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 throughout the UK.

Course Overview

This course will be particularly useful for environmental professionals who may be required to interpret freshwater and terrestrial invertebrate survey data in a variety of situations. It provides practical experience of undertaking an invertebrate site survey and interpreting the results using a variety of analytical tools, particularly using Natural England’s Invertebrate Species-habitat Information System (ISIS). A basic level of competence in species level identification in at least one group of invertebrates will be assumed.

Central to the course will be the planning, implementation and interpretation of your own site survey. You will have Drake et al. (2007) as the core text to guide you on issues such as standardised sampling protocols and further information will be provided. However, following this introduction you will have to work closely with your course colleagues to ensure that the exercise is completed within the deadline. Alongside the survey, through illustrated talks, you will be introduced to a range of techniques for interpreting invertebrate data (including species richness, Wetscore, SQI, CCI and ISIS). The relevance of population size, indicator species, habitat fidelity and species assemblages in assessing conservation value will be discussed. Also, workshop sessions will provide opportunities to explore these analytical methods using species lists from your own sites. This course is part of the MSc in Biological Recording run by Manchester Metropolitan University.
Course Tutor

Paul Lee is an independent ecological consultant specialising in invertebrate ecology and conservation. He undertakes invertebrate based site assessment projects for national conservation bodies, Wildlife Trusts and many other organisations from civil engineering companies to national park authorities.

What to Bring

- A hand lens is essential, preferably x10 and/or x20.
- Warm waterproof clothing and footwear.
- A field notebook and pencil.
- Your own laptop (if available, if not please contact the Centre)
- A memory stick for a copy of ISIS software and to store field data. (Please bring any species lists of your own from sites that you wish to investigate but you are advised to bring them as an excel spreadsheet to avoid a lot of retyping.)
- A copy of the core text (see Background Reading section)
- A sandwich box, flask and/or water bottle and a bag to carry your kit.

Collecting equipment, specimen preparation materials and taxonomic works will be available to borrow but you may wish to bring your own if you already own them. Laptops will also be available for group use but some people prefer to bring their own machines.

Useful Books

The following resources are recommended. The first can be downloaded from Natural England’s website and is the core text for the course. You should bring your own copy to the course if at all possible.


Provisional Timetable

Friday: Introductions, Site surveys for invertebrates, Assignment


Sunday: Field visit, Further direct assessment, Laboratory workshop – specimen identification. An introduction to ISIS. In the evening there will be an ISIS workshop.

Monday: Using existing data, Laboratory workshop / ISIS workshop. In the afternoon there will be a round up of the course.
Course fees

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<th>Sole occupancy:</th>
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<th>Shared occupancy:</th>
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<th>Non-resident:</th>
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The residential course fee includes

- Full Board accommodation with sole occupancy *(shared occupancy is available at a reduced fee)* including cooked breakfast, picnic lunch, afternoon cake and evening meal.
  - Vegetarian and other dietary options are available
  - Tea and coffee making facilities are available throughout the day
- Transfer to and from Shrewsbury train station
- Up to 10 hours of tuition a day, with breaks for meals and refreshments
- In course transport and necessary admission fees
- Use of centre facilities including library, workrooms, studios and the Centre grounds
- Rigorous and proven health and safety procedures including 24 hour emergency cover
- Insurance to cover cancellation, personal belongings, personal accident, legal liability and medical emergency / emergency travel arrangements

The non-resident course fee includes all of the above except breakfast and accommodation.

To make a booking contact: FSC Preston Montford directly by

- Telephone: 0845 330 7378
- E-mail to: enquiries.pm@field-studies-council.org
- Online at: www.field-studies-council.org/prestonmontford

Accreditation

This is one of a series of courses run jointly with Manchester Metropolitan University. There is assessment of the course through, for example, identification tests, producing survey reports or field journals, working through keys and other various pieces of work. Credits from these assessments contribute towards the MSc Biological Recording. To gain University Credits you must be registered on the programme. To request an application pack, please contact Emma Hopkisson, Manchester Metropolitan University, The Gateway, Chester Street, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY1 1NB

Telephone: 01743 355137
E-mail: E.Hopkisson@mmu.ac.uk

The course is also suitable for non-credit students with experience of invertebrate collection and identification. Bookings are to be made via Manchester Metropolitan University at the above address.
General Information 2015

FSC Preston Montford was opened as an outdoor education centre in 1957 by the Field Studies Council. Since then it has been delivering high quality, inspirational curriculum related outdoor education. Our teaching staff are expert in their field and we work with the widest possible range of learners; from pre-school to Masters level. We can provide courses for schools, universities or individuals; for infants, school students, undergraduates or enquiring adults; anyone with an interest in the natural world. We offer day and residential courses and the Centre is available as a venue for others to use; there are bed and catering facilities for 130 visitors along with 6 fully equipped teaching and meeting spaces, a library, common rooms and a bar.

About The Centre

Location and site: FSC Preston Montford is very accessible by road or rail. The site is 10 km west of Shrewsbury just 3 minutes drive from the A5 and 15 minutes drive from Shrewsbury Station.

Buildings: The campus has a complex of three main buildings built between 1700 and 1990 located around a central pond. Each building has bedrooms, classrooms and office space with additional classroom or meeting spaces set in a wooded garden area. The Main House has undergone a major re-furbishment in the first half of 2014 to provide modern bed and bathroom facilities as well as enhanced reception, meeting and library space.

Facilities and services: A dining room and kitchen are part of the Main House; all catering is done in house with a fully trained and experienced Catering Team who cater for a full range of dietary requirements. The main teaching, recreation and dining areas are on ground floor level and some accommodation is available for wheelchair users. The different ages of our Centre buildings means that bedrooms range in style from dormitories to twin rooms with full en-suite.

The centre has a wide range of specialist equipment for teaching geography, ecology and other subjects outdoors as well as microscopes and laboratory equipment for examining and analysing samples indoors. Classrooms are fully equipped with interactive whiteboards and Wi-Fi access.

There are common rooms, drying areas, a library, a shop and a bar. We operate a 24 hour duty system and all staff are first aid trained and DBS checked.

Site and grounds: The Centre has 11 hectares of ground with a range of habitats. To the north lies the River Severn Montford SSSI which has a bank of semi-ancient woodland growing on a steep bank of glacial drift. Most of the area is grazed fields with hedges, 18th century specimen trees and some more recently planted copses. The eastern side of the estate is an area of more specialised habitats; ponds, wildflower meadow, ancient orchard, the remains of a walled garden and a Bee hotel.

Around the campus there is a sensory garden with a willow classroom area, weather monitoring plot, compost heap with wormery and installations for simulating rainfall-runoff relationships. The lawns, ponds, grassland and woodland are used for introductory teaching activities as well as student recreation.