



Milton Keynes Natural History Society

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Photography by Harry Appleyard

Tattenhoe Wildlife: Self-guided Spring Walk

While it may be part of a city that never sleeps, Tattenhoe is a great place for wildlife, featuring a wide variety of habitats including a brook, ponds, meadows and woodland, creating homes for an increasingly large range of species.

The start and finish point for the walk is from the Rosemullion Avenue car park, on the first left turn from the V2 near Tattenhoe's allotments (**MK3 3AH/SP841340**). The route is designed for a walk that should last around an hour, covering 1.7 miles but the amount of time you spend on the route is entirely up to you! A map is included on page 6.

Most of the paths are solid, gravel or brick footpaths; however there are also some woodchip and bridal paths around Howe Park Wood that may be damp and muddy in some areas.

Species Guide and Directions



Waypoint 1 – Wren

Upon leaving the car park, turn left to reach waypoint 1. Wrens are one of our smallest but noisiest birds. At this part of the brook in spring, they can often be seen gathering nesting materials from the reed-beds and singing loudly from the trees nearby.

To reach waypoint 2, from facing this part of the brook, turn left and continue in a straight line, stopping just after the first wooden bridge near the red way.



Waypoint 2 – Willow Warbler

The Willow Warbler is one of many migratory birds that breed in and around Tattenhoe through spring and summer, travelling all the way from Africa, usually arriving in late March/early April. They can often be heard singing in the trees overhanging the water, occasionally briefly coming out into the open to catch flies.

To reach waypoint 3, continue in a straight line past the second wooden bridge until reaching the next crossroads.



Waypoint 3 – Song Thrush

Many garden birds gather among the trees and bushes in this spot, occasionally drinking and bathing in the brook. One of these birds is the Song Thrush, which is easily one of the most vocal birds in Milton Keynes, singing regularly from before dawn to after dusk, often repeating its phrases and mimicking the sounds of other birds. You may see one singing from the trees nearby or looking for snails on the ground, which they crack open by hitting them against stones.

To reach waypoint 4, cross the bridge, turn left and after reaching the bandstand, turn right to follow the path towards the red way near Carnweather Court, continuing straight.



Waypoint 4 – Holly Blue Butterfly

A wide variety of insects can be found along this red way in spring including butterflies, one of the smallest being the Holly Blue, which usually emerges in April and can be found through the summer. They spend a lot more time in flight than some of the other local species but you may spot one basking on the bushes or on the ground nearby.

To reach waypoint 5, continue straight up the red way until reaching a crossing, taking either the bridal way or the adjacent gravel and brick footpaths to continue straight again, turning right just before the Passive house to head towards Howe Park Wood.



Waypoint 5 – Green Woodpecker

Head through the gates towards Howe Park Wood. In spring, Green Woodpeckers can often be heard making their loud, high-pitched laugh-like call from the treetops around this part of the wood and on quiet days, may be spotted looking for ants on the grass out in the open.

To reach waypoint 6, continue straight along the footpath into the wood.



Waypoint 6 – Wood Anemone

Turn at the first left, walking onto a woodchip path. Wood Anemone can be found in large clusters throughout Howe Park Wood in spring. It is a popular food plant of many insects at this time of year including various butterflies, bees and hoverflies.

To reach waypoint 7, turn right at the next crossroads, heading towards the centre of the wood and right again at the next sign.



Waypoint 7 – Bank Vole

After turning right, continue straight along the footpath, heading towards the south side of the wood. Bank Voles are one of many small mammals that can be found around Howe Park Wood. Although they are active all year round, they can often be seen in spring scurrying through vegetation. If you move quietly and carefully, you may spot one out in the open.

To reach waypoint 8, turn left at the next crossroads, at the sign pointing towards the Howe Rock Place car park.



Waypoint 8 – Bee-fly

Bee-flies are relatively small flies which can be in large numbers around Tattenhoe in spring. Although they may look like a large mosquito, they are a harmless species and can usually be seen basking or feeding on various woodland flowers, mostly in March and April.

To reach waypoint 9, follow the sign to the Tattenhoe Street V2 exit, turning left through the gate and crossing the road.



Waypoint 9 – Red Kite

Red Kites have become an increasingly common sight around Milton Keynes in recent years, often being seen over Tattenhoe and the neighbouring estates circling above gardens and large fields as they search for carrion. From the red way at the edge of Howe Park Wood, you stand a good chance of seeing some over the streets nearby.

To continue back to Rosemullion Avenue, follow the red way adjacent to the V2 until reaching a crossing just past the underpass near the start point. Alternatively, turning right, following the red way into the estate and to the bottom of Langerstone Lane will take you back into the linear park, where you will have to turn left at the first wooden bridge near waypoint 2, following the gravel footpath back to waypoint 1.

Tattenhoe Spring Wildlife Walk Map

- Gravel/brick path
- Redway
- Bridleway/woodchip path

