



The London Natural History Society (LNHS) has made the difficult decision to extend the suspension of field and indoor meetings until the end of 2020. The resumption of these events is dependent on a significant improvement in safety from COVID-19 such as the availability of an effective vaccine. Therefore, it is likely that the suspension may continue until at least March 2021 as a vaccine is not expected to be due until at least the end of 2020. The Council will continue to keep the situation under review but the priority will be the safety of members and volunteers.

In the case of indoor meetings, Council takes the view that staging these places speakers, volunteers, venue staff and attendees at risk from possible exposure to COVID-19. In the case of field meetings, these events still place leaders and attendees at some risk. The need for many members to use public transport in order to attend meetings is a further factor we felt we needed to consider.

Council has therefore decided to err on the side of caution and avoid any increased risk of exposure to COVID-19 of its own members and volunteers (as well as those from other organisations) through the resumption of LNHS activities.

To continue to provide opportunities for our members, the LNHS is pleased to announce the launch of our Virtual Natural History Talk series. We hope to host fortnightly talks using the Zoom platform and to host speakers on a range of topics. More information for both members hoping to attend these sessions and potential speakers is available from the LNHS website: <http://www.lnhs.org.uk/activities/virtualltalks>

We appreciate that some people may find it difficult to participate in virtual meetings. However, on balance the LNHS believes that during this difficult time virtual events are actually more inclusive as those in the higher-risk categories for COVID-19 will be able to participate and this is an important consideration. Accessing Zoom meetings is relatively straightforward and it is even possible to phone in to listen to a talk. There are members who are willing to give advice to those who may need a little technical support.

In addition, we will be running monthly projects for members which could be done at home. We hope these will be another way in which members can enjoy being involved with the Society and stay connected with nature – something which is particularly important in these challenging circumstances.

Finally, we can also assure you that LNHS publications will continue to appear. The London Bird Report 2018 has already been published and circulated and we hope you have enjoyed reading this. We are also on schedule for publishing The London Naturalist in the autumn. So, as you can see the LNHS is still very much an active society and it's still well worth being a member!

Details of up-coming LNHS Virtual Natural History Talks and other virtual events to follow are on the LNHS Website: <http://www.lnhs.org.uk/activities/virtualtalks>

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