

## Marvellous mushrooms and fascinating fungi

**Start date** 01 November 2019 **End date** 03 November 2019

**Venue** Madingley Hall  
Madingley  
Cambridge  
CB23 8AQ

**Tutor** Dr Patrick Harding **Course code** 1920NRX012

**Director of ISP and LL** Sarah Ormrod

**For further information on this course, please contact the Lifelong Learning team** Zara Kuckelhaus, Fleur Kerrecoe  
[shortcourses@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:shortcourses@ice.cam.ac.uk) or 01223 764637

**To book** See: [www.ice.cam.ac.uk](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk) or telephone 01223 746262

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### Tutor biography

Patrick Harding is the author of four popular books about mushrooms and has been teaching at Madingley for over 30 years where he has also taught courses about trees, herbal medicine, the plant hunters and Christmas. Freelance since taking early retirement from Sheffield University he still appears on television (most recently foraging for edible fungi on the Antiques Road Trip) and is often interviewed on the radio (last December on Radio 3 about Christmas trees). Patrick's lectures are well illustrated and backed with handouts; he likes to mix science and the arts along with some humour – learning does not have to be dry.

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## Course programme

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### Friday

Please plan to arrive between 16:30 and 18:30. You can meet other course members in the bar which opens at 18:15. Tea and coffee making facilities are available in the study bedrooms.

19:00 Dinner

**20:30 – 22:00 1. An introduction to the Fungal Kingdom. Biology and Ecology.**

22:00 Terrace bar open for informal discussion

### Saturday

07:30 Breakfast

**09:00 – 10:30 2. How to identify our common Mushrooms and Toadstools**

10:30 Coffee

**11:00 – 12:30 3. Fungal Groups; from waxcaps and webcaps to brackets and boletes**

13:00 Lunch

**13:45 – 16:00 4. Fungal Foray – a visit to a local wood to find and examine fungi in their natural habitat**

16:00 Tea

16:30 – 18:30 Free

18:30 Dinner

**20:00 – 21:30 5. Fungi in Folklore, Art, Climate Change and Medicine**

21:30 Terrace bar open for informal discussion

### Sunday

07:30 Breakfast

**09:00 – 10:30 6. Edible Mushrooms and Poisonous/Hallucinogenic Toadstools**

10:30 Coffee

**11:00 – 12:30 7. Fungi in Literature – readings of poetry and prose**

Participants are asked to bring some prose extracts or poetry on the subject of fungi to share but public speaking is not compulsory!

12:45 Lunch

**The course will disperse after lunch**

## **Course syllabus**

### **Aims:**

1. To enable students to understand why fungi are now placed in their own kingdom.
2. To provide students with some of the practical skills needed to help them to identify our common species of mushrooms and toadstools
3. To provide a broad view of the environmental importance of fungi together with an appreciation of their place in history and the arts.

### **Content:**

The Madingley sessions will cover a wide range of topics including why fungi are placed in their own kingdom plus their role as decomposers and in helping to provide essential elements to many of the world's plants. The field identification of fungi makes use of a range of features that are not found in plants or animals; these will be explained as part of the session about the identification of some of our common species.

As with animals and plants, the higher fungi (those with fruit bodies easily visible to the naked eye) can be grouped into families and genera. One session will look at those features that are the hallmark of groups such as the waxcaps, milkcaps and knights.

The foray will be an opportunity to look at species in situ and learn about their microhabitats. Medicinal fungi include the source of Penicillin while there is fascinating folklore about hallucinogenic species such as the Fly Agaric.

In the penultimate session we will learn about the best edible species and how to cook and preserve them. We will also investigate the most poisonous species before the final session examining how fungi have been portrayed in literature.

### **Presentation of the course:**

Most sessions will take the form of well-illustrated lectures backed by handouts where necessary and with time for questions and discussion. The foray will provide an opportunity to search for fungi and examine them in habitat. The literature session will be a group exercise led by the tutor.

**As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:**

1. Appreciate the important role played by fungi
2. Take a more scientific approach when using a book to identify fungi.
3. Be aware of some of the unique chemicals found in fungi which can kill or cure.

**Students are asked to bring any fungal specimens they would like the tutor to identify as well as extracts of prose and/or poetry featuring fungi. Please ensure that you bring suitable footwear and outdoor clothing for the fungal foray.**

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## Reading and resources list

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Listed below are texts that might be of interest should you wish to supplement your learning on the course. Any essential reading is marked with an asterisk \*

Author	Title	Publisher and date
Dann, G	<i>Edible Mushrooms</i>	Green Books 2017
Harding, P	<i>Collins Gem Mushrooms</i>	HarperCollins 2013
Harding, P	<i>Mushroom Miscellany</i>	HarperCollins 2008
Sterry, P & Hughes B	<i>Complete Guide to British Mushrooms and Toadstools</i>	HarperCollins 2009
Marren, P	<i>Mushrooms</i>	British Wildlife 2012

## Website addresses

British Mycological Society	<a href="http://www.britmycolsoc.org.uk">www.britmycolsoc.org.uk</a>
British Wildlife Magazine	<a href="http://www.britishwildlife.com">www.britishwildlife.com</a>
Images of fungi	<a href="http://www.fungifvlmedia.dkin2.dk">www.fungifvlmedia.dkin2.dk</a>

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## Additional information

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### Venue

Details of how to find Madingley Hall can be found on our website:  
<http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/who-we-are/how-to-find-the-institute>

### Refreshments

Tea and coffee, lunch and dinner will be provided as outlined in the timetable. If you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies and have not already advised us, please inform our Admissions Team on [ice.admissions@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:ice.admissions@ice.cam.ac.uk) or +44 (0)1223 746262.

**Note** Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

*Information correct as of:* 20 September 2019