

Round-about-Buckden

SEASONAL

Summer



Around 20 species of dragonfly and damselfly can be found in the wetland areas and summer is the best time to see most of them. Each has a slightly different flight time, but summer walks will provide the most. The Emperor is our biggest dragonfly while the Southern hawker may even fly up to you to investigate you due to its inquisitive nature – a real treat. Red-eyed and Small Red-eyed Damselflies (the latter a recent colonist from the continent) perch on lily pads and other short vegetation growing in the water. Common Blue and Azure



Emperor Dragonfly



Common Blue



Southern Hawker



Red-eyed Damselfly

Damselflies can be abundant in summer.

Even more colour comes from the beautiful wetland wildflowers such as the tall, purple, Rosebay Willowherb that thrives by the river and lakes and Yellow Flag. While enjoying the riverside wildlife, make sure you keep an eye out for fish in the clear waters of the river.

Birdsong gradually dwindles through June, but then the sound of baby birds takes over and adults are very busy carrying food. Look for graceful Common Terns along the river and over the lakes carrying small fish back to their young.



Rosebay Willowherb

Grey Herons are now joined by another heron in the ditches and wetlands – the snow-white Little Egret. Summer is a good time to see them with plenty of young around from nearby breeding colonies. Look for their yellow feet, which they use to stir up fish prey from mud underwater. Mute Swans are joined by their cygnets on the river and noisy flocks of Greylag Geese gather in fields with their young.



Swan



Little Egret



Grey Heron



It is well worth staying out in the evening to enjoy Daubenton's Bats feeding over the lakes and the large shapes of Noctule Bats flying high in the sky. Soprano and Common Pipistrelles can be seen anywhere on the walk – tiny, restless bats that you must be quick to see!

Watch for Fox families and deer at such times and perhaps even Badgers out and about. It is always worth stopping and staying silent so that shyer creatures and birds may appear - and good to take a break on your walk to admire the view or treat yourself to a snack or a drink! At such times, interesting things often appear.



Daubentons Bat



Badger



Honey Bee

There are dozens of different species of bee to look for. The familiar honey-bee and bumblebees (as many as 10 species!) are best known but there are also colourful little nomad bees, leaf-cutter bees that make holes in leaves and yellow-faced bees. In late summer, listen out for the chirping of Dark Bush-crickets coming from the scrubby and grassy areas, especially in the evenings.



Roe Deer



Leafcutter Bee

There are plenty of butterflies to see. Meadow Browns, Gatekeepers and three species of the tiny, moth-like bright orange skippers: Essex, Large and Small Skippers. They can be hard to tell apart and you'll need to look closely. They are grassland butterflies, so check the many wildflowers for them.



Large Skipper



Grasshopper



Dark Bush Cricket



Gatekeeper Butterfly

Another sound to listen for is the very high-pitched sounds made by common and pygmy shrews. When the young are born, this can be a common sound in the grassland and hedgerow bottoms. Getting a glimpse of one of these tiny mammals is a much more difficult task!



Pygmy Shrew

