

Malham Tarn Field Centre

It is the first day of December and the year is ending as it began with snow and ground temperatures down to -9.5°C . 2009 at Malham Tarn has been a very busy year as we contribute to fulfilling the FSC mission of "Bringing Environmental Understanding to All". The Autumn period has been full with a great variety of activity including the sixth Malham Tarn Research Seminar, University groups, schools on the Eco-Challenge scheme as well as A-level Ecology and Geography courses and leisure learning courses for artists, crafters and navigators. Brief details are included in this mini-newsletter.

As the new year approaches we are looking forward to 2010 with many friends old and new already booked to come. There is some capacity for more groups but please enquire as soon as possible as the 2011 diary is already filling up.

Adrian Pickles
Head of Centre

Eco-Challenge challenges KS3 students

The FSC Lottery funded Eco-challenge project continues to bring Key Stage Three students from across the country to the Centre for a holistic course that involves adventurous, curricular and practical conservation tasks.



The National Trust estate warden and volunteer team have restored the walled garden to its former glory. This has been a fantastic resource for our students and different groups have cleared a wildlife area and laid footpaths. Future work could involve garden maintenance, harvested and the eaten food.

There are lots of pictures and news about this on a special open access FACEBOOK site called the Friends of Malham Tarn Walled Garden. Please have a look!



BIOLOGY A-LEVEL: Year 12 to Year 13

The autumn has had the first Year 13 A2 Biology courses. Some have tried mock AQA ISAs, others have completed the full suite of evaluative, quantitative and qualitative assessments for OCR courses.

The increased emphasis on synopticity at A2 level has led to even more holistic approach to courses for Biologists so we highlight areas where the information at AS links through to A2 level with topics such as energy flow, succession and the application of statistics.

Measuring Trees

The new WJEC Forestry day deals with ideas about Agricultural Exploitation and Conflicts between Production and Conservation. Students measure size of trees linked to age and consider different management strategies.



EVOLUTION MEGALAB

Students from several schools have contributed to the Open University, online Evolution Megalab web page by catching and identifying snails from different habitats. The snail work relates the results to genetics and habitat preference due to climate change. The project will contribute to the future understanding of the ecology and genetics of banded snails for the future.

NEW GCSE Geography Courses...

For the new GCSE specifications we have developed new courses. The main change is a transfer from coursework to a controlled assessment. We offer a number of structured programmes that enable students from all exam boards to complete varying parts of their controlled assessment.



The two main topics that we will focus on for Controlled Assessment Programmes will be Tourism and Rivers

Geography AS and A2 courses

After a year of Geography courses using the new specifications and now that teachers and students have seen how the exam boards are presenting questions, the tutor team have reviewed and refined our courses. We have had a number of helpful comments from teachers which are very useful in this process.

If you have had a chance to reflect on your visit any thoughts will be most welcome - send to tutors.mt@field-studies-council.org

Trout in the Classroom – Crayfish in the Field Centre-

Thanks to the 'Trout in the Classroom' project and Neil Handy of the Environment Agency there are two glass tanks in the entrance hall. In the Tarn tank we have a trout, a stone loach and two adult native white-clawed crayfish. The two crayfish are very different as the male is a very rare blue colour whilst the female is the normal brown colour. Eggs from the female hatched successfully in July and 22 are maturing in the nursery tank which models conditions in a stream.



As well as being of informal interest in their own right the tanks are a way of relating the issue of invasive species and conservation to students – a prime example of the value of using situations and evidence from the real world to help students engage with ideas. Next year we are hoping to add a third tank to show the full life stages of the crayfish.

RESEARCH Seminar,

The 2009 Research Seminar was held over the weekend of 27 - 29 November. The weekend was a great success and brought ecologists, geologists, geographers and archaeologists together to share the results of their work and discuss the future of the National Nature Reserve Management Plan.



Proceedings from the 2007 Seminar are published and are available from the Centre Office or on the FSC website www.field-studies-council.org/malham.

We hope to continue the local species information leaflets as information becomes available. If you have any records that could be shared with the rest of the world please get in touch

People and the Dales

Following on from the Learning in Limestone Country project a new partnership between FSC, Yorkshire Dales National Park, Bradford MDC, Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust and Natural England has been established using funding from the Access to Nature Scheme.

This project works with community groups who are somehow excluded from accessing the natural world and the splendours of protected areas such as the Ingleborough and Malham National Nature reserves.

Lead worker Judy Rogers would be glad to hear from any community group who would like help in getting out to this special landscape. Contact the People in the Dales project: judy.rogers@ydmtd.org

Inspired by Heritage - Artist in Residence

Our artist in residence, Jackie Hunt, working with students and staff has been inspired to create a new window. This will be installed in Tarn House in 2010.

Leisure learning and courses for professional development

Details of all our courses are now on the FSC website. There are several new ones for 2010 including making a stained glass panel with Jackie Hunt. Please do get in touch with the Centre if you would like a brochure or, better still, why not book onto a course and learn a new skill.