on site catching and identifying live insects and studying their habitat requirements.

There will also be the opportunity to examine prepared specimens and explore some of the literature and resources available to help to take your learning further.

**Date(s):** Saturday 8 August 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Old Sulehay nature reserve  
**Trainer(s):** Rebecca Cartwright

# Botany

## C Introduction to Tree Identification

A workshop to identify common native broadleaved deciduous and (if found) exotic trees in winter whilst on a nature reserve. We will use key characters such as bud colour and shape, bark types and overall growth form to separate oak from field maple, sycamore from ash, hazel from sallow and apple from elm. The shape and size of trees and their growth rates are varied as a result of their particular family history and the environmental conditions they have adapted to. The types of trees, their characteristics and their associations are all key components of many of our local habitats, so knowing which trees are which will help you to better understand your local nature reserve.

**Date(s):** Saturday 25 January 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Cambourne  
**Trainer(s):** Matt Hamilton

## C Vegetative Grasses

Ecologists, reserve managers and field botanists cannot always do their site assessments when every species is in perfect condition – flowers, fruit and leaves all present. If you are recording a quadrat, or trying to see whether management is having the desired effect, you will need to identify every species and estimate their abundance. Especially in grasslands, but actually in most habitats, recognising grasses without their flower heads can be vital. Though apparently daunting at first, distinguishing the most important grasses in leaf is relatively straightforward given a few field-marks to look for. This course will provide a framework for identifying the commonest grasses in the region by vegetative features alone. Beginning with a description of these features (and a detailed handout for later use), the course will focus on field identification of grasses at a local site – testing the approach practically through field exercises. The course should equip the participants to identify most grasses that they encounter at whatever growth stage they happen to be!

**Date(s):** Sunday 26 April 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Upwood Meadows  
**Trainer(s):** Owen Mountford

## C Introduction to Umbellifers

Cow-parsley on road verges, or hogweed and wild carrot in meadows, are very familiar, but the umbellifers have a reputation for being 'difficult', because they all look alike (at least when crowded together in illustrated floras!). In fact, the members of this distinctive family are readily separated on closer examination, even without ripe fruits. By the end of the day you should be able to identify all the common species in our area. The group contains several useful indicator species, especially in wetland habitats and grassland, so are helpful in assessing habitats.

**Date(s):** Saturday 20 June 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Ramsey Heights/  
Woodwalton Fen  
**Trainer(s):** Neil Crossman

## C Grasses I – a beginner's introduction

Grasses are among the most important flowering plants, ubiquitous in almost all habitats. Their structure, co-evolved with grazing animals, adapts them well to mowing as well as grazing, so they dominate pastureland and meadows. They can be daunting to start with, as they look so different from other wildflowers. The day will explain the structure of grasses, including their beautiful if subtle flowers, and help you identify common grasses in the field using a hand lens. A short guide to recognising the most distinctive species, and keys to flowering and vegetative features will be used.

**Date(s):** Sunday 21 June 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Cambourne  
**Trainer(s):** Brian Eversham

## C Grasses II – practicing grass identification

For people who have already had a go at identifying grasses, perhaps having attended Grasses I, this day will use the same identification guides and give participants more time to practise using keys, and learning to recognise grasses outside. A little more attention will be given to vegetative, non-flowering features, so participants can begin to identify grasses at any time of year.

**Date(s):** Sunday 28 June 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Cambourne  
**Trainer(s):** Brian Eversham

## C Introduction to Wildflower Identification

Do you want to know how to tell the difference between a speedwell and a sandwort? Or to know what the parts are that make up a flower? Learn to use identification keys and about the characteristics of plants that are used to tell them apart.

**Date(s):** Saturday 11 July 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Trumpington Meadows  
**Trainer:** Matt Jackson



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## B Introduction to Aquatic Plants

During this workshop you will learn how to identify plants commonly found in ponds and rivers. The focus will be on submerged and floating vegetation which are found in the water and are not always apparent at first sight. Survey techniques, including the use of a grapnel, will be demonstrated in the field. By the end the workshop you should become familiar with some of the pondweeds and other common aquatic plants.

**Date(s):** Sunday 12 July 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Priory Country Park  
**Trainer(s):** Nathalie Hueber and John Wakely



# Botany

## **B** Heaths and their Wildflowers

Heaths are amongst the most threatened habitats in lowland England. Treatment with lime and with fertilisers has eliminated heathland from counties such as Cambridgeshire, though the significant areas of Greensand in Bedfordshire allow fragments to remain. Studying these habitats has a double benefit, not only does one learn about some of the most special sites in our region but one learns the basic building blocks of the heaths and moors that are so extensive in the north and west of Britain.

By visiting Cooper's Hill, Ampthill, we will be introduced to the key plant species of lowland heaths and investigate the way that heaths have developed in relation to climate, soils and management. Complementary indoor sessions will describe the ecological context of lowland heaths in England.

**Date(s):** Saturday 1 August 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Cooper's Hill  
**Trainer(s):** Owen Mountford



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## **C** Willows, Sallow and Osiers

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 principle species and common hybrids in our area.

By looking first at samples, a simple-to-use key to the local species should enable participants to identify most species quickly and easily.

**Date(s):** Sunday 6 September 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Cambourne  
**Trainer(s):** Brian Eversham

# Vertebrates

## **C** Introduction to Raptors

Raptors are a fascinating group of birds and the Great Fen is fast becoming a great place to see them, especially in winter.

This is a beginner's guide to learn more about where and when to see them, and how to identify them, perched and in flight.

**Date(s):** Saturday 18 January 2020  
**Timings:** 11am – 5pm  
**Venue:** Corney's Barn, Great Fen  
**Trainer(s):** Henry Stanier

## **N** Introduction to Wetland Birds

This workshop will concentrate on birds which use wetland environments. The indoor session will detail the way in which birds have adapted to wetland habitats and how this has determined their shapes and behaviour.

Most of the day will be spent in the field at Summer Leys looking at the birds and how they use this beautiful nature reserve.

**Date(s):** Saturday 22 February 2020  
**Timings:** 12pm – 6pm  
**Venue:** Summer Leys nature reserve  
**Trainer(s):** Richard Chandler

## **C** Introduction to Amphibians

The workshop will cover the identification, life histories and habitats of our native amphibians and surveying for the protected great crested newt including health and safety and legislation.

Participants will gain experience in assessing habitats and surveying for great crested newts on this former brickyard.

**Date(s):** Saturday 18 April 2020  
**Timings:** 3.30pm – 10pm  
**Venue:** Ramsey Heights  
**Trainer(s):** Helen and Terry Moore

## **C** Mammal Tracks and Signs

This workshop will highlight the sorts of mammal tracks and signs that you might come across when out in the countryside. 'Tracks' could include those of the larger mammals like badgers, foxes, otters and deer, but will hopefully include the smaller mammals like hedgehogs and water voles – all may depend on the weather. 'Signs' can be a very wide variety of things, including droppings, hair, fur, feeding signs (like holes in nuts and gnawed fir cones and tree bark) and 'homes' including badger setts and water vole burrows.

**Date(s):** Saturday 25 April 2020  
**Timings:** 10am – 4pm  
**Venue:** Hayley Wood  
**Trainer(s):** Peter Pilbeam

## **C** Warbler Identification

**Only £30**

This workshop aims at helping participants to identify our warblers by voice and plumage. It will start with an indoor session where we will listen to warbler songs and look at key features of warblers, to be followed by a walk testing our skills in the field. This workshop is open for beginners and those who want to improve existing identification skills alike.

**Date(s):** Saturday 25 April 2020  
**Timings:** 7am – 12pm  
**Venue:** Paxton Pits  
**Trainer(s):** Tony Fulford

# Vertebrates

## **N** Introduction to Woodland Bird Identification and Bird Song

This workshop will include visual and aural identification, plus an exploration of the niches each species occupies within the woodland, focusing on feeding, nesting and behaviour. The day will start with an indoor presentation followed by a field trip around the reserve.

**Date(s):** Saturday 2 May 2020

**Timings:** 10am – 4pm

**Venue:** Pitsford Water nature reserve

**Trainer(s):** Paul Gosling

## **C** Bat Sonogram Analysis

**Only £25**

Listening to bats on detectors is a skill which needs lots of experience to be able to positively identify an individual to species level, especially as they only stay in range for a few moments.

Using a recording device with the bat detector means that the calls can be reviewed after the event and a greater level of accuracy obtained when identifying what bat species made the call. Variations in call type, between species, are easily seen and help to explain what you hear when using a bat detector.

The training workshop will look at the range of species found in our area and have examples of the different software to view sonograms produced by recordings from a library file. Technological advances in the last 5 years have also brought visual analysis to the field and this is extremely useful when dealing with multiple species and call types.

Ecological consultants are a key user of this technology for emergence surveys and long term monitoring, but it also has its place with the amateur conservationist who wants to further their experience of bat identification.

**Date(s):** Friday 8 May 2020

**Timings:** 7pm - 10.30pm

**Venue:** Grafham Water

**Trainer(s):** Aidan Matthews



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## **C** Small Mammals - Identification and surveying

Capture and identification of small mammals will be demonstrated in this workshop along with a range of related aspects of work on small mammals. The evening session will be used to set a variety of small mammal traps and the early start is to see what's been caught overnight – the welfare of any trapped animal is of paramount importance. There will be a session on British mammals in general, methods of study (including owl pellet analysis) and on small mammal surveying.

**Date(s)/Time(s):**

Saturday 26 September 2020

5pm - 7.30pm

Sunday 27 September 2020

8am - 1pm

**Venue:** Paxton Pits

**Trainer(s):** Peter Pilbeam

## **B** Mammal Bone Identification

Discover the fascinating works of osteology and learn how to identify a wide range of skulls and bones from British animals.

Concentrating on mammals but also introducing birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish, this indoor workshop draws extensively on actual specimens to highlight the most useful identification features allowing you to confidently identify the most common bones likely to be found whilst enjoying the British countryside, in either owl pellets or predator droppings.

**Date(s):** Saturday 17 October 2020

**Timings:** 10am – 4pm

**Venue:** Cardington

**Trainer(s):** Richard Lawrence



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# Practical Skills Habitat Management

## **C** Trail Cameras for Wildlife

Whether you are using trail cameras (camera traps) on a nature reserve or in your back garden, they are an invaluable tool in revealing the presence and behaviour of your local wildlife. Do you know which one to purchase? Do you know how to set it up, how to position it, and what to do with the resulting photographs and/or video clips? This **2-day workshop** will help you to get the best from your trail camera.

### **Date(s)/time(s):**

Saturday 8 August 2020

2pm - 5pm

Sunday 9 August 2020

10am - 1pm

**Venue:** Corney's Barn, Great Fen

**Trainer(s):** Henry Stanier

## **C** The Answer Lies in the Soil

This workshop is an introduction to soils with particular emphasis on how different soil properties influence the plants and crops they support. We will consider the components and factors that make soils different from one another, whether it is parent material/texture, structure, hydrology, climate, etc. The workshop will be held at Wimpole Home Farm and will start with an indoor session on basic soil science relevant to local soils, before having a farm walk to see how soils change over the estate and how organic cropping and wildlife conservation have been integrated into the Estate's management.

**Date(s):** Sunday 15 March 2020

**Timings:** 10am - 4pm

**Venue:** Wimpole Home Farm

**Trainer(s):** Ian Bradley

## **N** Meadow Ecology and Conservation

The workshop will focus on the ecology and conservation of floodplain meadows and will include site visits to two meadows in Northamptonshire. The indoor session will look at the ecology, management and conservation of floodplain meadows as well as botanical and hydrological monitoring techniques. The afternoon site visit will look at both a SSSI meadow and existing meadow. The site visits will cover survey techniques, botanical ID skills and comparisons of differing management and restoration techniques.

**Date(s):** Saturday 27 June 2020

**Timings:** 10am - 4pm

**Venue:** Titchmarsh nature reserve/  
Aldwinckle meadows

**Trainer(s):** Matt Johnson

## Basic Ecology Skills

### **C** BES 1 - Species and Habitats (including habitat classification)

This workshop combines an introduction to the basic ecology of species and their populations, with a description and classification of the main habitats in our three counties. It will look at the factors which control individual species distributions, and how species may be used as 'indicators', to evaluate and monitor habitats.

The second part of the day is a brief introduction to the main habitat types in the three counties, and how they can be classified. We will also look at how size, location and surrounding landscape affects the value and the management of a habitat for wildlife.

**Date(s):** Sunday 16 August 2020

**Timings:** 10am - 4pm

**Venue:** Cambourne

**Trainer(s):** Brian Eversham

### **C** BES 2 - Habitat Management and Monitoring

The Trust puts much effort into grazing, mowing, coppicing and other activities - why? How do we decide what to do? What are the underlying principles?

The day will concentrate on the underlying ecological processes in managing habitat, and the basic features of the major habitat types - heathland, grassland, wetland and woodland.

The last part of the day will explain the role of monitoring in conservation, and which plants and animals to record in which habitats.

**Date(s):** Sunday 20 September 2020

**Timings:** 10am - 4pm

**Venue:** Cambourne

**Trainer(s):** Brian Eversham



More information on wildlife training workshops can be found at [www.wildlifebcn.org](http://www.wildlifebcn.org)