



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.



“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

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

dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/Kingcombe



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



Sessions available and curriculum links

*Maximum group size = 30 students. Learning opportunities can be tailored to suit individual groups. Please get in touch to discuss your requirements and we will do our best to meet your needs

Session	Description	Price	Length	Time of year	Curriculum links
The history of Lower Kingcombe	An introduction to the history of Kingcombe Visitor Centre and Kingcombe Meadows nature reserve. By the end of the session, your class will understand what is special about our working farm and why it was purchased by Dorset Wildlife Trust. We will explore the reserve, looking out for the species that call Kingcombe home from towering trees to marvellous minibeasts, whilst learning about the history of the local village and farm.	£100 per group*	2 hours	Feb - Dec	Animals, including humans Living things and their habitats Plants Identifying animals History of the local area
Stream studies session	Investigate the importance of the River Hooke as part of Kingcombe Meadows nature reserve, whilst observing the key species that play a role in the river's ecosystem. By following the path of the River Hooke through the nature reserve, discover how the meanders of the river help to shape the landscape of the meadows. Your class will learn how leaky dams work by slowing, diverting, and temporarily storing floodwater to reduce flood risk, improve water quality and create wildlife habitats, mimicking natural beaver dams.	£100 per group*	2 hours	April - Oct	Animals, including humans Living things and their habitats, including microhabitats Classification Food chains Adaptations Life cycles Identifying animals Ecosystems Biodiversity Water cycle Features of rivers Water safety
Feathered friends	Discover the diverse bird species residing at Kingcombe Visitor Centre and the surrounding nature reserve. Your class will act as ornithologists for the day, learning how to identify some common bird species by sight and sound. We will explore the remarkable journeys of migratory species and understand why swifts and swallows travel all the way to Kingcombe Meadows each year.	£100 per group*	2 hours	April - Oct	Animals, including humans Living things and their habitats Identifying animals Classification Food chains Adaptations and evolution Life cycles Ecosystems Biodiversity Why animals migrate
We're going on a bug hunt	Your class will become minibeast detectives as they go on a bug hunt and learn to classify invertebrates by different characteristics. The session lasts for 2 hours and will be tailored to meet the national curriculum requirements for the key stage and year group of your class. We will explore the wonderful small world of minibeasts and discover the different species that live in some of the habitats here at Kingcombe Meadows.	£100 per group*	2 hours	May - Sept	Animals, including humans Living things and their habitats, including microhabitats Classification Food chains Adaptations Life cycles Identifying animals Ecosystems Biodiversity
Wonderful wildflowers	Explore the wonderful wildflower meadows that make Kingcombe Meadows nature reserve so special, whilst learning to identify the different flowers we see. Understand the importance of the diverse plant life as a part of the local ecosystem. Using a scientific sampling method (quadrats) to discover the rich biodiversity of the unimproved grasslands, your class will get the chance to delve deeper into how many different species are found there.	£100 per group*	2 hours	May - Sept Recommended time is mid-May to mid-June.	Living things and their habitats, including microhabitats Classification Food chains Ecosystems Biodiversity What plants need Plant life cycle Scientific sampling methods (quadrats)
Tremendous trees	Discover the different types of trees we have in Dorset and the vital role they play in our ecosystem. Your class will investigate the different parts of a tree, from anchoring roots to light-gathering leaves. They will become tree detectives as they go on a walk through Kingcombe Meadows nature reserve, where they will learn how trees create habitats for a variety of wildlife, from insects to birds to mammals.	£100 per group*	2 hours	March - Oct	Animals, including humans Living things and their habitats Classification Food chains Adaptations Life cycles What plants need Plant life cycle

How to find us



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

We look forward to welcoming you!



Dorset Wildlife Trust map
© Tom Woolley



© Tony Bates



Kingcombe Visitor Centre
Lower Kingcombe, Toller Porcorum
Dorchester, DT2 0EQ
kingcombe@dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk | 01300 320684

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