

School Visits

2008/09



Animal Encounters

School visits for Reception to Year 7

School visits to the British Wildlife Centre's collection of over forty different British wild animals and birds are a wonderful opportunity for children to learn about Britain's own wonderful wildlife!

We will not be open to the public during your visit, and all groups will be led throughout by our own experienced education staff and keepers.

British Wildlife centre

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www.britishwildlifecentre.co.uk

Discover Britain's Wonderful Wildlife

Animal Encounters at the British Wildlife Centre

Our 'Animal Encounters' programme is run for organised school groups from Reception to Year 7. It complements and brings to life teaching in the classroom on a variety of National Curriculum topics and skills in Science, Geography and History at Key Stages 1, 2 & 3. A visit here will encourage a greater awareness of the natural world, show how we fit into it and emphasise the need to care for the Environment and its sustainability.

This is a chance to see many fascinating British animals and birds including otters, foxes, wild cats, owls and many more. The children will learn more about wildlife habitats, the countryside and their local area and the survival challenges faced by wildlife in Britain today.

We ask you to select one of the following themes. We will also try to explore links with any other topics your pupils may be studying at the time, so do advise us of any particular interests.

Reception / Key Stage 1

Animals in Your Garden

Discover the variety of animals that visit or live in different parts of your garden. Find out what they eat and where to see them.

A Day in the Life of a Vole

Experience the world through the eyes of a vole and its daily efforts and adventures to find food, shelter and safety, together with the other wild creatures encountered along the way.

Key Stage 2

Life in the Hedgerow

Discover the vital habitat of the hedgerow and the great variety of wildlife that depends upon it for food and shelter.

Mammal Detectives

Learn where and how Britain's mammals live by identifying the clues, tracks and signs that they leave behind.

Key Stage 3

From Ice Age to Our Age

The fascinating story of the changing wildlife and countryside of Britain from the last ice age to the present day. Learn why we have the wild animals we have today & about the impact of man on the environment.

Format of your visit

A typical day includes a combination of talks, animal encounters and other activities relevant to your chosen theme. These are all led by our own education staff and keepers and take place in our fully-equipped lecture theatre, visitor centre and around the animal enclosures. With a break for lunch and a visit to the gift shop, the day ends around 2 pm.

Suggested schedule:

- 10.00 - Arrival and introductions
- 10.15 - Classroom presentation
- 10.45 - Break (tea/coffee for the teachers)
- 11.00 - Guided tour of the larger animals
e.g. foxes, cats, otters, deer, birds
- 12.15 - Lunch (+ gift shop if required)
- 1.00 - Guided tour of the smaller animals
e.g. hedgehogs, rats, barn owls
- 2.00 - Departure



Scottish Wild Cat (*Felis silvestris*)

When to come

Visits are available all year round and whenever you come we will be closed to the public. The summer term is especially popular and we usually fill all dates in May, June and July, so please book early for this period. Alternatively, there is much to see at other times of the year, plus the cost is reduced between September and March.

How to book

Always call us first to check availability. We can provisionally book your preferred date to enable you to check for transport and other requirements. Then simply send our booking confirmation form (you can download this from the web site) by fax or post to secure the booking.

Group Sizes, Costs & Payment

The minimum group size is 20 and the maximum is 90. The cost is £5 per child from September to March and £6 per child from April to July. One teacher/helper is free per 8 children and any additional adults are charged at the same rate. Advance payment is not required - we either issue an invoice on the day of your visit or can take payment by cash, cheque or credit/debit card.



Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*)

Planning your visit

You are welcome to contact us to discuss your visit in more detail, or to come in advance to prepare a risk assessment - please call to make an appointment. There is also a lot of information about British wildlife on our web site.

Clothing

Much of the site is outdoors, so please ask parents to prepare children for hot, cold or wet weather. Paths are gravelled but in very wet weather there can be mud or puddles, so suitable footwear is important.

Lunch

Children should bring their own packed lunch for our outdoor picnic area. Lunch can be eaten indoors in cold or wet weather. Unless the school permits it, we do not normally allow the children to buy sweets and drinks, although we always have facilities to provide hot drinks to revive weary teachers!

Gift Shop

Our gift shop specialises in British wildlife merchandise and includes many inexpensive items suitable for children to spend their pocket money on. Just let us know if you wish to visit the shop during your visit.

Parking

There is plenty of parking on site and ample space for coaches to manoeuvre.

How to Find Us

We are on the A22 in Surrey between Blindley Heath and Newchapel, 10 minutes south of Junction 6 of the M25.

Approximate journey times from:

Crawley:	15 mins
East Grinstead:	15 mins
Redhill:	20 mins
Croydon:	35 mins
Tunbridge Wells:	30 mins
Haywards Heath:	30 mins

