Bird Language and Nature Awareness

Nestled in the Scottish Highlands, Kindrogan is within close reach of some of the most secluded parts of the UK, allowing for inspiring landscapes and rich wildlife to feature in our courses.

Course Overview

Reading ‘bird language' is the ancient art of interpreting bird calls and behaviour, and is closely related to tracking. We will discover how interpreting bird vocalisations can help us to see more wildlife and become much more aware of what is happening in the wider landscape. We will also use a range of tools to hone our nature awareness and become more observant naturalists.

Course Description

We will be paying close attention to the calls and behaviour of birds, and learning how to interpret what these are telling us about the lives and whereabouts of other wildlife, including ground and aerial predators. There will be observation time in the field as well as exciting mapping exercises in which we gain a fascinating insight into the hidden lives of Kindrogan’s wildlife. The theory aspects will include the key categories of bird calls and patterns of disturbance and what these mean. As a standalone course or as a complement to the Wildlife Tracking course, we will also explore and deepen key naturalist skills such as stealth, camouflage, journaling and observation, through a range of engaging and fun activities (while seeing as much wildlife as we can in the process)!
# Indicative timetable

*(please note this is subject to change due to factors like the needs of the group, weather and conditions)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday</strong></td>
<td>Arrival before dinner. (Dinner is served between 5.45 and 6.30).&lt;br&gt;Evening talk introducing the content of the course.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday</strong></td>
<td>During the day we will be in the field observing birds and other wildlife and using a variety of observation and awareness exercises. Theory and group mapping will be covered at various points during the day and evening. There will also be the opportunity for evening wildlife walks and using the pine marten hide.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday</strong></td>
<td>There will be further field sessions during the day, covering new skills and exercises, and following up and verifying the observations and predictions of the previous day. The evening session will include a night walk and wildlife watching, as well as pulling together the threads of the weekend’s observations.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Monday</strong></td>
<td>Depart after breakfast.</td>
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</tbody>
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## Course Objectives

- Recognising a range of key patterns of bird alarm (audio and visual)
- Recognising different categories of bird call
- Understanding how to locate wildlife using bird language
- Experiencing the value of the ‘sit spot’ for wildlife observation
- Learning observation and sensory awareness tools and exercises
- Improving stealth, camouflage and awareness skills
- Using mapping and journaling as naturalist tools
- Deepening nature connection through bird language

## About the Tutor

Dan Puplett is a naturalist, conservationist and outdoor educator. He has been involved in a wide range of conservation projects, and worked for Trees for Life for over 10 years. Dan is a certified wildlife tracker and has helped to lead lynx and wolf tracking surveys in Slovakia. As a freelance instructor he teaches naturalist skills, bushcraft and nature awareness to all ages. [www.danpuplett.net](http://www.danpuplett.net)

## What to Bring

- Lunch box and vacuum flask
- Plenty of spare warm clothing (and clothing for sunnier weather just in case!)
- Day sack
- Notebook
- Waterproofs and appropriate footwear (wellies & waterproofs can be borrowed from us)
- Camera
- Binoculars
- Torch

For your own and group safety, Centre staff reserve the right to refuse to take people out on excursions if they are not properly equipped. If you are unsure equipment required, please contact us for advice.
Suggested Reading

What the Robin Knows by Jon Young
The Walker’s Guide to Outdoor Clues and Signs by Tristan Gooley
Animal Tracking Basics by Jon Young and Tiffany Morgan

Arrival and Departure Times

Resident and Non-resident visitors are requested to arrive at the centre before 5pm on the first day of the course. An evening meal will be served between 5:45 and 6:30pm and the course will commence after a brief welcome to Kindrogan. Departure is after breakfast on the final day.

Extra nights
If you are interested in staying at the Centre for additional nights, before or after the course, please contact the Centre for availability and costs which start from £25 for B&B, or £40 full board (we can confirm B&B availability 4 weeks prior to the course). Sunday rate £35.

Partner Rate
For those paying the sole occupancy price, we are offering our guests a special rate for those who would like a twin room for them and their partner not enrolled on an FSC course, at £35 per night for dinner, bed and breakfast.

What is Included

- **Full professional tuition**: usually each full day of our courses has 10+ hours of tuition, including after dinner sessions. (When a course Sunday it usually ends at approximately 3pm).
- **Full board and accommodation**: including cooked breakfast, packed lunch, Tea/Coffee, homemade cakes and an evening meal.
- **Special dietary requirements**: Vegetarian and other dietary options are catered for; we just ask you to notify us at least three weeks in advance of the course if you have special requirements.
- **Centre Facilities**: including use of our lounges, library, wildlife hides and drying room.
- **Travel**: when transport is required to sites during your course this is provided within the fee.
- **Non-resident rate**: includes all of the above apart from Bed and Breakfast and a packed lunch each day.

How to Book

To book a place on this course you can either:

- Complete a booking form from the brochure and send it together with a £50.00 non-refundable deposit (cheque payable to Field Studies Council Limited) or provide us with you debit/credit card number details.
- Book online at [www.field-studies-council.org](http://www.field-studies-council.org)
- Telephone 01250 870150 to book directly with FSC Scotland (card payments made over the phone)