

MILTON KEYNES
NATURAL
HISTORY
SOCIETY



MKNHS OUTDOOR PROGRAMME – SUMMER 2026

President:	Vacancy
Vice President:	Vacancy
Chairman:	Gary Fowler
Secretary:	Jagoda Zajac
Treasurer:	Richard Schmidt
Address:	City Discovery Centre, Alston Drive, Bradwell Abbey, Milton Keynes, MK13 9AP
Website:	www.mknhs.org.uk
Contact Us	info@mknhs.org.uk

Meetings start at 7pm unless otherwise stated. Please meet at 6.45pm so we can run through information about the site and the risk assessment as appropriate.

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.”

Additional descriptions will be added on the website and if there are any last-minute changes, they will be posted on the website too, so please check before you travel any distance to a meeting.

April

28 **PILCH FIELD – Sue Hetherington**

Pilch field is of special botanical interest due to the wealth of flora on land that has never had modern weedkillers and fertilisers used on it. Now pasture, it was cultivated in medieval times using heavy ploughs pulled by oxen or horses leaving the “ridge and furrow” we see today. The site is located off the A421 in Pilch Lane, Singleborough, at postcode MK17 0NX, map ref SP 749 321, obstruct.lateral.adding

We are fortunate in being offered parking at ADSTOCK END FARM at postcode MK17 0NX, SP 749 320, goats.workbook.saucepan

The farm gates will be open from 6:30 – 7.00pm. Assemble here for a briefing at 6:45 and the start of walk at 7pm prompt. Latecomers can park on the wide verges outside the farm near the reserve.

May

2 **KINGSWOOD – Charles Kessler and Mike LeRoy – Saturday 10.30am**

King's Wood is a large Ancient Woodland which is in multiple ownership, is part of a National Nature Reserve and has a single management plan. We will explore what plants, birds and insects make this a particularly valuable site and how it is being managed to restore the woodland and enable a wide range of species to flourish.

Share cars. Limited parking. Meet 10.30 am at: Stockgrove Country Park car-park off Brickhill Lane (£5 up to 3 hours). LU7 0BA, SP920293, faces.locker.layers

5 **BLACK HORSE WOOD/LINFORD MANOR – Jane Bidgood and Richard Schmidt**

After an excursion into the Linford Manor park, we will cross the canal bridge to access the wood. We should see a variety of deciduous trees and woodland birds and ground flora. There are moisture-loving plants on the sides of the numerous brooks that traverse the site. We will investigate the deadwood for fungi and invertebrates.

Please be aware that there are steps down from the canal bridge, steps up from the formal pond and another set of steps down into the wood. There is also a short slope which will need to be navigated to exit the wood onto the towpath.

Meet at the Memorial Hall car park in Great Linford, luck.dugouts.ladder

12 OLNEY RIVERSIDE WALK – Martin Kincaid

Description to follow

17 STRAWBERRY HILL NATURE RESERVE – Peter Meadows and BCN – Sunday 10.30am

Strawberry Hill is now owned by the BCN Wildlife Trust. It has been transformed over the last 25 years by its previous farmer owner from arable fields to scrub and young woodland, providing habitat for large populations of an increasing diversity of species, including nightingales, willow warblers, whitethroat and garden warblers. It also provides ideal habitat for turtle doves.

Meet at 10.30am, Strawberry Hill Nature Reserve, near Knotting Green just off the A6 between Bedford and Rushden. MK44 1AA. The number of visitors is limited to 15 @ £7.50pp. Contact Treasurer Richard Schmidt to book/pay for your place: treasurer@mknhs.org.uk. Places will be allocated in the order they are booked Parking is limited at the site. A BCN Wildlife Trust guide will lead us through the site.

19 DUNCOMBE WOOD – Charles Kessler, Julie Cuthbert and Mike LeRoy

Former Ancient Woodland near Little Brickhill planted with Conifers in the 1960s but still has some hardwoods and remnant Ancient Woodland flora. Explore the Wood with the owner and hear about initial restoration work. Much off-path walking on uneven ground and through some damp areas will require extra care. Wear walking boots or heavy-duty shoes. Opportunity to add to knowledge of species present.

South from Little Brickhill on west side of A5 interchange, then a mile along a former section of Watling Street, almost to the end of its 'No Through Road' section. Meet by roadside, near the Lodge just north of Duncombe Wood, MK17 9NF, SP 917 316, hothouse.plots.salt

26 No Meeting

June

2 LOUGHTON VALLEY PARK/BANCROFT – Joe Clinch and Mervyn Dobbin

The planned route will take us down the valley close to the Loughton Brook on hard core paths, then over Grafton Way to the Windmill at Bradville and returning up the valley via the Roman Villa. There should be a reasonable range of plants, birds and insects in the grasslands, shrubs and trees.

Meet at Parks Trust North Loughton Valley Park car park at Bancroft Park, Constantine Way off Millers Street, MK13 0RA, savers.revamped.debt. #

9 COOMBS QUARRY AN PADBURY BROOK – Sue Hetherington

Coombs Quarry (disused) is a Local Geological Site for Bucks. It is the best exposure of Jurassic limestone in the county. A short walk over a couple of fields partly alongside the Padbury Brook takes us to the quarry. There are a couple of styles (one particularly non user-friendly) and a wooden bridge to negotiate.

Meet at the Buckinghamshire Council “picnic” site (brown sign points to the site entry) off the A421 at approx. postcode MK18 2AA, SP 731 332, templates.string.intruded

16 No meeting

23 SANDHOUSE LANE NATURE RESERVE – Di Parsons

A small nature reserve off the A5, packed with flowers and insects. At its centre it has a brick-pit which is now a water-filled lake surrounded by trees. This is home to many types of insects; in particular, Bedfordshire’s first Downy Emerald Dragonfly – an insect scarce north of the Thames was found in 2006. The lake and trees have around them meadows containing many varieties of wild flowers and an area that was once an asphalt works, This shows the effect on flowers of attempting to grow in tarmac, such a restrictive substance. One of the highlights is an area growing several varieties of orchids.

Meet in the car park of the Flying Fox pub, on Sheep Lane just off the A5 south of Little Brickhill, from where we will car-share to the site. MK17 9HD, SP933304, eruptions.breached.slid

30 INTRODUCTION TO LICHEN IDENTIFICATION – FIELD SESSION AT SIMPSON/CALDECOTTE– Jagoda Zajac/Mike LeRoy

A hands-on introduction to the fascinating world of lichens. We’ll explore a variety of lichen forms growing on different natural and man-made substrates, learning how to recognise key features in the field. Please bring a hand lens and a 365nm UV torch if you have them but they’re not essential.

Meet at the St Thomas’ Church in Simpson MK6 3AD, SP883361, curiosity.adopt.asserts

There are two car parks off Simpson Road, with a short walk to the church.

July

7 WICKEN WOOD – Martin Kincaid and Adrian Cadman – 8pm start

Description to follow

14 HOLY TRINITY CHURCH/OLD WOLVERTON – Florie Bryant - Parks Trust

Description to follow

21 MOUNT FARM LAKE – Martin Kincaid and Helen Wilson

Description to follow

25 GEORGE HIGGS/GORDON REDFORD MOTHING NIGHT - Andy Harding and Bucks Invertebrate Group - LINFORD LAKES – Saturday 8.30pm

An evening when we remember two members of the Society who did a lot to promote interest in, and knowledge of, moths in Milton Keynes. This is a joint event with the Bucks Invertebrate Group, who provide several moth traps in addition to traps run by Society members.

Start time: from 20.30 onwards Fold up chairs, torch, and a flask of something to drink have been helpful in the past. Meet in the car park MK14 5AH SP842427 cemented.rankings.deeper

28 HAVERSHAM LAKE – Phil Sarre (MKNHS) and Gillian Thompson (Haversham SC)

Enjoy a gentle walk, mostly on short grass, around Haversham Lake, seeing lakeside and riverside species. A fuller description of what we might see can be found on the Haversham Sailing Club's website under the title Lakeside walk. <https://www.havershamsc.org/lake-side-walk.html>

Meet at the car park of Haversham Sailing club, MK19 7DX, grid reference for clubhouse SP 833430, remission.lies.formal,

Aug

4 STOCKGROVE COUNTRY PARK – THE EFFECTS OF GEOLOGY ON BAKER'S WOOD - Di Parsons

Baker's Wood is the area of woodland to the East of the cafe at Stockgrove. The underlying soil is sand as it is in all this area, but overlying it is a layer of clay which flows down over parts of the sand. this is particularly true in Baker's wood. Between the top and the bottom of the wood we will walk over waves of different geology. Unfortunately, the waves of different flowers that develop on the different types of geology are best seen in spring, but we will try to identify them from their leaves and bring pictures to show what the flowers look like.

Meet at Stockgrove Car park. Please note that there is a car parking charge payable. LU7 0BA, SP919293, tight.encounter.neat

9 CLOPHILL LAKES NATURE RESERVE – Peter Meadows and Greensand Trust – Sunday 10.30am

Clophill Lakes, owned by the Greensand Trust, is a former Fuller's Earth quarry site shaped by its industrial heritage and now a haven for wildlife. The River Flit runs through the site which also includes the Cainhoe Lake County Wildlife Site. The reserve offers wetlands, flower rich grassland and woodland with a wide range of species, including otters, dragonflies, damselflies and wetland birds. There is a cafe, toilets and visitor centre. We hope to have a Greensand Trust guide for our visit.

The entrance is on Shefford Road, Beadlow, Beds., SG17 5TR, off the A507 just outside Clophill village. Meet at 10.30 am in the car park which uses an ANPR system and costs £3-50 for up to 3 hours and £5-50 for up to 5 hours.

11 LODGE LAKE/LOUGHTON BROOK – Gary Fowler and Martin Ferns

An easy walk around the lake edge, good for birdlife such as herons, tufted ducks, little grebes and other birds skulking and fishing among the reedbeds; maybe a cormorant or a little egret. Then a stroll north towards Bradwell Abbey along Loughton Brook, looking for kingfishers. Mostly on leisure paths.

Meet at car park on Bradwell Road (off H4 Danstead Way) MK8 9LG, SP833385, automate.frog.rinse

18 OUZEL VALLEY PARK – Eavesdropping on MK Bats, Bat Walk 8pm– Carla Boswell

We will be walking a circular route around Walton Lake and south along the River Ouzel and around OU church grounds before returning to the car park. The aim is to listen to the 5 common bat species in MK plus some other elusive ones around the parkland. Do bring your Bat detectors along if you have one but some detectors will also be available to share. Estimated finish 9.30pm

Meet at Walton Lake Car Park, available (free) off Newport Road, Woughton SP879369, gallons.wool.waddle.

25 No Meeting

NEXT MEETING – Tuesday 1st September, Cruck Barn, **7.30pm** for an 8pm start.

City Discovery Centre, Bradwell Abbey, Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK13 9AP