

# SCHOOLS *Go wild!* at Kingcombe



**Dorset**  
Wildlife Trust



## About Dorset Wildlife Trust

Dorset Wildlife Trust is the leading charity dedicated to nature conservation in Dorset. From small beginnings in 1961 based entirely on voluntary effort, we now have over 27,000 members, 42 nature reserves, four visitor centres, one conservation centre and a thriving programme of outreach with communities.

Kingcombe Visitor Centre is the gateway to the stunning Kingcombe National Nature Reserve, incorporating Kingcombe Meadows and Powerstock Common nature reserves. Kingcombe Meadows is a traditional working farm complete with flower-rich grassland, ancient hedgerows, rough pasture and wet woodlands. The hedgerows, fields and hay meadows are almost untouched by artificial fertilisers and pesticides. As a result, they are home to a huge array of wildlife, some common and easy to see, others rare elsewhere in the UK.

The grounds of the visitor centre provide a snapshot of Kingcombe's varied habitats, making Kingcombe a brilliant location for school groups. Nestled in the heart of 450 acres of nature reserve, the visitor centre provides easy access to a multitude of habitats, ideal for enriching the lives of young people.



Photos:  
(left) Marbled white butterfly  
© Jim Higham  
(below) © James Burland



# The Facilities

The visitor centre contains displays about Kingcombe's wildlife and history. Swallow Barn is our dedicated meeting space, perfect for classroom use and provides space for groups to have refreshments and/or lunch. Swallow Barn can be configured to meet the needs of your group. The toilets and hand washing facilities are conveniently located to the rear of Swallow Barn. There is free parking for a limited number of cars and/or a minibus is available on site. Due to our rural location, we cannot accommodate coaches.

# The Visit

Educational visits last between two hours or a full day for all Key Stages. You are welcome to eat your lunch on site, but please take your litter away with you. Our learning programme supports the requirements of the National Curriculum. If you can't find an activity to meet the needs of your group, please contact us to discuss your topic. We supply all the equipment necessary for the activities, including age-appropriate worksheets and ID guides.



Kingcombe National Nature Reserve and Visitor Centre © Tom Woolley

“It’s so important for children to grow up enjoying wildlife. My daughter visited Kingcombe for a school trip six months ago and still talks about it now!”

**Melanie Ware, Parent.**



## Safeguarding and Health and Safety

Dorset Wildlife Trust is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and we follow all safer recruitment practices. All our staff have full DBS clearance and are first aid trained. All activities and sites are fully risk assessed. We advise that a site visit and Risk Assessment be carried out in advance, staff can provide a Risk assessment guide and support with this if you need assistance.

## Accessibility

Activities can be adapted for students with special educational needs. The visitor centre and educational room are both wheelchair-accessible. The centre has an accessible toilet and parking bay. Please contact us to discuss your requirements.

## Costs

The cost of our sessions helps us to fund vital conservation work to protect Dorset's wildlife.  
Two-hour visit: £100  
Four-hour visit: £200

## Booking

To discuss your requirements and book an educational visit please contact us:

**T: 01300 320684**

**E: [education@dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:education@dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk)**

For further details of Kingcombe National Nature Reserve and Kingcombe Visitor Centre, visit:

**[dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/Kingcombe](http://dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/Kingcombe)**



Photos:  
(top) © James Burland  
(above) © Bullfinch © John Bridges

# Sessions available and curriculum links

Category	Session	Description	Length	Time of year	Curriculum Links
Your local patch	The history of Lower Kingcombe	An introduction to Kingcombe Visitor Centre and Kingcombe Meadows Nature Reserve. Learn what is special about our working farm and why it was purchased by Dorset Wildlife Trust. We'll take a walk on the reserve, look at the species that call Kingcombe home and explore the history of the local village and the farm.	2 hours	Feb - Dec	
Who's who? Identifying Animals and Plants	Feathered friends	Take a walk around the reserve and spot some of the birds living at Kingcombe. We'll learn about different species of bird, their habitats, and lifecycles.  Reuse a plastic water bottle and make a bird feeder, perfect for providing birds with a source of food throughout the year, especially the winter.	2 hours	Feb - Dec	Identifying birds Classification Living things and their habitat Food chains Sustainability
Who's who? Identifying Animals and Plants	We're going on a bug hunt!	Explore the meadows and the minibeasts living at Kingcombe. We will explore the different habitats, learn how to survey for insects, and discover more about their fascinating lifecycles.  Get creative and sculpt a clay bug based on what you found at Kingcombe.	2 hours	April - Oct	Identifying insects Classification Living things and their habitat Food chains Life cycles Adaptations
Who's who? Identifying Animals and Plants	Marvellous moths and brilliant butterflies	Can you guess how many species of moth and butterfly live in the UK? Together, we will look through our moth trap, make a moth or butterfly using natural materials, and discover the features of a moth or butterfly.	2 hours	May - Sept	Identifying insects Classification Living things and their habitat Food chains Life cycles Adaptations
Who's who? Identifying Animals and Plants	Wonderful wildflowers	We will identify the flowers we see and enjoy some activities to learn about flowers and the creatures which live on them. Learn about the structure of a plant, seeds, and the requirements for life.	2 hours	May - Sept  Recommended visit time 15 May - 15 July	Identifying insects Classification Parts of a plant Pollination Seeds Adaptations Needs of plants
Who's who? Identifying Animals and Plants	Tremendous trees	Learn about trees and their differences. We will go for a walk on the reserve with time for regular stops to look at the creatures which live on and around the trees and try to identify the trees we see!	2 hours	April - Oct	Identifying trees Classification Parts of a plant Food chains Life cycles Adaptations
Who's who? Identifying Animals and Plants	World of water	Discover the minibeasts living in water. We will go for a walk on the reserve and stop at a beautiful stretch of the River Hooke and use nets to sample the invertebrates living in the water.	2 hours	April - Oct	Identifying Classification Living things and their habitat Food chains Life cycles Adaptations
Self-led activities	Visit Kingcombe	As the gateway to Kingcombe National Nature Reserve, the visitor centre has a nature table, displays about the meadows and its wildlife, and facilities for school groups. Visits are free but must be booked in advance. Call or email to discuss the hire of Swallow Barn learning space and indoor seating area.		Feb - Dec	

# How to find us



© Hazel Ormrod

From Dorchester, take the A37 towards Yeovil. Turn onto the A356 towards Crewkerne. Continue through the village of Maiden Newton. At the top of the hill, turn left, signposted to Toller Porcorum. Turn right in the village, signposted Lower Kingcombe and Hooke. Kingcombe Visitor Centre is one mile along this road on your right.

[what3words.com/gentle.stews.condense](http://what3words.com/gentle.stews.condense)

We look forward to welcoming you!



Dorset Wildlife Trust map  
© Tom Woolley





© Tony Bates



**Dorset**  
Wildlife Trust

**Kingcombe Visitor Centre**  
Lower Kingcombe, Toller Porcorum  
Dorchester, DT2 0EQ  
[kingcombe@dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:kingcombe@dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk) | 01300 320684

SCHOOLS  
**Go wild!**  
at Kingcombe