

NRS training course info sheet

Knepp Estate, West Sussex.
24 May - evening talk online
27–29 May - field sessions



What the course will be about

This exciting course will teach you how to find birds' nests and monitor them for the BTO's Nest Record Scheme. Participants will be tutored in the field by experienced nest finders and shown how to locate nests of a variety of farmland, woodland and scrub-nesting species, while following the NRS Code of Conduct.

When

The course will begin with an online talk on Tuesday 24 May, 6pm to 6:45pm. Then there will be field sessions on Friday 27th, 5:30pm to 8pm, Saturday 28th, 7am to 5:30pm and Sunday 29th, 7am to 5:30pm.

Where

Occupying a 1,400-hectare area between Horsham and Worthing in central Sussex, the family-owned Knepp Estate is home to a 21-year rewilding project that has seen modern arable and dairy farmland converted to low-input, extensively grazed pasture and developing scrub. It is one of few sites in southern England with strong and increasing populations of Nightingale, Turtle Dove and Lesser Whitethroat. All of the course activities over the weekend will take place on the estate.

How to book

To book a place on the course, please use the online form on the booking page.

How to attend the talk

The talk will be held over Zoom and you will be emailed a link in advance. If you are unable to use Zoom or don't think you will be able to attend the talk for any reason, please let us know as soon as possible.

Accommodation

If you require local accommodation, the following are all nearby:

Knepp Wildland (the estate's own campsite)
<https://kneppsafaris.co.uk/stay/camping>

Goffsland Farm camp site
<http://goffsland-farm.co.uk/campsite.html>

Windmill Inn B&B
<https://www.windmilllittleworth.com/hotel-horsham-pub-with-rooms>

Billingshurst Travelodge
<https://www.travelodge.co.uk/hotels/13/Billingshurst-Five-Oaks-hotel>

Alternatively, you can pitch a tent for free at Woodgers Yard, where we will be meeting each morning, but note it has outdoor toilets and water but no showers.

Catering

Food will not be provided on the course, so please make your own arrangements. We will usually break for lunch in the field, so please bring a lunchbox. Course participants typically eat breakfast before they arrive, bring their own lunches, and then dine out together at a local pub in the evening.

What to bring

Please bring the usual outdoor gear, including waterproofs, walking boots and wellingtons. Materials and equipment for nest recording are provided, but it is essential to bring binoculars. Gardening gloves and a stout stick for parting vegetation will be useful if you have them.

Directions by road

Knepp Estate is off the A24, 1.5 hours from London and 40 minutes from Brighton. We will be meeting at a part of the estate called Woodgers Yard, which is not at the main entrance, so please follow the directions below carefully.

Coming south on the A24, 3.5 miles after the Haywards Heath/Billingshurst junction, take the right exit for Dial Post. Enter the village and take the first right onto Swallows Lane.

Or coming north on the A24, four miles after the Washington Roundabout take the left exit for Dial Post. Drive through the village until you see a green on the left then take the next left onto Swallows Lane (signposted Shipley).

Then follow Swallows Lane for over a mile until you reach a triangular-shaped junction signposted Shipley/Southwater to the right and Coolham/Thakeham bearing left. Turn towards Coolham/Thakeham and after half a mile look on the left for a gravel area with a 'BTO Course' sign on a closed gate. Go through the gate, follow a metal track through a second gate and bear to the right into the parking area.

Woodgers Yard, Countryman Lane, Shipley, West Sussex. RH13 8PZ.
Grid reference: TQ1377821399.
Google Map: <https://goo.gl/maps/bYUB9PRwvjSvEvnSE7>

NRS training course programme

Knepp Estate, West Sussex.



BTO

Looking out for birds

Please note that on both Saturday and Sunday the timetable might be adjusted on the day for convenience, for example by delaying lunch slightly if a field session is going well and folk are happy to continue. Also note that on one or both days we may plan to have lunch in the field, so please bring a lunch box.

Tuesday 24 May

18:00 Online talk on nest recording.

Friday 27 May

From 17:30 Arrival, with refreshments.
17:45 Field tutorial on the Code of Conduct.
18:30 Field introduction to nest finding techniques.
20:00 Finish for the day. Optional group trip to the local pub for dinner.

Saturday 28 May

07:00 Early morning nest-finding session.
09:00 Breakfast: Self-catered.
09:45 Late morning nest-finding session.
13:00 Lunch: self-catered.
13:45 Early afternoon nest-finding session.
17:30 Finish for the day.
19:30 Optional group trip to the local pub for dinner.

Sunday 29 May

07:00 Early morning nest-finding session.
09:00 Breakfast: Self-catered.
09:45 Late morning nest-finding session.
13:00 Lunch: self-catered.
13:45 Early afternoon nest-finding session.
16:30 Debrief and refreshments
17:30 Home

For more information, please contact the NRS Team, BTO, The Nunnery, Thetford, Norfolk, IP24 2PU. Tel: 01842 750 050 E-mail: nrs@bto.org

