

Identifying Fungi

10th - 17th September 2010

Led by Liz Holden

Level: Open to all



Photographed by: Liz Holden

Kindrogan Field Studies Centre

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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

Course outline: Whether your interest in fungi is just for fun or for more serious recording, this course aims to give participants the tools to be more confident in their identifications.

Time will be spent in the field looking for the fungi that associate with a stunning range of habitats including Caledonian pine, broadleaf woodland and old grasslands; many of the fungi that grow here are rarely seen in other areas of the country. In the field with an expert, it is possible to clarify the distinguishing macro characters that can be so difficult to transfer from the guidebooks to the real world. Prior knowledge of the scientific names of fungi is not required for this course but it is hoped that in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, you will surprise yourself at how many names you actually learn during the week.

Part of the afternoons and evenings will be set aside for working indoors to allow close examination of the specimens collected. Tips on taking spore prints and other simple techniques will also be given. A number of texts will be available, ranging from beginner's keys to genus monographs and time will be spent working through keys with those who are not confident in their use. Techniques will be taught to beginners in microscopy, to enable access to the world of spores and other fascinating micro-characters.

Evening talks will include further information about fungal lifestyles and why they are so important in our woodlands, grasslands and other habitats.

Your tutor: Liz Holden has been seriously interested in fungi for twenty years and has been involved in fungal field surveys for the last ten, working in a range of habitats across the UK. She is particularly interested in sharing her fascination in the identification, recording and ecology of fungi.

Recommended reading:

There is no essential reading list, although a familiarity with the names of different parts of the fungal fruiting bodies would be useful. This information can usually be found in the introductions of the many field guides that are available in bookshops and libraries. A selection of these books is given below:

'Mushrooms' by Roger Phillips published in 2006 by Macmillan. This is a revised and updated version of the excellent book that Pan published in 1981. It is a bit large for taking into the field but with good photographic illustrations.

'The New Naturalist Library – Fungi' by Brian Spooner and Peter Roberts published in 2005 by Collins. Not a field guide but an excellent and readable introduction to the kingdom of the fungi.

'Pocket Nature – Fungi' by Shelley Evans and Geoffrey Kibby published in 2004 by Dorling Kindersley Ltd. A useful field guide

'Eyewitness Handbooks – Mushrooms' by Thomas Læssøe published in 1998 by Dorling Kindersley Ltd. A useful field guide

'How to Identify Edible Mushrooms' by Patrick Harding, Tony Lyon and Gill Tomblin published in 1996 by Collins. This has been reprinted and focuses on the features of edible fungi and their look a likes.

Equipment to bring with you:

Wellingtons and/or waterproof walking boots (some are available at the centre at a small cost)
Waterproof clothing (some are available at the centre at a small cost)
Lunch Box , vacuum flask
Rucksack
Plenty of spare warm clothing
Notebook

Booking Procedure

To book a place on this course, please complete the booking form and send it together with a deposit of £50.00 (cheque payable to Field Studies Council). Provisional bookings should be made by telephone. Payment of the balance of the course fee will be 30 days before the beginning of the course. Cancellation after this date may leave the customer liable for the full amount – a condition which is accepted when the booking is confirmed. You are recommended to take out personal cancellation insurance to cover this eventuality.

Course Fees & What's Included

Resident - £440 Sole Occupancy / £370 Shared Accommodation includes tuition, full board accommodation, transport to sites, the use of our library, from supper on 10th until after breakfast on 17th September 2010

Non – Residential - £326 includes tuition packed lunches, evening meals and transport (in other words everything but bed and breakfast).

Transport – Any excursions during the trip will be made in either the Centre vehicles or private cars. The cost of this is included in the fee. For anyone who kindly uses their own vehicle for the course excursions will be reimbursed for petrol costs at a set rate.

Times – Resident and Non-resident visitors are requested to arrive at the centre before 7pm on 10th Sep and report to reception. Supper will be served at 7.30pm after which there will be an introductory talk about the centre. Breakfast is served at 8am. Tuition will end on the evening of the 16th with departure after breakfast on the 17th September.

Weekend/Mid week Courses – Courses that run from Friday to Sunday or mid week may finish late, so to accommodate this we maybe able to offer extra nights accommodation.