

MILTON KEYNES NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY



MKNHS PROGRAMME – AUTUMN 2025

Most meetings are held at the **Cruck Barn, Bradwell Abbey, Alston Drive MK13 8AP on Tuesdays at 7.30pm for 8.00pm**. Visitors are very welcome. Please note that clause 7 of the Society's constitution reads: "the Society will exercise due care when arranging its meetings and activities for the benefit of members. Members taking part in any meeting or activity do so at their own risk."

Tea/coffee and biscuits will be served free of charge. Cups are provided, but you are encouraged to bring your own if you can.

Members who are unable to attend a meeting in person can request to join the meeting via Zoom. Email webeditor@mknhs.org.uk in advance of the meeting

September

9 SUMMER REVIEW

A chance for members to share some of their highlights from the long hot summer (and spring!) of 2025. Please come prepared to tell us of some of your favourite moments, whether from MKNHS meetings or your own travels.

16 ORCA (ZOOM MEETING)

Tyler Shaw is an Education Officer with ORCA, a charitable organization which researches the behaviour and natural history of whales and other cetaceans. She will give us an overview of the important work that ORCA is currently engaged in, in British waters and beyond.

23 THE INTERNATIONAL WORK OF PTES

A welcome return for **Nida Al-Fulaij**, Chief Executive of the People's Trust for Endangered Species. This time, she will focus on the overseas work of PTES from Indonesian Elephants to Giant Tortoises.

30 DEADLY FUNGI – FACTS, FASCINATION AND FATALITIES

Inspired by recent events in Australia, **Justin Long** digs deeper into our fascination with deadly fungi – how to identify them, what are the consequences of eating them and some interesting cases of the most deadly fungi in the world – some of which will surprise you...

OCT

7 HOW HILL: THE HEART OF THE NORFOLK BROADS

In July 2025, members of the Society stayed at How Hill House in the Broads for the fourth time. This superbly located house is a centre for environmental education for all age groups and the surrounding gardens, grounds and wetlands abound with scarce and specialised wildlife. **Jane Grisdale** and **Julian Lambley**, with input from others, will show some of its highlights.

14 A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO FERNS AND THEIR 'ALLIES'

Revered by Victorian botanists, ferns (and other Pteridophytes) are fascinating and elegant plants which date back to the Devonian era. **Charles Kessler** and **Martin Kincaid** will give a short, illustrated talk showing some of the species that can be found in our region and elsewhere in England, followed by an examination of some specimens, looking at key identification features.

21 MEMBERS NIGHT

An evening for anyone to share a recent interest with fellow members. Offers of contributions to Martin Kincaid or Linda Murphy in advance please.

28 MY APPROACH TO NATURAL HISTORY PHOTOGRAPHY

A former member of MKNHS, **Alan Goodger** lived in MK for most of his life and now resides in Bedfordshire. Tonight, Alan will give us a light-hearted and eye-opening talk on some of his favourite photographic subjects, from birds to larger mammals such as badgers and foxes.

NOV

1 SATURDAY WALK – BRICKHILL WOODS 10.15am Leader: Justin Long/Martin Kincaid

A seasonal walk around Bow Brickhill to look for autumn fungi and birds. We may find winter visitors such as brambling, redwing and fieldfare and this should be peak season for woodland fungi. Note: uneven paths, steep in places. Meet at the car park of All Saints Church, Bow Brickhill. MK17 9LQ SP913344

4 EMBERTON COUNTRY PARK AT SIXTY

Emberton Country Park recently celebrated its sixtieth anniversary. But did you know that it was among the first country parks to be established? MK City Council's **Samuel Flowers** will tell us about the park's history and biodiversity. Those of us who have visited the park recently will have seen great signs of habitat creation here.

11 **CORNISH CHOUGHS – FROM BUST TO BOOM**

The red billed chough had long been associated with the county of Cornwall but was extinct in England until quite recently. **Judith Lloyd** spoke to us some years back and this evening she will give us a full update on one of the great success stories in UK bird conservation.

18 **THE RETURN OF THE BEAVER TO NORTHANTS – ZOOM MEETING**

About 6 months ago, Beds, Cambs and Northants Wildlife Trust released beavers in the Nene Valley Wetlands. BCNWT Conservation manager Matt Johnson will explain the background to this project and show what the beavers have been up to since their release - and how their arrival has gone down with local farmers and the general public.

25 **HAVE I GOT NEWTS FOR YOU – THE ANNUAL QUIZ!**

Once again, time to exercise our grey matter and see if we are equal to the combined IQ of our quizmasters **Ann and Mark Strutton**. Teams of up to 8 people to be assigned on the evening. It's all Greek to me.

DEC

2 **REMEMBERING ROY MAYCOCK**

Roy Maycock (who passed away in 2024) was the Society's President for many years and a great ambassador for MKNHS. He was an eminent botanist and the Country Recorder of plants until his final years. This evening we will pay tribute to his memory and hear about his tireless work in recording and promoting the county's plants.

9 **LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM**

The Parks Trust's Outdoor Learning team runs a varied education programme working with schools, youth groups and community groups across Milton Keynes. **Florie Bryant** will give us an overview of their varied work.

14 **SUNDAY WALK – BURY FIELD COMMON 2pm Leader: Carol Watts**

A winter afternoon visit to a site we usually see during the summer months. Bury Field often has Barn Owls, Kestrels and other raptors during the winter months as well as a host of winter passerines. Meet at the car park on Queen's Avenue, Newport Pagnell close to the park entrance. MK16 8EU. SP 874439

16 **XMAS PARTY**

Our traditional festive gathering and feast. Come along with a dish to share and something to drink as we review the past year and enjoy a festive feast

23 **NO MEETING**