



ecology courses

Advanced Bat Survey Techniques Training Course

Course Overview

This hands-on, field-based training course is tailored for experienced bat ecologists looking to progress towards Natural England's Level 3 (CL19) and Level 4 (CL20) Bat Survey Class Licences. It focuses on practical application of advanced survey tools and techniques, including mist-netting, harp-trapping, and the effective use of acoustic lures.

The training is ideal for those who already hold a Level 2 licence (CL18) and are looking to develop the specialist skills and field experience needed for more complex surveys and research work involving bat capture and handling.

What You'll Learn

Throughout the three days, you will explore advanced bat survey methods used in professional consultancy and research contexts. The course includes both theoretical sessions and intensive night-time fieldwork.

Topics covered include:

- Legal scope and permissions under CL19 and CL20 licences
- Selecting, setting up and operating mist nets and harp traps, including specialist configurations (e.g., triple-high, over-water, canopy nets)
- Safe and ethical use of acoustic lures
- Bat welfare considerations, including current biosecurity protocols
- Safe extraction techniques for captured bats
- In-hand species identification, sexing, ageing, reproductive assessment, and biometric data collection
- Practice session on bat ringing/banding using a model bat

Fieldwork and Species

Two nights of capture surveys will take place at proven bat sites, including a swarming location where species such as Bechstein's bat, greater and lesser horseshoe bats, brown long-eared bats, and various *Myotis* species are regularly recorded. Field sessions are led by licensed and experienced ecologists.

Assessment and Certification

To support your licence application, the course includes both written and practical assessments. A certificate of completion will be awarded to those who successfully demonstrate safe and effective use of the methods taught.

You can provide Natural England with a completion certificate from an organisation for a course taken in the last 3 years. [References and experience needed to support your protected species application or registration - GOV.UK](#)

Our course certificates include (as required by Natural England):

- name of the person attending the course;
- course title and content;
- course dates; and
- signature and name of the trainer.

You can submit a training certificate in place of a reference for a survey licence application, as long as the course has both:

- training of species identification; and
- practical training of the techniques the licence covers;

which are included in our course.

In addition to the certificate, we will provide signed logbook entries for the techniques undertaken during the course. Please note participation alone may not be sufficient to apply for CL19/CL20 — additional experience will be needed as documented in your training log.

Natural England state, *“To upgrade a survey class licence, you must already hold the lower-level licence. You must submit an extra written reference that is relevant for the licence activity you’re applying for.”*

If you can demonstrate that you are able to undertake the activities listed under the relevant licence safely and competently, we can provide a reference.



However, Natural England also state “*Referees should...not be a trainer from a course you’ve taken instead of a reference*”.

Therefore, there is no guarantee of a reference or that a reference will be accepted by Natural England if you are also using the course certificate as evidence for your licence application.

To be able to confidently provide a reference, we might need to see you extract and process more bats than you get opportunity to on the course.

If further oversight is needed, we would be happy to arrange additional opportunities for you to attend to get more experience/demonstrate your abilities (for a fee – which might be shared with other course attendees).

We would also consider your logbook in our decision to provide a reference, so please bring along to the course if you decide to book and attend.

Who Should Attend

This course is aimed at ecologists who already have:

- A Level 2 (CL18) licence
- Competency in bat handling and basic species ID
- Rabies vaccination (proof required prior to attendance)

If you’re unsure whether this course is suitable for you, please get in touch before booking.

Location

The course is delivered from our main office near Exeter, with local fieldwork locations selected based on bat activity and access permissions.

Questions?

For further information or to reserve your place, please contact us at:

office@richardgreenecology.co.uk

