

INDOOR MEETINGS 2020-21

Meetings take place on Wednesdays starting at 8 pm, in Room 109 in the Palmer Building, Reading University, which is accessible.

COVID-19

At the time of printing, we cannot be sure when and how we will be able to hold indoor meetings this season. If it is safe and permitted, we will hold them as planned. If not, we aim to hold them online via Zoom. Wherever we hold them, we hope to record them and make the recordings available online.

Please check our website at <http://berksoc.org.uk/club-news/programme/> for up-to-date information about each meeting. We will also email members before each meeting.

Members without email or internet access: Please phone Robert Godden (07543 800921) or Sally Wearing (0118 946 3125 or 07939 488971) during the week before each meeting to find out how it is being held.

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| October 7 th 2020 | A Journey Through Spain – Len Clarke Our talk this evening starts in the Spanish Pyrenees, goes west to the Picos de Europa, then on south to the Belchite Steppes, to Extremadura then south west to the Doñana and Cadiz province, including the Gibraltar Straits. |
| October 21 st 2020 | Farming for Wildlife – Des Sussex Des works for Natural England and will tell us of some of the ways that farmers are helping wildlife by restoring and creating habitats, focusing on examples of habitats created in Berkshire and their benefits to wildlife. |
| November 4 th 2020 | Costa Rica Migration – Mike Henderson During March and April approximately three million birds will pass over Costa Rica. These include raptors, vultures, waterfowl, hummingbirds, orioles, tanagers and many, many more! |
| November 18 th 2020 | AGM & Saving Nature – Gwyn Williams The Club's Annual General Meeting will be followed by a talk about saving nature by the Head of Conservation Investment, RSPB. |
| December 2 nd 2020 | 2020 Photographic Competition Time to catch up with our exciting annual photographic competition that had to be postponed in March. Three categories: Portrait, Action/flight and Bird(s) in their habitat. |
| December 16 th 2020 | Christmas Social Our annual Christmas social, probably minus the nibbles, but we will have interesting and topical talks by three of our members. |

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| January 6 th 2021 | Birds of the Camargue – Edward Towne Our speaker spent nearly a year in the Camargue, home to more than 400 species of birds, such as Greater Flamingos, Pied Avocets, Black-winged Stilts, Purple Herons, Kentish Plovers, Black-necked Grebes and Collared Pratincoles. |
| January 20 th 2021 | The Reserves of Lincolnshire – Stephen Lovell. Postponed from April 1 st 2020. There are nearly 100 reserves in Lincolnshire. Stephen will tell us how the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust is helping to secure the future of many important habitats and species. |
| February 3 rd 2021 | Hungary Birds: A Jewel in Europe – Mary Braddock Mary's talk focusses on the Tisza flood plain, the Great Hungarian Plain, and the reedbeds and ponds of the Hortobágy National Park, with a variety of herons, woodpeckers, waders, birds of prey and songbirds. |
| February 17 th 2021 | Vulture Conservation – Campbell Murn Joint BOC & University of Reading Lecture Campbell is head of research at the Hawk Conservancy and a part-time lecturer at the University. He will tell us about the raptor conservation issues that we're all only too aware of. |
| March 3 rd 2021 | Birds by Habitat – Carl Chapman Carl is a qualified ornithologist and chairman of the oldest natural history organisation in Norfolk. His talk looks at birds by their habitat, focusing on why most species of bird are found only in particular habitats. |
| March 17 th 2021 | Photographic Competition 2021 The new season's Photographic Competition. Now's the chance to show off your skills at photographing the special birds that you've been seeing either in their habitat, action and flying shots or in portrait form. |
| March 31 st 2021 | A Field Guide to Field Guides! – Chris Foster Our own Chris Foster will give us an informative talk on how our very important bird guides originated. |

FIELD TRIPS AND MIDWEEK WALKS 2020-21

Please note that there are new arrangements this year for outdoor activities. Because of the changeable COVID-19 situation, **you must contact the relevant leader at least three days in advance** (or earlier where specified) to register your contact details and to be updated. Please do not turn up without prior booking.

If anyone under 18 wishes to attend, the leader must be notified of this at least a week in advance, in accordance with our safeguarding policy.

Accessibility: Please contact the relevant leader for information about accessibility on our field trips and midweek walks.

Thursday 17th September 2020

Day trip by car to Titchfield Haven

At passage time, many species of waders, passerines, terns and raptors gather at this coastal launch pad. It is an excellent time to look for Bearded Tits. There are often interesting sea birds on the Solent.

Meet at 9.30 a.m. on Meon sea front (SU535023 / PO14 3JT)

Contact Carole White, 01344 452058 or carole.ann471@btinternet.com

Wednesday 21st October 2020

Midweek walk at Coley Meadows

There will be a wide variety of birds in the very varied habitats of this area. We will be looking out for lingering summer visitors and for newly arrived winter migrants.

Meet at 10 a.m. at Circuit Lane, Southcote. Parking is limited (alt. no 25 bus). (SU692717 / RG30 3HH)

Contact Adrian Lawson, 07716 348948 or 348948@gmail.com

Saturday 24th October 2020

Selsey Bill and Pagham Harbour by car

Selsey is a prime sea-watching site for skuas, divers and other sea birds and is worth an early start. Alternatively come later to enjoy superb birding around Pagham Harbour, where waders, raptors and passage passerines are usually plentiful.

Meet at 7.15 a.m. at Selsey for sea-watching. Meet at seaward end of Grafton Rd (**SZ855921 / PO20 0JA**) (parking there or at sea front CP nearer toilets) **OR at 9.00 a.m. at Pagham Harbour Visitor Centre, Sidlesham (SZ856966 / PO20 7NE)**
Contact Chris Foster, 07779 302347

Sunday 22nd November 2020

Weekend day trip by car to Kent

We will visit one or more of the superb birding sites in this diverse county. Details will be decided closer to the date according to what offers the best day's birding.

Contact Robert Godden, 07543 800921, in advance for details of meeting time and place.

Thursday 17th December 2020

Midweek morning walk at Moor Green and/or Christmas Lunch at a local pub/restaurant

We will walk around the lakes (possibly a short walk for some and a longer walk for others) to look for wildfowl, wintering finches etc., and maybe owls and raptors. Or simply join us for lunch at 1.30 p.m. (details available later).

Meet at 10 a.m. at Moor Green NR car park for the walk. (SU805627 / RG40 3TJ)

Lunch Menu and Booking (essential) via Carole White, 01344 452058 or carole.ann471@btinternet.com

Tuesday 5th January 2021

New Year walk at Hosehill Lake, Theale

Walk off the New Year excesses, get a breath of air, and see some interesting birds to start your year list. Drinks and snacks afterwards are optional.

Meet at 10 a.m. in The Fox and Hounds car park at SU649698 / RG7 4BE

Contact Ray Reedman 0118 986 4338 or meander2@hotmail.com

Sunday 7th February 2021

Weekend day trip by coach to RSPB Rainham Marsh, Essex, with East Berks RSPB. (Cost £25 adult, £15 U16/student)

Rainham is a wildlife oasis close to the M25 crossing of the Thames. It turns up all sorts, from Bearded Tits and Water Pipits to Short-eared Owls and Bitterns. For more detail see:

<http://www.eastberksrspb.org.uk/calendar/56/353-RSPB-Rainham-Marshes-2021-br-Sunday-COACH-trip/>

Meet at 7 a.m. at Braywick Park (Braywick Sports Ground), Braywick Rd, Maidenhead (SU892798 / SL6 1DX)

Book with Helen Pearson, helenEBRSPB@gmail.com

March 2021: Visit by car to the Great Bustard reintroduction site (Dates are flexible)

This is a good time to see the spectacular leks. These birds now qualify as a British species breeding freely in the wild. Access to the hide is via booking only and there is a fee. The site in Wiltshire is about 75 mins by car from Reading.

Contact Ray Reedman, 0118 986 4338 or meander2@hotmail.com before the end of January if you wish to book via the club.

Sunday 28th March 2021

Weekend day trip by car to Keyhaven/Pennington marshes

This site can normally produce a huge variety of waders and wildfowl, with a good chance of sea-ducks, divers and scarce grebes. The area rarely fails to produce something really special.

Meet at 9.00 a.m. at Keyhaven car park (SZ308916 / SO41 0TR) for limited free parking; there is a paying car park nearby and toilets.

Contact Robert Godden, 07543 800921

Thursday 8th April 2021

Weekday trip by car to Combe Hill, Inkpen

At this time of year migrant Ring Ouzels, Wheatears etc. stop to feed and rest on this magnificent chalk ridge, sometimes in good numbers. It is also a good site to view a variety of raptors. Ravens are almost guaranteed.

Meet at 10 a.m. at the Combe Gibbet car park at the top of the ridge. (SU370620 / RG17 9EL nearest)

Contact Chris Foster, 07779 302347

Thursday 22nd April 2021

Evening Bat Walk at Whiteknights Park

We hope to encounter three or four species during this walk

Meet at 8.15 p.m. at the entrance to the Harris Garden (behind School of Biological Sciences) (SU 737714 / RG6 6EG) Parking is available in that area.

Contact Elaine Charlson, elainemcharlson@gmail.com

Sunday 25th April 2021

Local 'Early bird' walk at Dinton Pastures

All nine regular warblers should be back plus Cuckoo, Common

Tern, Swift and hirundines. There is a good chance of passage waders.

Meet at 7.30 a.m. at Lavell's Discovery Centre Car park (SU786725 / RG10 0SU) (Parking charge £1.50/hr)

Contact Brian Bennett, btbennett1@googlemail.com

Saturday 8th May 2021

Weekend day trip by coach to Dungeness (Cost £25 adult, £15 student)

It is a prime site at most times of the year. At this season there should be nesting activity, incoming migrants, and sea passage.

See <http://www.eastberksrspb.org.uk/calendar/56/359-RSPB-Dungeness-2021-br-Saturday-COACH-trip/> for more details

Meet at 7 a.m. at Braywick Park (Braywick Sports Ground), Braywick Rd, Maidenhead (SU892798 / SL6 1DX)

Book with Helen Pearson, helenEBRSPB@gmail.com

Wednesday 19th May 2021

Midweek walk at Southcote Meadows

This is a 4m (7km) return walk which follows the River Kennet through the Fobney Island reserve to Fobney Meadow. Some areas may be muddy. The main targets will be passage birds and incoming spring migrants, with high hopes for some of the scarcer species which this site often produces.

Meet at 10 a.m. at Circuit Lane, Southcote. Parking is limited (alt. no 25 bus). (SU692717/RG30 3HH)

Contact Adrian Lawson, 07716 348948 or 348948@gmail.com

Wednesday 2nd June 2021

Evening walk on Compton Downs

This Ridgeway site is north of Compton. A fine June evening on the Downs can be a real treat, with buntings, larks, pipits and wagtails – and maybe a few special surprises too.

Meet at 7 p.m. at the north end of Churn Road, (which can be a bit rough at times) off High Street, Compton, at SU 507821 / RG20 7LY (nearest)

Contact Andy Tomczynski, andy.tomczynski@btinternet.com

Saturday 21st August 2021

BOC Weekend Coach Trip to the British Birdwatching Fair: Cost £36 (including entry)

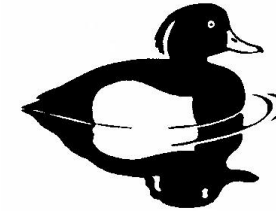
This is a trip to the biggest gathering of bird enthusiasts in Britain. There are extensive exhibitions of all sorts, a wide range of free talks by some of the world's experts, and the chance to do some special bird watching too, since the site is a magnet to all sorts of birds. (NB. This trip is biennial, so your next chance will be in 2023)

Depart 7.00 a.m. Whiteknights Park, Shinfield Road main entrance (SU728719 / RG6 6UR)

Pick up: 7.30 a.m. at Braywick Park (Braywick Sports Ground), Braywick Rd, Maidenhead (SU892798/ SL6 1DX)

Book by 31st July with Ray Reedman, 0118 9864338 or meander2@hotmail.com

BERKSHIRE ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB 2020-21



OFFICERS and COMMITTEE

Presidents Emeritus:

Neil Bucknell, Robert Gillmor, Andy Swash

President: Renton Righelato

Chairman: Robert Godden

Secretary: Sally Wearing
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Treasurer: Eleanor Pitts

Membership Secretary: Iain Oldcorn
01344 625883
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Indoor Programme Secretary: Sue Charnley
Outdoor Programme Secretary: Ray Reedman

Chair of Conservation Sub-committee: Renton Righelato

Newsletter Editor: Iain Oldcorn

Chairman of Editorial Board, Birds of Berkshire Annual Report:
Position Vacant

Committee
Ken Moore Sue Charnley Ray Reedman
Jane Campbell Chris Foster

Club Website: www.berksoc.org.uk

Registered charity no. 1011776