Inkpen Wild Walk

Berkshire Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire



Explore west Berkshire: this walk includes ancient heathland, woods and downs and spectacular views

Starting in Kintbury, this 17 km circular walk takes in the Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust's (BBOWT) Inkpen Common and Inkpen Crocus Field nature reserves.

- 17 km/10.5 miles (about 4.5–5 hours)
- The end of stage 2 and start of stage 4 are very steep
- There is a shorter 10km/6 mile circular section which starts at Inkpen Common nature reserve. There are further paths around the reserve to explore further
- BBOWT's Kintbury Newt Ponds nature reserve is nearby

How to get to the start

Postcode: RG17 9UT Grid ref: SU 387 672

By bus: Check www.traveline.info for information about local buses

By train: The walk starts at Kintbury railway station, check www.nationalrail.co.uk for train times

By car: There is parking in Kintbury, by Wayfarer's Walk and limited parking on Great Common Road, Inkpen

By bike: There is limited cycle storage at Kintbury railway station



Please help us look after wildlife by keeping dogs on short leads at Inkpen Common and picking up after them.



Please note no dogs are allowed at Inkpen Crocus Field.

Inkpen Common Nature Reserve

This remnant of Inkpen Great Common, dominated by heathers and gorse, contains many plants both beautiful, such as pale dog-violet, tormentil, heath milkwort and heath spotted-orchid, and unusual such as lousewort and the parasitic common dodder.

Oak and birch fringe the heath, supporting breeding finches and warblers that provide a chorus of birdsong during spring and summer. A carpet of rushes and bog mosses in the small valley bog is punctuated by yellow blooms of bog asphodel through the summer.

Fungi, including the attractive but poisonous fly agaric, erupt from the ground each autumn. Periodically trees are cut down to restore open heath, and livestock are used to maintain this by grazing the young saplings and regrowth.

Inkpen Crocus Field – renowned for its spectacular display of thousands of crocuses blooming each spring. You can also see many butterflies, such as ringlet, orange-tip and gatekeeper, on this flower-rich meadow later in the year.

Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT)

BBOWT relies on the support of our members to help us look after local wildlife. By joining BBOWT you can help to secure the future of special landscapes like Inkpen Common and Inkpen Crocus Field. Join us today!

NATURE NOTES



The song of **skylarks** is one of the iconic sounds of the

countryside. Listen out for the seemingly endless song as it pours down from high above your head. Skylarks are found on grassland and farmland where they nest on the ground. Modern farming methods have led to a decline in the number of skylarks in recent years. BBOWT is working with farmers and landowners to promote wildlife-friendly practices to help skylarks and other farmland birds.



In autumn an array of fungi emerge from the ground. The **fly**

agaric is the toadstool of fairy tales with its red cap covered with white spots. It's poisonous to humans but edible to slugs and rabbits. Look for them growing on the ground near birch trees. The toadstools we see above the ground are actually the fruiting bodies of the fungus which has an extensive body hidden within the soil.



Buzzards are a common bird of prey that can be seen all

year round. They take a wide selection of prey from rabbits, voles, mice and shrews to frogs, toads, insects, earthworms and fledglings. These tree-nesting birds are often seen soaring overhead. **Red kites** are also common in this area and soar high above too. But red kites have a distinctive forked tail and two white patches under their wings.



Brown hares rely on speed for protection and escape from danger,

instead of bolting down holes like rabbits. Hares, distinguished from rabbits by black ear tips, lie up in shallow depressions in open ground to escape predators. Unlike rabbits that are born blind and naked, young hares or 'leverets' are bright-eyed, fully furred and ready for action from birth. Look out for them on open grassland and farmland. During the breeding season in spring they can be seen 'boxing'.

