

London Wetland Centre

Queen Elizabeth's Walk Barnes, London SW13 9WT, London

We will assemble in the courtyard area, just inside of the entrance building, at 9.45am.

London Wetland Centre, an award winning nature reserve, brings the countryside to London. Although close to the heart of the capital - just a 15-20 minute bus ride from Hammersmith - it is a haven of tranquility for both wildlife and people. In late spring, the lakes, pools and gardens are home to:

- kingfishers nesting in a bank
- sand martins zipping over the ponds
- ducklings waddling after their mother
- marsh frogs, often making a loud cackling noise.

There are six hides, perfect for watching wildlife - and for photography. From these (with suitable equipment) you can take photos of the wetland birds. Those who are patient may see frogs and lizards basking in the sunshine; and we should see - and be able to photograph - dragonflies, damselflies and butterflies fluttering over the wildflower meadows. If we're very lucky we could see one of the many water voles that live there, chomping on the reeds at the pond edges. Chris Packham, BBC Springwatch presenter, said, "I love it here at the London Wetland Centre. It's one of my favourite places in the country."

There will be opportunities for both bird photography and close-up photography (e.g. dragonflies, damselflies, flowers).

We will have lunch there at about 13.00 hrs, and review our morning's work. You can either bring your own food or select from a wide range of options in the excellent café.

There is an entrance fee to the reserve of about £12 (£9 for concessions).

Directions

By bus Buses 33, 72 and 209 stop nearby (alight at the Red Lion stop, approximately 150 metres walk from the wetland centre). If you get the 72 back to Hammersmith tube ensure the bus is going to East Acton.

By rail Barnes rail station is just 25 minutes from Waterloo or 10 minutes from Clapham Junction. It is then a 15 minute walk to the wetland centre (or 5 minutes by buses 72 or 33). You can also alight at Barnes Bridge station then walk through Barnes village (about a 15 minute walk) or catch a 209 bus (alight at the bus stop opposite the Red Lion pub, which is approximately 150 metres from the Centre).

By tube Hammersmith tube (on the Piccadilly and District & Circle Lines) is the nearest tube station. From here it is just a 10 minute bus ride (see 'by bus').