

Curriculum Connections:

Junior Certificate:

Section 1C1: Living Things, Section 1C7: Ecology

Leaving Certificate:

Sub-unit 1.1: The Scientific Method

Sub-unit 1.2: The Characteristics of Life

Sub-unit 1.4: General Principles of Ecology

Sub-unit 1.5: A Study of an Ecosystem



Skills Used:

Questioning, Observing, Analysis, Classification, Investigation, Recording, Communication, Selection of Sampling Techniques, Teamwork.

Duration and Pricing:

Leaving Certificate Study: 3.5 hours (€15 pp.)

Junior Certificate Study: 3 hours (€12 pp.)

We also offer exciting recreation activities:

Tree-Top Adventure Walk, Climbing Wall, Leap-of-Faith, Orienteering Trails, Boating & Fishing.

Wherever you are, we are not too far away:

Just 70 mins from Newlands Flyover, Dublin; 60 mins from Waterford City; 90 mins from Wexford town and 60 mins from Clonmel.

Castlecomer Discovery Park is a social-community enterprise, operating on a not-for-profit basis. Chy. 12152.

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Castlecomer
Discovery Park
Yours to enjoy



Ecology Field Study

Leaving and Junior Certificate Level



Castlecomer Discovery Park

Opened in 2007, we are a non-profit, social-community enterprise. Our education programme is designed to reflect and complement the school curriculum. Active, practical learning takes place in our beautiful 80 acre woodland, by the river and lakes and indoors in our dedicated education rooms.



Ecology Field Study Day

We deliver a Leaving and Junior Certificate Ecology Field Study where students carry out a habitat study of the diverse plant and animal life in our woodland ecosystem. A range of sampling techniques, methods and equipment are used.

The Footprints in Coal interactive multimedia exhibition is also experienced during the Ecology Field Study Day. Students hear about the processes shaping the Earth through time, discover more about prehistoric flora and fauna (e.g. adaptation, interdependence, evolution) and see amphibian fossils in our fossil room.

An ecology work booklet is provided for groups to record observations and notes to take back to the classroom for further analysis.

Ecology Field Study Content

In teams, students investigate a study site examining organisms including woodland invertebrates, small mammals and general flora and fauna. The study is carried out using a range of techniques.

The 'Scientific Method' is discussed and a site description is carried out. The effects of biotic & abiotic factors on organisms are investigated. Physical & behavioural adaptations of the ecosystem are a key feature of the study. Food chains are examined along with the role of producers, decomposers & consumers in an ecosystem with competition and interdependence also addressed. The impact of human activity on the ecosystem and wider environment are discussed whilst invasive species are also addressed.



Sampling techniques include:

- Quadrat survey of spatial distribution of plant species.
- Line transect studying abiotic factors & plant growth.
- Collection & classification of woodland invertebrates.
- Small mammal capture & release demonstration (Leaving Certificate only).

Equipment used:

- Square and gridded quadrats.
- Light intensity meter, pH meter, hygrometer and for Leaving Certificate only; gradometer.
- Pooter, beating tray, sweep net, plant & animal classification keys.
- Longworth small mammal trap.