



Ashmolean Natural History Society of Oxfordshire

Education Group

Identification courses 2017

www.anhso.org.uk

The Basic Course

Now in its sixteenth year, the basic course is held on six Saturday mornings from April to September. The aim is to teach the use of dichotomous keys to gain knowledge of the main families of flowering plants and to provide an understanding of technical terms and descriptions in the keys in order to identify plants. No previous experience is necessary for this course. A certificate is awarded on satisfactory completion.

The basic course is for a maximum of 18 students in each session and will usually be taught by three or four tutors. Tutors will be active botanists. Each session will be a mixture of practical work and talks. We will use binocular microscopes, hand lenses and dissecting tools. There will be information on books, societies, websites and other useful organisations. Students will be expected to do work between sessions. The course book (which students should buy) is the *New Flora of the British Isles* by Clive Stace, Cambridge University Press, third edition, published in 2010. (The cost of this is approximately £55 to £60.) We also make some use of John Poland and Eric Clement *The Vegetative Key to the British Flora* BSBI but it is not essential to buy it.

Examination

We are again offering the opportunity to take our examination in plant identification. We have developed this assessment to be suitable for our alumni and it is open to all those who have taken our basic course. There will be a morning session (10.00 am till 12.00 noon) on the day of the exam for guided revision and then the two-hour exam will follow in the afternoon at 1.00 pm. We provide a syllabus for the exam to help you to prepare, and will send this to all those who register for it. The date is 23rd September 2017. The cost is included in the course fees.

Continuation Courses

These courses, listed below, are for those who have attended the Basic Course or who have a similar level of experience. They are usually for a maximum of 12 students. In general they use the same methods as the Basic Course with adaptations to suit the subject of study. Tutors will be active botanists or experts in the particular botanical group that the course is covering.

Latin for Botany

Dr Stephen Harris, Druce Curator of the University Herbaria will come back to repeat his very successful previous courses. He will look at the ways in which scientific names of plants can give clues to their origins or identification. Classification and nomenclature will be explained and the structure of botanical words examined. No set books are needed for this course but you may be interested to look at *Plant Names Simplified*, Johnson and Smith, Landsmans Bookshop.

Cyperaceae

This course offers help with the whole of Cyperaceae, including sedges. It will be classroom-based to give intensive experience of fresh and dried specimens and to look at some of the problems and difficulties presented by this family. You will need Stace's *New Flora of the British Isles* (3rd edition, 2010) and your hand lens. You might also consider buying the BSBI Handbook *Sedges* and/or Francis Rose *Grasses, Sedges, Rushes and Ferns*.

Polygonaceae

This new course will focus on Polygonaceae with a particular emphasis on *Rumex*, *Polygonum* and *Persicaria*. It will be classroom-based to give intensive experience of fresh and dried specimens. You will need Stace's *New Flora of the British Isles* (3rd edition, 2010) and your hand lens. You might also consider buying the BSBI Handbook on *Docks and Knotweeds of Britain and Ireland* (second edition).

Herbarium Interactive

Dr Stephen Harris, Druce Curator of the University Herbaria, will show how a Herbarium is used and course participants will have the opportunity to use specimens from the Oxford Herbaria to make identifications of other dried material. You will need Stace's *New Flora of the British Isles* (3rd edition, 2010) and your hand lens.

Field Outing

A field outing will take place on the 3rd June in the afternoon following the basic course session; £15 payable in advance on the day. These field outings are designed to give you practice at using Stace in the field and are open to all our alumni, as well as our basic course students. There will be the option to focus on a one-metre quadrat. The venue for this will be announced later.

Equipment

The set books can be obtained by post from Summerfield Books, (01768 484909, www.summerfieldbooks.com) or good booksellers. Hand lenses ($\times 10$) are essential, and are readily available on the Internet including from Summerfield Books. <http://www.eyemagnify.com> supply $\times 30$ hand lenses which are called “ 30×21 mm Metal Loupe magnifying eye glass” (current cost £19.99). We have found these $\times 30$ lenses extremely useful and they are notable for providing a wide field of view. We can supply some dissecting tools.

The Education Group Team

Our regular tutors are Susan Erskine, Stephen Harris, Sue Helm, Matt Jackson, Camilla Lambrick, Debbie Lewis, Alison McDonald, Caroline Pannell, Tim Waters and Frances Watkins.

Dates, Costs and Venues

Costs include coffee etc. and biscuits but you should bring a packed lunch for whole-day courses.

Note that if sufficient students do not enrol for any particular course then we shall regretfully have to cancel it. In such a case, of course, the fee will be refunded.

All courses are held at the John Krebs Field Station, Wytham, grid reference **SP473096**, postcode **OX2 8QJ**, except the **Herbarium Interactive course**.

Basic Course

1st April, 6th May, 3rd June, 1st July, 5th August, 2nd September Cost £160

Saturday mornings, 10.00 am to 1.00 pm

Latin for Botany

One morning - 11th March, 10.00 am to 1.00 pm Cost £30

Cyperaceae

One full day - 8th July 10.00 am to 4.00 pm Cost £50

Polygonaceae

One full day – 12th August, 10.00 am to 4.00 pm Cost £50

Herbarium Interactive

One morning – 30th September, 10.00 am to 1.00 pm

Cost £30

Note that this course will be held at the Department of Plant Sciences on South Parks Road. Participants will be met by Dr Harris outside the main entrance to the building. Note that there is no parking on site. The closest parking is in Mansfield Road.

For further information on all courses phone Frances Watkins on 01865 863660 or email educationgroup@anhso.org.uk.

The application form is on the fourth page of this document.

Bespoke courses

Courses from our usual repertoire (or similar) for organisations

Educational institutions or consultancies might require this kind of course; again do get in touch if you have a requirement we might be able to satisfy. Please email educationgroup@anhso.org.uk or phone 01865 863660 if you would like more information.

Subject Matter of the Basic Course Sessions

Note that this is a provisional plan for what we will cover. It may be subject to change depending on the rate of progress of the class and the availability of suitable plant material.

First Session (Lamiaceae, Liliaceae)

Welcome. Structure of a flower, keys, terminology. The floral formula. Equipment and use of a hand lens. Stage-by-stage identification of a known plant from one of these easier families, in flower at the time, using the main key in Stace. More similar plants.

Second Session (Boraginaceae, Ranunculaceae)

Books. Talk on how the plant kingdom is classified. Flowering plants and how they are arranged into families. Characteristics of the families and identification of some examples. Use of binocular microscope.

Third Session (Brassicaceae, Caryophyllaceae)

Books. Characteristics of the families and identification of some examples. Going straight to the family key. Other examples if there is time.

Fourth Session (Poaceae, Juncaceae, Cyperaceae)

Books. The different flower and vegetative structures of these families and identification of an easy example of each. Use of the vegetative key of Poland and Clement's *The Vegetative Key to the British Flora* and the family key of Stace. Other examples if there is time.

Fifth Session (Asteraceae, Apiaceae)

Books. Inflorescence structures. The flower structures of each family. Dissection and identification of an example including microscope work. Similar families, e.g. Dipsacaceae. Dissection and identification of an example of Apiaceae, noting the importance of the fruits and including microscope work.

Sixth Session (Amaranthaceae, Polygonaceae)

Societies. The flower structure of each family. Dissection and microscope work on examples from both families, noting the importance of the fruits, bracts, tepals and seeds. Identification of examples.

Application Form

Please tick the course or courses that you would like to attend. Note that fees are not normally refundable.

Basic course	£160	
Latin for Botany	£30	
Cyperaceae	£50	
Polygonaceae	£50	
Herbarium Interactive	£30	
Outing	£15	

I enclose a cheque for payable to **ANHSO Education**

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone Number

Email Address

Date

Are you being paid for by your employer? Yes/No (Please circle one.)

Please send this form to ANHSO Education, 17, Norreys Road, Cumnor, Oxford, OX2 9PT.

NOTE: if your fees are being paid by your employer or another third party, you must complete this form yourself and send it to us without the fee but giving details of when and from whom we should expect payment.

TRANSPORT: please let us know if you will have difficulty in getting to Wytham and we will try to arrange a lift. Unfortunately there is no suitable bus to Wytham.