

Level		Date	Days	Shared occupancy cost		
SL	O			Sole occupancy cost	Non-Residential cost	
		4 - 9 Aug	Sun – Fri	£535	£485	£360

Wildlife Tracking in South Devon



Badger Tracks



Deer Incisor Scraping

Course Overview

This track and sign workshop is designed to both introduce a prospective new tracker to the general concepts involved in interpreting track and sign and add to the knowledge of the more experienced naturalist. Although we can't import wildlife to the area and therefore give a definitive list of the signs we will find, anything that makes a track on the ground is fair game for our attention. We will potentially cover the recognition of the track and sign left behind by the passing of mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians and even on occasion insects. The course will include foot morphology and identification of tracks, feeding signs, droppings, beds and resting areas. Interpretation of behaviour and movement of animals from their tracks and track patterns is also covered. Although the programme is aimed at anyone new to tracking or those wanting to know more about wildlife it is taught to a deep level with some real and very useful information imparted, even those with some experience of the subject will benefit from the course. The workshop mixes theory and practical with enough of the theory covered to explain the sign found in the field. It is very likely we will be visiting several venues to cover as many of species as possible and will set up a final fun test at the end to reinforce the learning.

If time permits we will also cover feather form, function and identification of commonly found species and the identification of the skulls and bones from animals most frequently encountered in the landscape.

Programme

Please note that this is only a provisional programme and can be changed at the tutor's discretion.

Day 1

AM tracks and scats, a general introduction the foot morphology and tracks of the main groups of UK mammals from the smallest of our rodents to the largest ungulates. We will also include a detailed journey into the science and perhaps art of identifying scats of various mammal groups and how to differentiate them from other mammals and from pellets.

PM a field trip in the outdoors to try and find as many tracks and scats as possible

Day 2

AM Gaits and track patterns, the arrangement of tracks on the ground can reveal great deal about the way an animal is moving and therefore what it might be up to, it is sometimes possible to tell the sex of the animal from the track patterns together with its likely intentions.

AM/PM field trip to find track patterns for real and to find more tracks and scats

Day 3

AM focuses on bird tracks and sign including feathers, wing form and function and scats it is possible to identify many birds to species level based on their tracks alone

AM/PM field trip focusing on bird sign but also recapping on sign already discussed and hopefully finding some new things

Day 4

AM bones and skulls, this element serves as an introduction to mammal and bird skulls and to a lesser extent bones found in the British landscape. The focus is on skulls as these are the easiest to identify and perhaps the most commonly parts of animals found.

AM/PM field trip to consolidate the knowledge already gained and once again hopefully find some new things

Day 5

AM slide show covering any common tracks not already found in the field and to explain some unusual pieces of sign that we may not encounter.

AM/PM a CyberTracker style fun tracking quiz to consolidate the course elements.

About the Tutor

John Rhyder is an author, naturalist, wildlife tracker, ethnobotanist and bushcraft expert. He is certified through [CyberTracker](#) wildlife tracking accreditation as a track and sign specialist having scored 100% on a specialist evaluation (this is the highest assessed level possible within the system), in addition he has achieved level four in trailing, or following the animal also scoring 100%. This makes John the only level 4 and therefore the highest qualified wildlife tracker in Northern Europe. John is also qualified as a track and sign evaluator one of only three people in Northern Europe who can assess the CyberTracker system

in this region. To expand his knowledge John has also been certificated in Germany, Holland and Spain. He has also worked on several tracking evaluations as second evaluator in the pacific north west of the USA. He also holds a University certificate in Species Identification and Biological Recording specialising in mammals, reptiles, bats, fungi and woodland plants and trees. John has been endorsed as an instructor in natural navigation techniques through [Tristan Gooley](#) and his school of natural navigation.

<http://www.woodcraftschool.co.uk/>
[Wildlife Tracking http://trackercertification.com/](http://trackercertification.com/)

What to Bring

- Casual and some warm clothing.
- Waterproofs and wellingtons (can be borrowed from the Centre, if necessary).
- Stout trainers / walking boots.
- Lunch box, salad box and flask/drink bottle.
- Note book and pencil and camera/binoculars (if you wish).
- Sun hat and sun lotion.
- A 8 or 10 x hand lens may be useful
- Camera to record any signs founds

Start and Finish Times

Resident participants are requested to arrive for registration between 1:00pm and 4:00pm on arrival day, after this time self-directed arrival information will be posted on the front door. There will be an introductory talk with the Head of Centre typically at 5:30pm. Supper is usually at 6:30pm. Non resident bookings should arrive just before 5.30pm. A non resident booking also includes dinner during your course as teaching does progress into the evening. Breakfast, for resident participants, will be from 8:00am. The course will end at 3:00 pm on the last day. On the final day please vacate your room by 9:00am, storage is provided for your luggage.

How to Book

You can check availability and make a provisional booking by telephoning the Centre on 01548 580466.

To confirm your booking please complete the form found in the FSC brochure or online at www.field-studies-council.org.



Squirrel tracks



Predated Woodpigeon egg