

Bees, Hoverflies & Flowers: pollinators & pollination



Course Overview

Bees, hoverflies and other pollinating insects play an enormously important role in natural habitats and agricultural systems alike. Some pollinators are known to be declining, and their conservation is a cause for concern. This course introduces the insects that play a role in pollination, helping you to recognise them, understand how they interact with flowering plants, and find out how to play your part in conserving them.

Course Description

Pollinating insects include some very familiar and attractive species. Many plants depend on these insects to survive, and in turn the insects depend on the plants, resulting in fascinating interactions between these groups. Pollinators, and especially bees, have been in the news a lot in recent years. Some are known to be declining, and this has been linked to a combination of the use of pesticides, increased incidence of disease, and loss of habitat.

This course introduces a range of pollinating insects, including the variety of different bees and hoverflies: how to find them, how to recognise them and what their role is in pollination. We'll be able to explore the rich flower meadows and hedgerows of Forty Hall Farm in the Forty Hall Estate in Enfield. A number of projects have been set up recently to help record and conserve pollinators, and you'll be able to find out how to take part in these.

By the end of this course participants will have:

- Learnt to distinguish some of the important insect pollinators
- Gained an overview of the interactions between plants and insects
- Had experience of how and where to find pollinators in the field

- Found out where to go for further information and guidance on insect identification and conservation, and how to join in with current pollinator projects

This course runs from 09:45 to 16:00; please bring a packed lunch.

Course Schedule

09:45 – 10:00 Assemble by farm gate. Registration & refreshments at the Forty Hall Farm.

10:00 Welcome, Health and Safety & Introduction

10:20 Presentation - the main pollinator groups and how they interact with plants

11:00 Field Session - Exploring pollinators around the farm. First steps at identifying insects: which group is it in and what is its natural history

12:30 Lunch

13:30 Classroom - a closer look at the insects we found in the morning, taking identification further

14:00 Field session 2 – finding more pollinators and carrying out surveys

15:45 Summary - a chance to ask more questions

16:00 Course finishes

About the Tutor

Martin Harvey tutors regularly for FSC. He is an ecologist specialising in insect conservation and recording, and has worked on projects including iSpot at The Open University, and iRecord for the Biological Records Centre. Martin runs recording schemes for moths and soldierflies.

What to Bring

- Weather-appropriate footwear and clothing, ie waterproofs and / or hats etc
- Appropriate protection (sun cream, insect repellent)
- Notebook and pencil
- Not essential, but if you have them: insect net, bug boxes, insect field guides, digital camera, binoculars (small, close-focusing ones work best)

Catering Option

Please bring a packed lunch and plenty to drink. Complimentary tea, coffee available all day during classroom sessions. There is a cafe at adjoining Forty Hall but is extremely busy and your lunchbreak maybe more queuing than eating !

Transport Requirement

None – all fieldwork on site

How to Book

Online <http://www.field-studies-council.org/centres/eppingforest/leisurelearning.aspx>

By phone 020 8502 8500

Location Details

Forty Hall Farm, Forty Hill, Enfield EN2 9HA. Directions and a variety of transport links can be found here:

<http://www.fortyhallfarm.org.uk/downloads/map&directions.pdf>

There is ample parking as you enter the Forty Hall estate on your right with the farm a short walk down the drive.

Disclaimer

All timings are approximate. This is an outline programme and may be subject to change according to the weather, requirements of the group or access restrictions to field sites on the day of the course.