

Summer Leys – December 2019 (Evening Walk)

A hardy group of 17 people gathered together just after 6pm in the pitch black car park of the Summer Leys Nature Reserve ready to kit themselves out with sturdy walking boots and sticks. Torches were at the ready to help with this task, as well as allowing others to find their kit.



After a little rain earlier in the day, the evening promised to be dry albeit that a bit of a breeze had been predicted. Our leader for the night, Finbarr Finn, reminded us to be very vigilant as some of the paths may be a little muddy. We then set off promptly at 6.30pm.

This year we decided to go around the Reserve in a clockwise direction, a decision we were pleased about as on the long straight run the wind was behind us. All was very quiet except for some quiet chatter and then the occasional call of a coot or blackbird, none of which were visible.



As the group spread out a little, it was quite magical to see the dancing lights from various head torches and hand held lights ahead. The moon was just visible, although rather blurred, behind the clouds so did not give off much extra light.



After about 40 minutes of walking we found ourselves back at the car park again. From the various cars food and drinks appeared and we took this to the Pioneer Hide a few yards away. Here a magnificent spread was set out and we all had plenty to eat and drink. Some large torches had been brought for the occasion which lit up the hide really well.

For about an hour we enjoyed the refreshments and conversation as well as finding time for the all-important group photograph.



Shortly after that we cleared up the remnants and made our way back to the car park. With final farewells and Christmas wishes given we all set off once again, ensuring the car park was securely locked as we had found it.