

PART-TIME POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN

# Ecological Survey Techniques



SECURE THE FUTURE OF OUR  
NATURAL WORLD'S TOMORROW  
BY SURVEYING WILDLIFE TODAY.

A transformative  
part-time course  
with Oxford  
University

# Welcome

**Learn how to make informed decisions to assess the status of species and ecosystems, and protect the future of our wildlife and habitats globally.**

This Postgraduate Certificate is a dynamic blend of experiential learning and online modules offered part-time and tailored for practitioners and volunteers engaged with the monitoring and surveying of species worldwide.



**Dr Joanna Bagniewska**  
Course Co-Director

*'The Postgraduate Certificate not only provides in-depth knowledge of ecological survey methods, but also gives you the opportunity to learn from experts in the field, connect with a range of practitioners, and think strategically about using your research skills to enhance employability. It places you in the heart of a professional network of ecologists.'*



**Dr Thomas Hesselberg**  
Course Co-Director

*'This course teaches you how to conduct surveys on a wide range of species for conservation and basic ecological research purposes. This, combined with a general introduction to survey design and data analysis, makes this course ideal for those wishing to change career into the conservation, research or ecological consultancy sectors.'*

# At a glance

The **Postgraduate Certificate in Ecological Survey Techniques** is a transformative part-time programme tailored for an international audience.



## Postgraduate Certificate

FHEQ Level 7



## Study part-time

While working full-time



## 12 months

Starts September 2027



## Locations

Oxford and online



## 4 online modules

2 core modules  
2 elective modules



## 5 days in Oxford

1 residential teaching week

## Who is this course for?

The course is designed for a wide range of professionals and volunteers looking to develop practical skills to address environmental challenges and anthropogenic changes – including habitat restoration, species reintroduction, and the implementation of sustainable practices to mitigate human impact on ecosystems.

Many of our students are professional ecological consultants, environmental managers and rangers, research and postgraduate students, educators, as well as volunteers and those looking to make a career change. The course suits those looking for flexible study combined with expert training.

The techniques covered are universal using international case studies and examples. Past students have joined from the UK, the USA, Asia, Australia, Africa and Europe.



**Daniel Parker**

2024-25

Research Associate

*'The Postgraduate Certificate has already helped me find work as a wildlife surveyor. In this role, I have surveyed water voles along the Thames River, birds nesting in buildings, bats living under historic bridges, and many more animals. The course has also enhanced my work as a researcher. I now feel more confident interpreting complex scientific articles, planning ecological studies, and carrying out statistical tests on field data.'*

Read Daniel's story: [lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/student-spotlights/daniel-parker](https://lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/student-spotlights/daniel-parker)

# What you'll gain

## DEVELOP A CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING

Learn to make informed evidence-based decisions on, and assess the status of, species and habitats, focusing on the use of survey techniques for measuring, quantifying and monitoring biodiversity. Develop a deep understanding of how to analyse data to answer research or management questions directly related to your field.

## CONNECT WITH A GLOBAL CONSERVATION NETWORK

Expand your professional and personal network and exchange ideas with likeminded individuals working in your field. Build capacity and communities of practice among environmental conservationists worldwide.

## COLLABORATE WITH PEERS AND EXPERTS

Benefit from peer learning and discuss solutions to your environmental challenges with fellow students, experienced faculty, and industry experts. Take advantage of the in-person teaching week to immerse yourself in the Oxford University experience, both inside and outside the classroom.

## ADVANCE YOUR CAREER TOWARDS CHARTERED STATUS

Enhance your conservation and ecology employability and meet relevant professional competency thresholds to apply for Chartered Status (Chartered Environmentalist and Chartered Ecologist).



Students during in-Oxford week, September 2025

# How you'll study

## CUSTOMISE YOUR LEARNING

The programme can be tailored to suit your field and specific interests through the optional modules you select. You may also take the modules as **standalone short courses**.

### CORE MODULES

- Plant Biodiversity and Habitat Assessment Methods
- Data Analysis: Statistics for Ecologists and Field Biologists

### ELECTIVE MODULES

*Select two based on your special interest*

- Mammal and Reptile Survey Methods
- Bird Biodiversity and Population Monitoring Methods
- Fish and Amphibian Survey Methods
- Invertebrate Biodiversity and Population Monitoring Methods

### IN-PERSON WEEK IN OXFORD

Spend five days in Oxford and gain a practical introduction to: Geographical Information Systems (GIS); an overview of approaches to plant and animal identification; an introduction to selected surveying techniques; and the Field Project.

Be immersed in a mix of classroom and field-based teaching, with two days spent in the field at Wytham Woods, Oxford's 'living laboratory,' with activities

including the use of GPS, bird netting and ringing, and surveying bats and vegetation.

### FIELD PROJECT

Undertake an independent research or survey project guided by experts, which provides opportunities to collaborate with leading conservation and wildlife organisations. Apply your skills and knowledge in real-world settings, gain hands-on experience, and contribute to meaningful conservation efforts.

The project consists of one month of preparation time, up to two weeks of full-time (or equivalent) field work and one month of project writing for submission in September. Explore past student's field projects: [www.lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/ecological-survey-techniques-field-projects](http://www.lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/ecological-survey-techniques-field-projects).

### ASSESSMENT

Students are required to submit:

- One 2500-word formative (marked with feedback but no credit towards formal course results) assignment.
- Four 2000-word assignments, up to two of which may be as a poster or slide presentation (depending on which module you choose).
- One 5000-word field project and a 1000-word online journal.

# The Oxford experience

## GLOBAL REPUTATION FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

The University of Oxford welcomes students from around the world who bring their own insights and experience to enable inspiring conversations. Embedded in a 900-year-old world-class university, this programme allows students to create solutions, innovate, and gain new perspectives within a diverse, vibrant community of adult learners.

## LEARN FROM LEADERS

Benefit from the wealth of experience and expertise of our esteemed Oxford University faculty, comprising academics and practitioners deeply immersed in ecological research and practice. Gain invaluable insights and skills directly from those at the forefront of ecological endeavours.

## UNLIMITED ACCESS TO WORLD-LEADING LIBRARIES

Students will have access to the electronic online resources of Oxford University's Library Services, including the Bodleian Library, and all other University libraries. With their University card, students can also use the in-person facilities of the Bodleian Libraries.



Students during in-person week, September 2026



**Rachel Walker**  
2024-25  
Conservationist

*'The most rewarding part of the course was the field project because it brought together everything we had learnt over the year. I really enjoyed spending a lot of time out in the field, getting to know the habitats I was studying in a lot of detail. This isn't usually possible in a job because you have other priorities. I was fortunate that my project also resulted in favourable conservation outcomes for amphibians in my local area and helped clean up polluted ponds.'*

Read Rachel's story: [lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/student-spotlights/rachel-walker](https://lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/student-spotlights/rachel-walker)



**Edward Morrison,**  
2019-20  
Ecological Consultant

*'The skills and knowledge gained from the Postgraduate Certificate have been instrumental in my career. I feel well-equipped to tackle the ecological challenges in this region, contributing to sustainable environmental practices. I would say to anyone considering undertaking the course, go for it!! You will be taught by incredible staff and joined by a diversity of inspiring students.'*

Read Edward's story: [lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/profiles/student-spotlight-edward-morrison](https://lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/profiles/student-spotlight-edward-morrison)



Students during in-Oxford week, Wytham Woods, September 2025

# How to apply

## APPLICATION DETAILS

For information about entry requirements and how to apply, please visit: [www.lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/pgcert-in-ecological-survey-techniques](http://www.lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/pgcert-in-ecological-survey-techniques)

### Deadlines

12:00 midday UK time on:

- Stage 1: Friday 13 November 2026 (Applications more likely to receive earlier decisions)
- Stage 2: Wednesday 27 January 2027 (Latest deadline for most Oxford scholarships)
- Stage 3: Tuesday 2 March 2027

If you have any questions about the progress of your application, please contact the Course Administrators.

## FEE RATES FOR 2027-28 ENTRY

| Fee status | Annual course fees |
|------------|--------------------|
|------------|--------------------|

|      |        |
|------|--------|
| Home | £8,240 |
|------|--------|

|          |         |
|----------|---------|
| Overseas | £11,045 |
|----------|---------|

### Additional information

Please note that this course requires you to spend one week of study in-person in Oxford. You will need to pay for your travel and accommodation to attend during this week. Further, as part of your course requirements, you will need to choose a field project topic. Depending on your choice of topic and the research required to complete it, you may incur additional expenses, such as travel expenses, research expenses, and field trips.

## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

As a minimum, applicants should hold or be predicted to achieve the following UK qualifications or their equivalent:

- a first-class or strong upper second-class undergraduate degree with honours. Candidates with a degree in environmental conservation, ecology, biodiversity or other life sciences subjects will be given priority; however, candidates with degrees in other subjects who can demonstrate field experience or science skills will also be considered.

Applicants who do not meet this requirement will also be considered if they are able to demonstrate considerable experience in the field of environmental conservation practice.

For applicants with a bachelor's degree from the USA, the minimum overall GPA that is normally required to meet the undergraduate-level requirement is 3.6 out of 4.0.

## Get in touch

To learn more, please visit:  
[www.lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/pgcert-in-ecological-survey-techniques](http://www.lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/pgcert-in-ecological-survey-techniques)

To speak to our Course Administrators:

✉ [est@conted.ox.ac.uk](mailto:est@conted.ox.ac.uk)

☎ +44 (0)1865 286952

## Join our online community

 [@ecological-survey-techniques-oxford-university](https://www.linkedin.com/company/@ecological-survey-techniques-oxford-university)

 Subscribe to our emails

# The in-person week in Oxford





Students during in-Oxford week, Wytham Woods, September 2024

## Oxford Lifelong Learning

Oxford Lifelong Learning brings the quality of an Oxford University education within reach of everyone. We inspire people across the world to fulfil their potential – whether by studying for a qualification to change direction, enhancing their career with new skills, or learning simply to satisfy intellectual curiosity.

Our courses, provided in Oxford and online, are led by tutors selected for their expertise and dedication to the exceptional teaching you expect from a world-class university.

Offering a transformational learning experience, we encourage and empower our vibrant community to achieve their goals and make a difference by sharing their knowledge.



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All information is correct at the time of publication (September 2026). Please check our website for the most up-to-date information.