

Malvern Local Group

Summer newsletter 2026



**Worcestershire
Wildlife Trust**

Talks, walks and trips

Those of you who attend our indoor meetings will have been greeted at the door by Sadie and Tim Densham. They have taken your entrance money, sold you raffle tickets, provided you with leaflets and answered your questions since 2019. Sadly Sadie and Tim have decided to retire from this role and we shall certainly miss them. They have our very best wishes and most grateful thanks for their consistent invaluable support.

Indoor Programme

Join us on the first Thursday of the month at 7.30pm: Lyttelton Rooms (near Malvern Priory).

September 7th

Rosemary Winnall: The Ecology of Graveyards

October 8th

Alan English: Big Cats in the UK

November 5th

Rachel Krufft: Spiders of Britain

December 3rd

Ashley Grove: Wonderful Winter Wildlife

January 7th 2027

We will celebrate our group's 50th anniversary
Mike Perry, CEO of the WWT and a birthday cake!

Please check malverngroupwwt.org.uk for notice of walks and visits during summer and beyond.

Trips

Our minibus trips leave from the car park at Malvern Splash, Priory Road WR14 3DS. Booking is essential by calling Lyndon Knott on 01905 455222. We are very grateful to Lyndon and Sheila Jones for the effort they put in to organising and taking these trips.

30th July - The Hollies, Brook Vessons and Nipstone nature reserves, Shropshire. 7am start, £20.

5th Sept - Formby Point (red squirrels) and adjacent Ainsdale and Ainsdale Hills nature reserves. 7am, £20 + entry for non-NT members.

22nd-25th November - Donna Nook and the Lincolnshire coast for seals and birds.

5th December - Otmoor nature reserve, Oxfordshire. 8am start, £18

A trip to the Wren's Nest, Dudley

Lyndon arranged a wonderful trip to the Wren's Nest, famous for its Silurian coral reef formations. But we were there for its nature. Quarrying of limestone has resulted in some spectacular geography, which entailed lots of climbing up and down on well maintained steps, thankfully with handrails. We looked up at limestone outcrops and down vertiginous wooded slopes. There were vales of beautiful wildflowers and grasses, including abundant bright purple marsh orchids, some pyramid orchids and a couple of beautiful bee orchids. There was even a stand of yellow loosestrife. In the woods we found other exciting flora and what looked like a swarm of bees on a tree stump turned out to be a mass of fairy inkcap fungi. It was a sight to behold. We saw superb specimens of Dryad's saddle and one huge fungus that wasn't identified.

After lunch we went to the northerly section, which doesn't appear to have been quarried. There weren't as many insects but a dark butterfly caught everyone's attention and was declared to be a ringlet. Some of us were sceptical about Merlin's identification of a parakeet but those who stayed to listen and look sighted not one but two bright green ring-necked parakeets.

Lyndon had found another wildlife reserve quite close, Portway Hill. This was a little disappointing because it appeared to be a park rather than a reserve but we climbed to a splendid vantage point from which, on a clear day, I have no doubt, you could see forever. All in all, it was a terrifically enjoyable trip and huge thanks to Lyndon for his hard work.

Alison Pickford



Knepp Rewilding A Malvern Local Group trip 27th – 30th April 2026

“Wall-to-wall birdsong” is how someone described much of our visit to the Knepp rewilding experience. Blackbirds, song thrushes, whitethroats, assorted other warblers and, leading the also-rans, the too-often-disregarded wrens.

It is probable that the distant purr of a turtle dove or, perhaps, even the call of a cuckoo would have taken the prize as most welcome to our ears ... had it not been for a virtuoso performance of an unexpected scale that was to be heard here, there, everywhere around the estate and throughout the day.

Should it fall silent, you need do no more than wait awhile, walk on a hundred yards and, from somewhere within Knepp’s unending bird-friendly habitat, you would hear again that avian riposte to anything penned by man; one minute demented, the next tender, a mix of baroque, jazz, classical. Strange that something so few of us will have ever heard before would have been so recognisable – once you had recovered from the moment of disbelief and accepted that, yes, we were listening to nightingales.

The storks were a delight, reminding us again of the miracle of recovery that nature can contrive, if given the chance.

Of Tamworth pigs we saw no sign; correction, we saw signs a-plenty, just no pigs. A few English longhorn cattle were corralled with a bull. We searched for Exmoor ponies, as did a young woman on horseback who seemed to have mislaid them. The animals are there in numbers but an estate of a couple of thousand acres offers plenty of places for them to hide away.

The tree-top platforms afford perfect sightings of anything on the move: a couple of fallow bucks were seen from one and a party of red deer from another.

Knepp’s resident beavers are still in purdah and not yet to be visited, though rumour

has it that two of our party had concluded that a large and out-of-the-way area, cut off by heavy duty security fencing and provided with sufficient water and timber to maintain a battalion of beavers, would have repaid investigation, had they been of such a mind.

Butterfly hunters seemed, for the most part, to have been hunting in vain, though a total of 12 species suggests a moderate return on their labours. A green hairstreak was found and brimstones were numerous, with a female of the species observed laying an egg at a pit stop during our journey home.

Bird species for the four days of our little expedition numbered 75. Had it not been for nightingales and turtle doves, a firecrest on the South Downs Way would have been the highlight.

Knepp’s catering is excellent, if expensive. If you are searching for an unusual and costly gift with which to impress a loved one, Knepp’s gift shop has ideas from books to brisket, skincare to secateurs. The unusual might be “Toxic Legacy” in which the author, Doctor Stephanie Steffens aims to do for glyphosates what Rachel Carson did for DDT. The expensive has to be a very large, floor-standing wooden vase priced at £1,500. It might even have been more.

Our journey home was broken by a couple of visits within the South Downs National Nature Reserve where views of the more-or-less unspoilt beauty of the English countryside provided a memory to grieve over. A hare prospected a field alongside the path and, above us, three paragliders took advantage of the thermals and battled a stiff breeze.

Our thanks to Lyndon for our safe travel, our admiration for his unperturbed handling of assorted challenges. Sheila had the navigator’s seat and held it with distinction.

Perhaps you’d consider joining some of us on a future trip, walk or talk – we always have a fascinating and informative time.

Kevin Larkin