

Badgers, Otters & Dormice

Sunday 1 – Thursday 5

August 2010

Led by Paul Chanin



Slapton Ley Field Centre
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Office hours: 08:30 – 17:00

Monday – Friday with an answer phone facility at other times.

The Field Studies Council (FSC) is an environmental education charity committed to helping people explore, understand and be inspired by the natural world. Each year over 100,000 people experience the FSC through visits to our network of 17 Centres



Overview of the course

Many of Britain's mammals are either rare, elusive or just plain difficult to find! Slapton Ley National Nature Reserve and the surrounding areas provide rich habitats for many of Britain's mammals. We will concentrate on dormice, badgers and otters but Slapton is home to several species of bats and we will spend some time watching and learning about these too. This course will show you where and what to look for, and will help you to discover more about mammal ecology and conservation.

There will be opportunities to see a wide range of species and to study tracks, trails and signs. The programme will involve a combination of talks, walks, site visits and surveys, as well as evenings watching badgers and bats emerging from their homes and bats feeding.

We don't expect to see otters but there is a good chance of a close encounter with a badger or a dormouse and we normally have good views of lesser horseshoe and Daubenton's bats. Encounters with greater horseshoe, barbastelle and soprano pipistrelle bats are also possible.

SUNDAY	Introductory talk: Protected species of mammals. Outline plan rest of week.
MONDAY Morning	Dormice and Bats: Talk on ecology and conservation of dormice. An introduction to bats
Afternoon	Dormouse habitat and nest boxes on the reserve. Walk around the Lower Ley, looking for tracks and signs of otters.
Evening	Badger watch, then Daubenton's bats at Slapton Bridge.
TUESDAY Morning	Badgers: Talk on ecology and conservation. Badgers and Man.
Afternoon	Walk around Higher Ley looking for tracks and signs of badgers and otters
Evening	Watch the emergence of lesser horseshoe bats from a roost in Slapton village
WEDNESDAY Morning	Otters: Talk on ecology and conservation. Recent developments in the study of otters
Afternoon	Visit to bat roosts at Berry Pomeroy and Berry Head.
Evening	Commuting bats at Wood Lane. Soprano pipistrelles and lesser horseshoe bats, very likely. Barbastelles and Greater horseshoe bats, possible.
THURSDAY	Depart after breakfast

NB: Programme subject to change depending on weather.

About the centre

Located on the southern tip of the Devon coast, the Centre is surrounded by the 200 hectare [Slapton Ley National Nature Reserve](#). Owned by the Whitley Wildlife Trust and managed by the Centre, the Ley is the largest freshwater lake in the south west and is extensively used in the courses at Slapton. The surrounding coastline and nearby Dartmoor National Park provides unrivalled opportunities for field courses.



About the tutor

Paul Chanin is a well known mammal ecologist with a long interest in mammals in general and badgers and otters in particular. He has published two books on otters, is a member of the IUCN Otter Specialist Group and has carried out research at Slapton on otters and mink.

Course fees

- Sole occupancy Room: £375
- Shared accommodation: £335
- Non-resident: £250

What is included within the fee?

- Up to 10 hours of tuition a day
- Full board accommodation including a cooked breakfast, picnic lunch, home made cakes and an evening meal. Vegetarian and other dietary options are available
- Tea and coffee making facilities available throughout the day
- Use of resources including library, workrooms, studios and the Centre grounds
- Centre organised transport during the course (other than boat trips) and most admission fees

Non-resident course fees include all of the above except breakfast and accommodation.

What to bring

- a good torch
- Binoculars and hand lens
- Notebook
- Warm clothing for night excursions
- Waterproofs can be borrowed.
- Suitable footwear. Wellingtons can be borrowed.
- Lunch box and flask
- Sun hat/sun screen
- Bat Detector (if you have one)

Start and finish times

Resident visitors are requested to arrive on Friday 1st August at the office reception for registration before 5.30pm. After this time self-directed arrival information will be posted on the front door. There will be an introductory talk with the Head of Centre at 6.00 pm. Supper will be between 6.30pm and 7.30pm. Breakfast will be from 7.30am. Tuition will end Wednesday evening, with departure after breakfast on Thursday 5th August.

Transport will be available to pick up from Totnes station at 2.15pm and 4.00pm. A return journey will be available at 9am or 4pm on day of departure. The total cost of this is £15 per participant.

Directions to the centre

The Field Centre is located between Kingsbridge, Dartmouth and Totnes and is about 20 minutes from each.

- Totnes Station is on the South West Main Line.
- Under 3 hours direct to London Paddington.
- Under 3 hours direct to Birmingham New Street.
- A pick up from the train station can be arranged, please contact the Centre for more details.



Booking procedure

Provisional bookings can be made by telephoning the centre or by completing the online form on the FSC website: www.field-studies-council.org

You will then be asked to complete a booking form, located within the relevant brochure or available to print off from the FSC website.