

FIELD IDENTIFICATION SKILLS CERTIFICATES (FISCs)

**Does your work or voluntary
activity include field botany and
plant recording?**

**Do you want to quantify your plant
ID skills?**

**Do you know where you are on the
plant ID skills ladder?**

If you want to find out more...

**...read about FISCs – the new field
skills certificates from the BSBI,
with the Field Studies Council and
the University of Birmingham’s
School of Biosciences.**



FIELD IDENTIFICATION SKILLS CERTIFICATES

In 2006 the Botanical Society of the British Isles trialled a new system for assessing skill levels for vascular plant identification, and this year Field Identification Skills Certificates (FISCs) are available for the third year.

What does a FISC entail?

There are usually three parts to a FISC and it takes the best part of a day to take. There are two lab tests where a number of specimens are laid out for identification – the easier ones without books and keys, the more difficult with books and keys. After lunch there is a visit to a site where candidates record everything that they can see for roughly 1½ to 2 hours.

How long does it take?

The FISC starts at about 10.45am and finishes about 4.00pm.

When do the FISCs run?

In 2009, there are two dates from which to choose:

Saturday 27th June

Thursday 16th July

How much does it cost?

The FISC costs £50 to take and this includes lunch and transport to sites.

What do I need to bring?

Identification books and a hand lens (although in an emergency we may be able to provide a lens and a Rose). Lunch is provided at Preston Montford Field Centre and transport to sites is also provided by minibus.

What sort of plants will there be to identify?

A wide range from a variety of habitats. The lab test will contain species that can potentially come from anywhere in the UK.

Will I pass?

You can't fail! The FISC test allows a skill level to be allocated to you. See the attached Botanical Skills Pyramid for the Skill Levels. You are awarded a certificate from the BSBI stating your skill level. You may wish to come back in a few years to take the FISC again to see how you have progressed.

Who runs the FISCs?

The Botanical Society of the British Isles awards the FISC, the Field Studies Council provides all study facilities and the University of Birmingham provides booking and marking services.

How do I book?

Fill in the attached booking sheet and return to Linda Marsh, University of Birmingham, The Gateway, Chester Street, Shrewsbury SY1 1NB. Email S.J.Whild@bham.ac.uk if you have any queries.