

Kent Wildlife Trust Wildlife Study Day Information Sheet

No.	37	Title	Getting to know the conifers	Date	Saturday 29 November 2008
No. of students	5-15	Start time	10am	Finish time	3-4pm
Leader	<p>Ros Bennett - Botanist and ecologist Ros was formerly a full-time tutor for the Field Studies Council in East Anglia and then organiser and leader of courses for FSC Overseas. She has written books on plants and habitats and has been teaching courses on identification and ecology for many years to all age groups from primary children through to University students, environmental professionals and interested adults.</p>				
Who should attend	<p>This study day is suitable for beginners and for those who, however knowledgeable about trees, do not feel confident about distinguishing the major types of conifers.</p>				
Meeting place	<p>Classroom at Tyland Barn, the Headquarters and largest visitor centre of Kent Wildlife Trust. Map Ref. TQ 753594.</p>				
Other sites to be visited	<p>None on this Saturday. However this day is linked with study day 39 on Saturday 6th December which will be spent at Bedgebury Pinetum, consolidating what we have learnt on this Saturday (29th).</p>				
Programme	<p>Most of the day will be spent in the classroom getting to grips with those basic features of cones and foliage that help us distinguish the main genera (such as Spruce, Pine, Fir, Hemlock, Cedar, Redwood, Lawsons, Juniper, Cypress and Yew). We shall also consider the features that can be used to differentiate the various species of each of the genera. Simplified keys will be introduced and students will be encouraged to use them on a variety of twigs and cones that will be available for practice.</p>				
Subjects to be covered	<p>What is a conifer? Features of cones and foliage for identification purposes.</p>				
What to bring	<p>A notebook and pencil. A hand lens magnification x10 (available for purchase at the Barn at £4.50). Suitable outdoor clothing so that you can take a bit of exercise around the nature park at mid-day. A picnic lunch, though sandwiches can be purchased in the Barn restaurant. Your favourite tree book such as "Collins Tree Guide" by David More and Owen Johnson (£17.50). "The New Flora of the British Isles" by Stace has some good keys to those conifers that have naturalised.</p>				
Other information	<p>In winter, when there are very few flowers around and most of our native plants have lost their leaves, it is a wonderful opportunity to focus our attention on the conifers – most of which are evergreen and still bear cones. The British flora is remarkably poor in diversity of native conifers but many introduced species form a major feature in our landscape. And here in Kent, at Bedgebury Pinetum, we are fortunate to have the opportunity to study the finest world collection of this</p>				

magnificent group of trees.

The field trip to Bedgebury Pinetum Study Day 39 on 6th December is an integral part of this week-end and it is highly recommended that participants join both study days to get the full benefit.`