

Spider Identification and Ecology

21st - 28th August 2010

Led by Mike Davidson

Level: Intermediate



Photographed by: Mike Davidson

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: Spiders are very beautiful and interesting animals which play important roles in all ecosystems from seashore to mountain top. If you are keen to learn more about the identification and ecology of spiders then this is the course for you. Whether you are a complete beginner, or more advanced student of spiders, then this week long course will provide you with an ideal opportunity to develop your knowledge, at a pace which suits you, taking advantage of the excellent lab facilities at Kindrogan and the diverse local habitats of Perthshire.

Through a mixture of talks, lab sessions and fieldwork you will learn how to find spiders in their habitats; identify them reliably and understand their role in the ecosystem. Guidance will be provided for those interested in becoming involved in spider recording and there will be opportunities to discuss their conservation.

Be aware: unfortunately it is necessary to pickle spiders to achieve reliable identification of most species (by microscopic examination) – but you won't be forced to kill them.

Your tutor: Mike Davidson is an amateur naturalist with a particular interest in invertebrate distribution, ecology and conservation. He is the area organiser for the British Arachnological Society Spider Recording Scheme in N.E. Scotland.

Equipment to bring with you:

Waterproof walking boots and/or Wellingtons (some are available at the centre at a small cost)

Waterproof clothing (some available at the centre at a small cost) and plenty of spare warm clothing

Rucksack

Lunch Box, vacuum flask

Microscopes with reasonable magnification are available – but if you have your own you may want to bring it with a lamp.

Some dissection equipment will be provided but bring fine watchmaker's forceps if you have them.

Hand-lens – x10

Some field sampling equipment will be provided but if you have a pooter, sampling tubes, a sweepnet, beating tray, plastic groundsheet, white plastic tray you may want to bring them.

Books: any of the following will be useful if you have access to them –

Collins Field Guide to Spiders of Britain & Northern Europe by M.J. Roberts – recommended

Key to the Families of British Spiders by L.M. Jones-Walters, Field Studies Council (hopefully copies will be available for sale). Recommended

The Spiders of Great Britain and Ireland by M.J. Roberts, Harley Books. Recommended but expensive.

There are various other photo guides and older I.D. books which may be useful.

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, use of library, from supper the 21st of August 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 21st 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 27th with departure after breakfast on the 28th of August.

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.