Course Overview

Shropshire in springtime is a delightful place in which to develop your bird identification skills. This course will visit a variety of different habitats within the county, which should enable a wide range of species to be encountered and give an indication of where to find different birds. It aims to improve identification by sight and sound. As spring is also a lovely time for other wildlife at the sites we shall be visiting we will not restrict ourselves to just bird watching but get an all-round flavour of this wonderful county.

Expect to be up with the larks and out with the night owls! The course includes some early morning dawn-chorus visits and evening activities – but feel free to opt out if you need to catch up on some sleep.
Course Tutor

Kevin Clements is a County Bird Recorder and Deputy Chairman of the West Midland Bird Club. An experienced field ornithologist and naturalist, he has worked for many organisations in conservation and biological recording.

Timetable

Please note this is provisional only and may change depending on weather, recent sightings etc.

Friday: 19.30 – 20.30 Introduction to the group and the course

Saturday:
05.45 – 06.15 Self-service breakfast in the centre
06.15 - 08.30 Visit to the bird ringing group at Whixall Moss
08.30 – 10.00 Walk around Whixall Moss NNR
10.00 – 11.00 Visit to Prees transport café for second breakfast!
11.30 – 14.30 Birding at Wood Lane nature reserve; return to Preston Montford
14.30 – 15.30 Introduction to Birdsong talk
15.30 – 17.30 Free time
17.30 – 18.30 Dinner
18.30 – 21.00 Evening birdwatching and red grouse survey on Long Mynd

Sunday:
05.00 – 07.00 Dawn chorus walk for International Dawn Chorus Day
08.00 – 09.00 Breakfast
09.00 – 10.00 Optional moth trap opening
10.00 – 13.00 Walk up Ashes Hollow, Little Stretton
13:00 – 15.00 Visit to Venus Pool nature reserve
15:00 – 16:00 Back at Centre for debrief and goodbyes
Course fees

Sole occupancy: £295
Shared occupancy: £270
Non-resident: £215

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

What to Bring – please note the course includes walks of several miles and a moderate level of fitness is required

- Field guide, if you have one.
- Walking boots and warm waterproof clothes.
- Binoculars.
- Telescope if you have one.
- Notebook, pen or pencil.
- Small rucksack.
- Flask or water bottle.
**General Information 2019**

**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. The Wenlock building has also undergone re-furbishment in the middle of 2016 to provide modern bed and bathroom facilities.

**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 copes. 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.