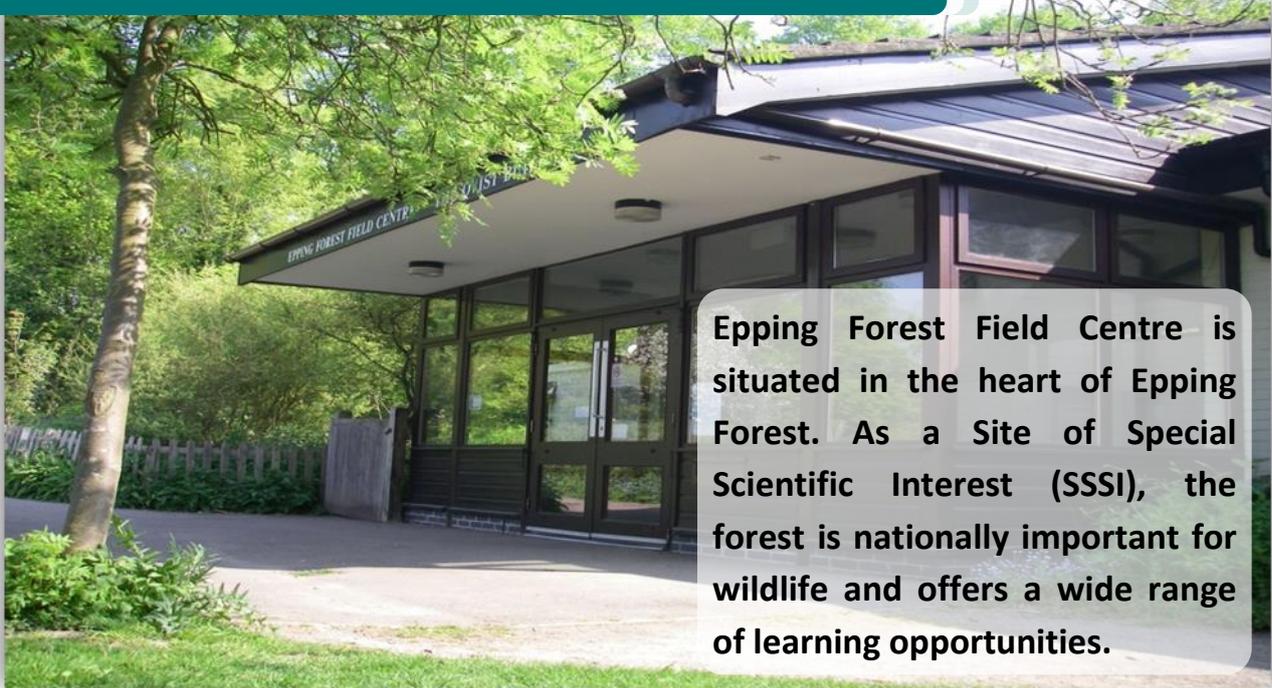


Discovering Diptera: Flies under the Microscope



Epping Forest Field Centre is situated in the heart of Epping Forest. As a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), the forest is nationally important for wildlife and offers a wide range of learning opportunities.

Course Description

Hoverflies, horseflies, houseflies, fruit flies, soldierflies, bee-flies, craneflies, greenbottles, mosquitoes and more: flies are all around us, but are often overlooked or even actively discouraged. In fact the true flies, or Diptera, are one of the most species-rich orders of insect in the UK, with over 7,000 species to choose from. They are found in all habitats and have fascinating life-histories and ecosystem roles.

This day course will provide an introduction to the Diptera, getting familiar with some of the major families and with a focus on some of the larger and more colourful species in the hoverfly, soldierfly, robberfly and related families. The course will be mostly based in the classroom, using microscopes and specimens to learn how to identify the different groups. We will also spend a short time outside searching for winter flies. This course is suitable for beginners with an interest in insects, as well as countryside professionals (but please note that we will be working with dead specimens, which are essential for identification in many cases).

Course Objectives

By the end of the workshops participants will:

- Be able to recognise a number of distinctive fly families
- Have used keys to confirm family level identification and to go on to species identification
- Have had experience of field methods for finding flies
- Be familiar with some of the most frequently encountered species
- Have explored the benefits and limits of identifying hoverflies from photos

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- Know how to record flies to for local and national recording schemes
- Know where to get further help

Course Schedule

09.45 - Registration and refreshments at the Epping Forest Field Centre
10.00 – Introduction to flies and their natural history
10.30 – Recognising families and identifying species
10.30 – Working with microscopes and specimens
12.30 - Lunch
13.00 – Finding flies in winter – fieldwork in Epping Forest
14.30 – Further identification
16.00 - Course ends

About the Tutor

Martin Harvey tutors regularly for FSC and for Manchester Metropolitan Museum. He is an entomologist and biological recorder, working at the national Biological Records Centre and for a range of clients. He runs the national recording scheme for Soldierflies and Allies.

What to Bring

Essential: Weather-appropriate outdoor clothing

Optional (if you have them already) : hand lens, digital camera, collecting tubes, id keys, fly specimens

Catering Option

Please bring a packed lunch; refreshments freely available all day for classroom sessions

Accessibility

Moderate level of mobility required; majority of short field trip will in forest environment of uneven and sloping ground.

How to Book

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

By phone 020 8502 8500

Location address

Epping Forest Field Centre, Pauls Nursery Road, High Beach, Loughton, Essex IG10 4AF

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