

Autumn 2016

Wren

Wildlife & Conservation Group

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Word from the chair

As the leaves turn and the first Redwings are heard calling overhead on their nocturnal migrations, it's a good time to reflect once again on how fortunate we are to live next to so many open spaces, open spaces that never fail to surprise me. Our area has been blessed with many amateur naturalists over the years, yet despite their best efforts we are still finding new plants and animals hereabouts.

This message was brought home to me in no uncertain terms on 7th September. On my way to a meeting of the Wanstead Park Liaison Committee to discuss progress on park projects ranging from the clearance of floating pennywort in Perch Pond to better signage – I heard about the sighting of a possible corn bunting on Wanstead Flats. Those of you who have seen a corn bunting will know that it's not the most exciting-looking

bird, but that declining denizen of arable farmland is rare in these parts. For a second I harboured thoughts of abandoning the meeting to search for it. But no, the more responsible side of my character dictated that I should stick to plan A.

Later that same day, I received a message from Tom Casey in Overton Drive that a friend of his had seen a "strange moth" fly in through his bathroom window. Most people would have ushered it back out through the window – or stamped on it – but Tony Butler is not most people. He caught the moth and brought it over to Tom's for identification. Probably at the very instant I was helping to ID the creature as an Alchemist moth – the first record for London, no less – some of the Wanstead Birders were relocating the "corn bunting" and identifying it as something even rarer: an Ortolan Bunting, which – like the moth – is a visitor from continental Europe.

Which brings me on to the Wanstead 1000 challenge. At the start of the year the Wren Group set out to

encourage its members – and others – to find as many species of flora and fauna as they could, with the target of hitting four figures. This was duly achieved during the bio-blitz in late June, and efforts have continued ever since. As I write this, the list has lengthened to more than 1,400. Unless you're a mathematician, you probably think numbers are boring - but hidden within that figure is a magnificent variety of birds, wildflowers, fungi, butterflies, spiders and dragonflies. The quest has produced a spider known from only one other site in the UK and a beetle not found anywhere else. As well as being great fun, all these discoveries add weight to arguments for enhancing our local wildlife habitats.

And the year isn't over yet. Watch out for notification of other nature searches on Wanstead Flats and in Wanstead Park before the year is out.

Tim Harris

Chair of the Wren Group



If children loose contact with nature
they won't fight for it

Involving and encouraging others, both young and older, to care about their environment is to plant a seed whereby they may grow more a part of where they live - caring more for it and others living there.

The Wren Group is trying hard to engage more with local groups and people in caring about where they live. We now have a regular presence at local markets and events.

We have a lively Facebook page as well as a website, and you can even follow us on Twitter. However, probably the best way of spreading the word is through you. If you are not a Wren member - why not join? If you are a member why not tell your friends? Please take a look and 'like' our facebook page – by following us you will be kept up-to-date with what's happening. And please tell your friends to like us.

Lastly, remember this is your newsletter and cannot be produced without your support so if you have any news, views or stories please send them to me at wreeditor@talktalk.net

Joining details, previous newsletters and much more can now be found on the Wren website at <http://www.wrengroup.org.uk>

fascinating fungi

Article by Tricia Moxey

Thomas Furlly Foster (1761-1825) was an enthusiastic observer of the natural world and after his death his writings were collected and published in 1827 in *The Pocket Encyclopaedia of Natural Phenomena*.

He wrote this about fungi: 'In the damp weather of autumn the fungus tribe become very numerous, and often are the first phenomena which remind us of the decline of summer and the approach of the cooler season ... There is something remarkable about the growth of fungi. Some fungi appear here and there springing up in places where they are least expected, and where they have perhaps never grown before. How do the seeds come in such places? A learned cryptogamist once said, he thought their semina floated in the air, and were carried up into the clouds, and wafted along with them, and deposited by fogs on the earth's surface.'



During the past three hundred years the development of specialist microscopes and advances in chemical analysis and have enabled mycologists, those folk who study the details of fungi, to discover much more about these wondrous organisms but such studies hint at what has yet to be discovered! And yes, fungal spores have been recorded in clouds!



Blackening Waxcap - starts off with this beautiful maroon coloured cap but it quickly ages and becomes black. Also known as Witches Hat

Fungi are living organisms, classified within the fifth kingdom. Lacking any chlorophyll, they cannot manufacture their own food by photosynthesis, so they feed on organic matter, requiring water and some warmth in order to flourish. The majority decompose dead material but those that are parasitic feed on living tissue. Potato Blight was the



Purple Brittlegill - a dark wine coloured fungus, usually having a darker, almost black centre. It is at first convex, but later flattens, and often has a shallow depression. The stalk (stipe) is firm and white, greying with age and the gills are cream. The flesh is said to smell of apples.

cause of the Irish Famine in the 1840's which showed the danger of dependency on one crop. The fungal infection transmitted by bark beetles was the cause of Dutch Elm Disease which destroyed many Elms over 50 years ago. The recently arrived pathogen *Chalara fraxinea* is killing Ash trees and is already prevalent in all the south eastern counties and will result in drastic changes to the landscape in the next few years.

Their basic structure is a fluid-filled cell surrounded by a wall containing chitin. These cells may contain several nuclei where the genetic material, DNA, is located. These cells release a variety of enzymes which break down the complex food materials of the external food source. These simple chemicals are used for growth and ultimately reproduction. Depletion of the food source or changes in temperature may trigger the reproductive process which is usually the production of a fruiting body which will release spores. The main cellular

structures are called hyphae, which are microscopically fine tubes and can form extensive sheets known as mycelia.

One major difficulty is that although the feeding mycelium is present throughout the year, it is only readily identified by eye when it produces a fruiting body. These are formed as the result of the fusion of two different strains of the mycelium of the same species with the recombination of genetic material leading to the production of spores. Once a fruiting body has been produced, identification may be possible as each species has unique features.



Hypholoma fasciculare - commonly known as the Sulphur Tuft or Clustered Woodlover, is a common woodland mushroom, often in evidence when hardly any other mushrooms are to be found.

There may be as many as 1.5 million species of fungi, but so far only 70,000 have been identified, with 30 or more being added to the list each month. Tropical areas will have many more due to the greater amount of biomass. Whilst DNA profiling can be used, it is the details of a fungal fruiting body which provide the clues which enable identification of at least the common species with the aid of a

guide book. However, the challenge to identify many accurately to a specific species requires a microscopic examination of the spores.



Spindleshank - the distinctive spindle-shaped stem of this mushroom is often buried and visible only after excavation. Spindleshank occurs in tufts nearly always on the basal roots of hardwood trees, notably Beech and Oaks

In our local area the majority of the showy fruiting bodies are produced in the autumn after a warm summer and wet autumn. Woodlands are good places to find them. Different ones turn up in long established grasslands and other are found on dung. In this county there may be as many as 12,000 different species of fungi. Records for Epping Forest go back over 130 years and several new ones are added each year. Listing what is found in a specific area requires dedication over many seasons by experts and the published list of species for Wanstead Park is 62 and Leyton flats 152.

Gardeners in the 18th century discovered that adding a spade of woodland soil to the planting holes of new trees improved their chances of

survival along with watering! Since then it has been discovered that some fungi form a vital and life enhancing symbiotic association with trees as well as heathers and orchids.

These symbiotic fungi fall into two groups: the ectomycorrhizal fungi which form a sheath, the Hartig Net around the root tips of many trees. The fungal hyphae obtain carbon in the form of sugars, and other essential organic substances from the tree. In return, the various fungi help the trees by passing water, mineral salts and metabolites into the roots. Such fungi also fight off parasites and predators such as nematodes and soil pathogens. Ectomycorrhizal fungi species include those species which produce the familiar toadstools of the Milk Caps, *Lactarius* species, Brittle Gills *Russula* species or the Fly Agaric *Amanita muscaria*.



Apricot Club - finger-like fruiting bodies grow to about 6cm, sometimes more, and have a characteristic apricot yellow colour and usually with pale tips. They have neither gills nor pores but develop spores on the outside of the fruiting body where they are dispersed by wind and rain.

Some tree species and the majority of flowering plants form a symbiotic relationship with less

conspicuous Vascular-Arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi. These subterranean fungi do not form large fruiting bodies, but reproduce by mean of spores, which can be identified by DNA profiling. Each species seems to carry out different functions within a specific habitat.



Blushing Amanita is one of the more common *Amanita* mushrooms. Summer to autumn is the best time to find them. They are usually solitary, in coniferous and deciduous woodland.

Using chemical tracers, recent studies have shown that this mycorrhizal fungal network is incredibly complex with links between the different fungal species and their hosts enabling a whole variety of chemicals to pass between individuals of different species providing nourishment as well as warning of attack by predators. This is an exciting development in our understanding of the essential role of so many fungi in wellbeing of woodland and other habitats.

Fungi play a vital role in the decomposition of dead organic matter and they are consumed by other organisms. Deer eat large quantities of fungi each

autumn, so do slugs and fungus gnats. Many people enjoy eating edible species but such collecting is banned within Epping Forest.

The main examples of larger fungi we are likely to see locally fall into two groups. The Ascomycetes, the Cup Fungi and the Basidiomycetes which include toadstools and bracket fungi.



Hairy Curtain-crust - (*Stereum hirsutum*) is a great name for this wood-loving fungi that thrives on dead wood and can often be found right through the winter months.

There is a growing amount of evidence to suggest that pollution levels are having an impact on certain key species including those which form mycorrhizal associations with the trees. Tar spot on Sycamore leaves and black spot on roses occur where there are low levels of SO₂. A dry autumn means very few fruiting bodies, but if it rains in the next few weeks, we can anticipate a fruitful season!

Trampling in the woodlands is having an impact, a healthy woodland should have a good squashy layer of leaf mould which contains masses of active

fungal mycelia and bacteria. A good pinch of such soil can contain 11 miles of hyphae and millions of bacteria. When light rain falls on dry ground, these underground organisms, especially the bacteria release fragrant aerosols containing traces of complex oils. This characteristic smell is termed petrichor.

Since the 1960's environmentalists have been preparing Red Data lists of all different kinds of species. Which species should be included in the Red Data List for fungi is still under debate, but increased awareness of their importance in the natural world has encouraged people to look much more closely at these wondrous organisms and record them.



Golden Pholiota - a large fungus that has a golden yellow cap with scales that are often a deeper redder shade. The stem is usually yellowy brown and is also scaly.

So why not get out and about and see what you can find this autumn? Alternatively come along on the Wren Group fungus walk on 23 October.

There is more information about the recent studies of the wood wide web on the Internet and check out www.forestry.gov.uk/ashdieback for details of this.

There are a number of guide books on fungi, but a number are rather too large or heavy to be used as a field guide. These three are more suitable for putting in your pocket and don't forget to use your hand lens when looking at specimens!

Kibby, Geoffrey. (2015) *Philip's Guide to Mushrooms and Toadstools of Britain and Northern Europe*. Philip.

Garnweidner, Edmund. (1994). *Collins Nature Guide – Mushrooms and Toadstools of Britain and Europe*. Collins.

Sterry, Paul. (2009) *Collins Complete British Mushrooms and Toadstools: The essential photograph guide to Britain's fungi*. Collins

Article by Tricia Moxey
Pics by Tim Harris



I would like to recommend the recently published volume by Melissa Harrison, *Autumn and anthology for the changing seasons*, which is published by Elliott and Thompson Ltd. As it contains a selection of old favourites about autumn as well as some inspirational passages by new writers and will perhaps stimulate you to put pen to paper yourself!

summer bird report

Report and pics by Nick Croft



Missing migrants

June

Not a lot avian happened, as one would expect in June in the metropolis, with Cuckoo the stand-out bird. With 74 species noted in the month, it was slightly better than February. For our resident breeding birds it's been a mix, some positive, some negative and some uncertain.

Warblers: A visiting birder reported a young Willow Warbler being fed by a parent in the SSSI, the resident male was still singing intermittently at the end of the month, and I did get calling birds while



Better news on the Reed Warbler front, with three territories still there at the end of the month

he was on song. What of the Garden Warbler? He had stopped singing halfway through the month. One or three Lesser Whitethroat began singing again in the SSSI, on the OSW and by Heronry, so a move to a second brood perhaps? Better news on the Reed Warbler front, with three territories still at the end of the month: Reedy 1 had a brood fledged by the end of June, while Reedy 2 had established a nest; only Reedy 3 appears single – we have a colony. The commoner warblers, Chiffchaff, Common Whitethroat and Blackcap are noisy as one would expect at this time of the year and some birds are on to their second broods.



Meadow Pipit

What is going on in the brooms is somewhat harder to ascertain: three or four Meadow Pipit territories, and parents seen with food, but no noticeable rise in bird numbers. The situation is worse for the Skylarks with now a maximum of three singing birds and no sign of food collection—one of our birds may have hopped the fence and moved off in search of a mate as Stu F reported a singing male

for a couple of days midway through the month on Leyton Flats.



House Martin

There may be more than six occupied nests in the House Martin colony, with birds being seen gathering mud in the Centre Road car park.

Considering the numbers we had at the end of last summer there is obviously a high mortality rate due to the rigours of migration. There may be time for two broods again this year, and so numbers will bounce back (20 birds were recorded feeding over the copses on the 9th July). A few Swallows were noted passing through, going both ways, and the Sand Martins visited the Alex less regularly. Swift numbers are higher on gloomy days than on bright sunny ones, and we have at least noted a few nesting sites on the fringes of the patch.

Flocks of Starling are still on the Flats, mainly now made up of young birds, but I figure that there aren't as many as in years past. Hopefully the

numbers will continue to rise before the wintering influx. House Sparrows, where there are local colonies, appear to be doing well, with a lot of fledged birds with them. The Reed Buntings raised a brood of young on the Cat & Dog, where water levels and the reedbed are doing better than usual. No was no sign of Linnets bar a few flyover so I guess they gave up on trying to nest here again. Better fortunes for our Greenfinches, though, the commonest finches here.

Kestrel sightings were down by the end of June, which is strange, and there just a few Buzzard and Hobby sightings; you were more likely to see a Peregrine than either of the other two.



Peregrine Falcon

It was a good season for Mallard, with some healthy sized broods, but there was nothing to report for either Tufted Duck or Pochard – though they are both late breeders. Failed breeding Gadwall returned early on in the month and a few Shoveler put in an appearance. The Mute Swans on Alex had

lost all six young by the end of the month, so a poor year overall with just four cygnets in two broods left in the park.

The gull creche on the Flats rose to well in excess of 100 birds, mainly young and near-adult Herring Gulls, with a sprinkling of Lesser Black-backed and the very occasional Great Black-backed. By the end of June there were daily records of Black-headed Gulls, all presumably failed breeders. There was just a single sighting of a Common Tern in the Park and a chance for Bob to grip me off for once.

The Great Crested Grebe on Shoulder of Mutton continued to play hide and seek with me at least, certainly showing a different feeding strategy from last year. The adult bird preferred to fish in the reeds as much, or more so than in the open water. Singles were noted on Heronry/Perch and a bird on the Jubilee for most of the month, meaning there must be a few in there at least. Little Grebes had chicks on Alex, but are sensibly keeping them well hidden from marauding Lesser Black-backed Gulls.



Treecreeper

July

The first Treecreeper for nearly two years proved to be a nice patch tick for Mr Heal. There may have been two birds, presumably young birds from north of Hollow Ponds. Two returning Sedge Warblers were seen and other returning warblers included increasing numbers of Willow Warblers and the first Garden Warbler of the autumn. Tony Brown picked up the first Lapwing sighting of the year, several returning Common Sandpipers included three at Perch Pond on the last weekend of the month, and the first of the autumn's Yellow Wagtails involved two birds.



Sedge Warbler

The young Great Crested Grebe gained its independence and wings and quickly departed. The adults are now on to a second brood on Heronry. Presumably the birds on the Basin have managed a brood, but since no one goes there, I could be wrong. Little Grebes are with young on Alex and the Shoulder of Mutton, where Reed Warbler numbers

peaked at around eight, with young birds from the two pairs spreading out around the pond.



Tufted Duck

A Tufted Duck brood appeared on Jubilee Pond, with an adopted Mallard chick. I didn't fancy its chances as at least its siblings can dive when danger threatens, but it has proved far more resilient than its brothers and sisters, who have been whittled down to just three. Otherwise, I think Mallard have done well this summer but there has been no Pochard success.

At least one of the local Peregrines was successful, the progeny of which has been giving the crows a hard time on a number of occasions. No Buzzards or Red Kites were seen, which is understandable as none breed too near.

While the ugly creche of young and sub-adult gulls held up during the month, the first Common Gull returned to Jubilee, and Black-headed Gull numbers increased significantly. Yup it's that time again when

the apparent lack of larid knowledge comes glaringly into focus when we try to pick out the young Yellow-legs.

August

Migrant numbers on the Flats in August

		2016	2015	2014	2013
Whinchat:	16th	19	79	22	20+
Common Redstart:	22nd	4	52	22	5
Northern Wheatear:	10th	10	24	25	8
Spotted Flycatcher:	15th	28	60	49	8
Pied Flycatcher:	26th	2	11	2	7
Reed Warbler:		1	19	n/a	10
Wood Warbler:		0	1	1	0
Yellow Wagtail:	7th	49	56	37	20-301
Tree Pipit:	20th	2	29	16	
Sedge Warbler		5			

Hurrah it was August and just as it got good it stopped being August and became September. In all, 88 species were the reward for all the slog (just behind April in total), and all-in-all it was a bit disappointing. Migrant numbers were well down on what we have come to expect, a similar story being reflected across all London patches. Are things just late as they were in spring or are birds just bypassing us?

Only Yellow Wagtails came close to previous years and their total was helped by 15 on 24th - including seven birds feeding on the football pitches, when they weren't being booted by dog walkers.



Redstart

Whinchats weren't too far off 2014's total, but otherwise migrant numbers were poor. Reed Warblers had their best year ever on Shoulder of Mutton, with at least three broods between the two pairs, so we would have expected a deluge of young reedies from that direction, but that didn't happen, begging the question, where did last year's birds herald from?

Even Chiffchaff and Willow Warbler numbers seemed down on previous highs for the month, and Lesser Whitethroat were pretty hard to find all over the patch. So what is going on? Reports from coastal patches for species like Tree Pipit were higher than I can remember—even our own Dan H was having a field day with his Tree Pipit counts in Devon, so perhaps everything went a different route.



Chiffchaff numbers seemed down on previous highs for the month

After a good end of June for Common Sandpiper, a few records in August was a bonus. One bird took up semi-residence on Jubilee Pond of all places (still being present on 11th September), while we still wait for any sign of Green Sandpiper, so frequent last year. The only other wader was a calling flyover Golden Plover on 26th.



Pied Flycatcher

There was only one record of Common Tern for the month, with an adult and what I believe is the first record of a young bird in tow on the 7th. Common



Spotted Flycatcher

Gull nearly didn't feature at all, while Lesser Black-backed Gull numbers reached a peak of over 50 birds at one point. We are still figuring a way to get past the eagle-eyes of Mr J Partridge (Walthamstow's larid expert) with our attempts at Yellow-legged Gull—maybe something here may tickle his fancy?

Only three Sand Martins headed south in the month, while Swallow numbers increased and our home-grown House Martins buzzed around Long Wood in varying amounts. The last Swift record was on the 19th, which is really early as we usually expect a few to linger into September (oops, spoiler alert!).

A female Wigeon was the only duck of note, associating with Gadwall on Alex on 21st. All our other wintering ducks picked up in numbers as they will continue to do.

There was good news on the grebe front, as pairs of Little Grebe were successful on Perch, Heronry and Shoulder of Mutton, and on Alex. The Great Crested Grebes had a second brood of four young



Great Crested Grebe

on Alex be the end of the month. But not such good news for Little Owls as a predated corpse was found on the Flats towards the end of the month, as was the eaten body of a Kestrel.

Article and pics by Nick Croft



Follow Nick on his excellent blog
<http://wansteadbirding.blogspot.co.uk>

ortolan bunting

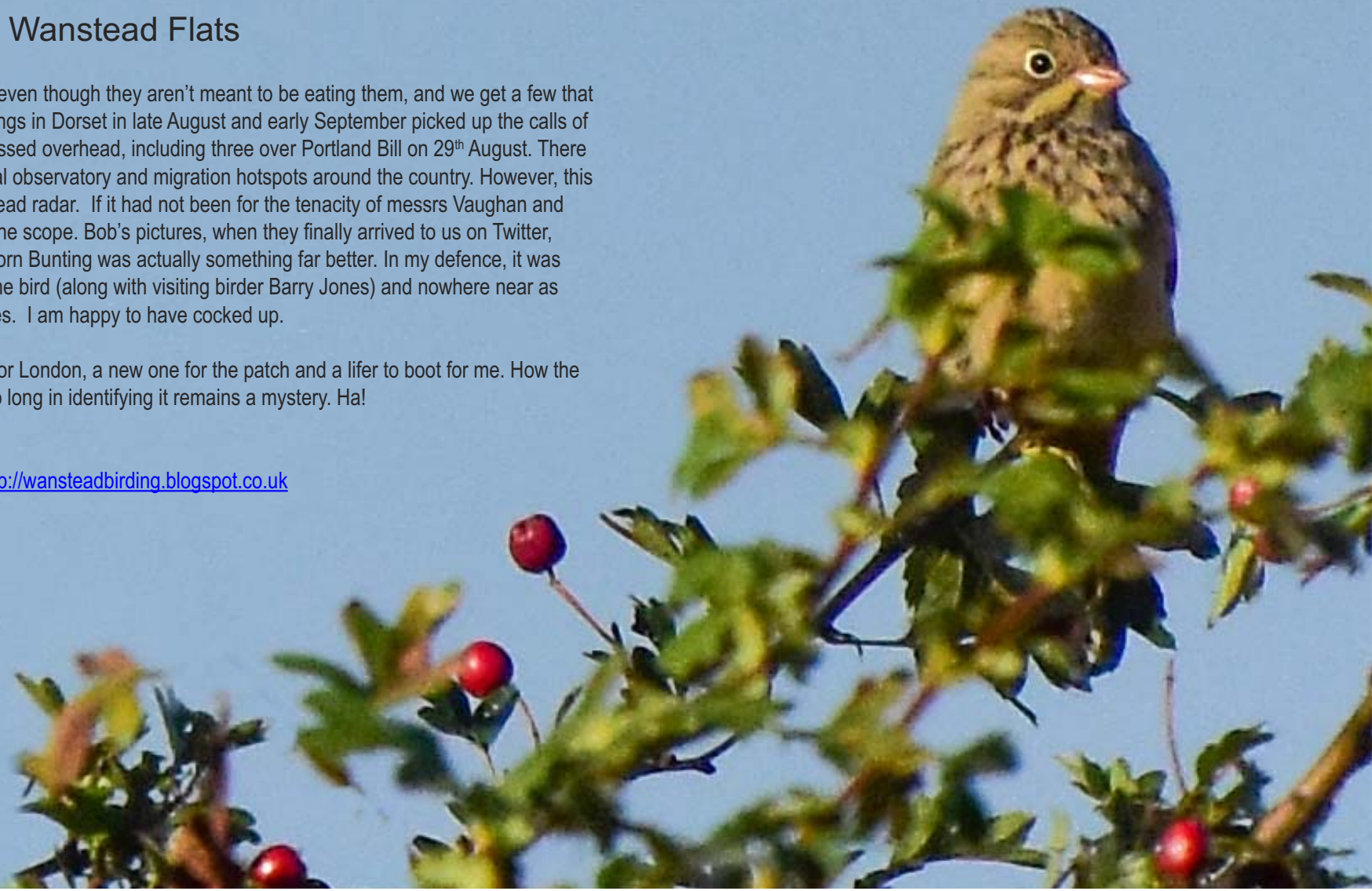
Report and pic by Nick Croft

7th September 2016, Wanstead Flats

The French love them in Armagnac even though they aren't meant to be eating them, and we get a few that escape the plate. Night-time recordings in Dorset in late August and early September picked up the calls of several Ortolan Buntings as they passed overhead, including three over Portland Bill on 29th August. There were also good numbers at the usual observatory and migration hotspots around the country. However, this wasn't a bird that was on the Wanstead radar. If it had not been for the tenacity of messrs Vaughan and Lethbridge it may well still been off the scope. Bob's pictures, when they finally arrived to us on Twitter, showed clearly that my supposed Corn Bunting was actually something far better. In my defence, it was grim early doors when I first found the bird (along with visiting birder Barry Jones) and nowhere near as obvious as in Bob's excellent pictures. I am happy to have cocked up.

This was the 30th record of Ortolan for London, a new one for the patch and a lifer to boot for me. How the more experienced old hands took so long in identifying it remains a mystery. Ha!

Follow Nick on his excellent blog <http://wansteadbirding.blogspot.co.uk>



alien attack

Article and pics by Paul Ferris

Sounds like a late-70s computer game, but it is real, it is happening – they are here and are living amongst us. And if you are thinking that this is just a means of adding a few more species to the Group's Wanstead 1K listing then, well possibly yes, it is.

But they are not extra-terrestrial, they are not necessarily a threat – and some of them have been living amongst us for so long that we don't consider them to be aliens at all. In fact a couple of them have been living amongst humanity for so long perhaps we could be considered the aliens.

Down to more up-front writings now. Can you get down to up front? What are they, these aliens? Well, lots of things. Hundreds of things. Thousands of things. More than that, maybe. But let's start with a couple that have been playing us up for a few years now and you'll see where I am going.



Floating Pennywort clogging Perch Pond

Have you seen the notices around the Perch Pond in Wanstead Park? The good ol' Conservators are at last trying to rid the lake of the alien invader Floating Pennywort – *Hydrocotyle rununculoides*. It has taken a hold – much to my disgust, as some of you will know – and may take years to eradicate, if that is even possible. Native to the Americas, it was sold as an aquarium plant and throw-outs and accidental transportations of this pernicious weed



New Zealand Pigmyweed

(always wanted to get that term in!) has led to the clogging up of many waters and waterways throughout much of the southern half of Britain.

Next is the species of plant that is increasingly damaging Alexandra Lake on Wanstead Flats. Much smaller than the pennywort, New Zealand



False Acacia suckers spreading into grassland on Wanstead Flats

Pigmyweed *Crassula helmsii* nevertheless forms a dense mat at the surface and on the edge of lakes and ponds, and similarly inhibits other plant-growth and oxygen and sunlight to the water. It is another one of those species that has been introduced to people's garden ponds, after which comes the realisation that it grows too much, Just a tiny piece thrown out or transported – perhaps by a bird – can establish a fast-growing colony elsewhere to the detriment of a whole ecosystem.



Tree of Heaven suckers amongst graves in the City of London Cemetery

That species has tiny leaves and flowers, and it is the sheer growth-rate and amount that does the damage. On Wanstead Flats there is a much larger species that was introduced, probably at the beginning of the 20th century, and has stood proudly in one or two tree-groups since then. Now, reaching an age where it is dying – for it is long-lived – it is fighting for its survival by spreading across the Flats away from its home. This is the tree *Robinia pseudoacacia* – the False Acacia or Black Locust, whose original home was in North America. It has

vicious double thorns – which you perhaps wouldn't expect from a member of the pea family – but as a solitary tree it also looks nice and has bunches of pretty flowers in the spring. The problem with this one is that once it dies back or is cut down for some reason it throws out suckers for survival, and these are spreading south from one tree-group on the Flats.



Coast Redwood in the City of London Cemetery

Another tree which occurs on the Flats in a somewhat unwanted fashion is the Tree of Heaven *Ailanthus altissima*. A native of China, but in this case originating from plantings in the City of London Cemetery, it has – like the *Robinia* – a tendency to sucker profusely. So much so, in fact, that it has suckered under the cemetery wall near Rabbits Road, and even under Rabbits Road! It will be easily understood that there are lots of suckers within the cemetery itself, where specimens of the tree were planted years ago. (I don't know how

many years, but it is a long-lived tree and some mature specimens are 15 metres high and one is 25m.

Of course, not all aliens are unwelcome, and the title of the article was designed to be catchy rather than strictly relate to content.

Indeed, it should be remembered that a good proportion of plants, at least - welcome or otherwise – have been brought here by us. The City of London Cemetery is a wonderful place to see a variety of tree-species, for example, from many parts of the world – helping to give the colour and form to the grounds that make it such a pleasure to visit.



Maidenhair Tree (Ginkgo) in the City of London Cemetery

Just inside the main entrance – though it must be said rather disguised by surrounding vegetation – is one of the cemetery's examples of a Coast Redwood, *Sequoia sempervirens*. This species has the world's tallest trees, although there have been taller Douglas Firs and Eucalyptus. Those, though, have all been felled for timber. There are a few examples of Coast Redwoods in the cemetery, not particularly tall specimens for this tree in Britain, where it does very well, but impressive enough at between 15 and 20 metres, and not so hidden.



Japanese Flowering Cherry in the City of London Cemetery

Towards the other end of the size scale, there are numerous specimens of Japanese and other cherries – some species, some cultivars – but often providing a lovely flower-spectacle in the spring. One alien tree in particular may be of interest. It is the Maidenhair Tree *Ginkgo biloba*, of which there are a few specimens in the cemetery. This is the

tree of the Family Ginkgoaceae, which was dominant in the Mesozoic era – the time at which dinosaurs were the dominant land life form. The species was thought to have been extinct and exist only as fossil records when – in 1758 – it was brought back from China where it was growing in temple gardens. It lives quite happily in Britain and elsewhere, and indeed can be seen more and more frequently in London Streets where – as in New York – it thrives against polluting and light inhibiting odds!



A young Wollemi Pine in Green Park

In 1994 a field officer of the Wollemi National Park in New South Wales brought back a specimen of a tree he's discovered in a remote and almost inaccessible gorge. It transpired that this was a species new to science, and a member of a genus of which the most recent fossils were 2 million years old, so again during the Mesozoic era. The

tree was designated *Wollemia nobilis* and quickly became known as the Wollemi Pine – although it is not a pine tree. The wild population is endangered, and moves are being made to distribute the seeds to other suitable environments; they are now available as young trees here in Britain and are proving quite hardy. I have suggested that it would be nice if an example of this alien were to be planted in the City of London Cemetery.

So, to finish on a negative note, 'cos it's always worth mentioning these things even if no notice is taken.



Chalet Wood with its native Bluebells



A troop of Spanish Bluebells in Reservoir Wood. Waiting to advance

We have a lovely and increasingly (over?) popular colony of Bluebells *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* in Wanstead Park. We also have at the edges of the park – by Northumberland Avenue and particularly by the south edge of Reservoir Wood, a healthy population of Spanish Bluebells *Hyacinthoides hispanica*. Healthy is a pertinent word here, you will understand. There are even Spanish Bluebells at the very west edge of Chalet Wood. It would be a shame if some of the aliens took over our world.

Article and pics by Paul Ferris

See Paul's excellent website
www.wansteadwildlife.org.uk



making hay while the sun shines

Article and pics by Peter Aylmer

The Wren Group continues on its search to find out more about some of the other great wildlife hotspots of London, as walk leader and Wren committee member Peter Aylmer describes.



Approaching Gutteridge Wood

Summer in London this year has seemed to veer from one extreme to the other. Indeed, the June walk had to be cancelled as overnight floods had played havoc with London's transport and inundated many of the paths we might have taken. July fared little better, scheduled for the hottest day of the year, better suited to central Australia.

Things had quietened down a bit by August, even though it was still distinctly warm, so much so that a record crowd of 13 set off for their mystery tour across London. The destination, they discovered, was a string of nature reserves along the Yeading Brook in west London. They are alas perhaps the most inaccessible, from Stratford, sites in the Lucky Dip inventory, though that will all change with Crossrail some time later this decade.

Even before then, they are worth a look. The brook, a tributary of the Crane and then of the Thames, is named for the little suburb of that name, and that's where we started, plunging first into Yeading Brook Meadows, part of which is still cut for hay each summer. There are one or two spots where you can pop over into the moist hollows surrounding the brook, though with little recent rain these were drying out fast.



Meadowsweet, Ten Acre Wood

From the lunch stop of Ten Acre Wood we passed a little patch of Meadowsweet as we left, and in the open country beyond we spotted a wasps' nest – swiftly moving on when we discovered that they were in fact Hornets. After the Oak and Hazel coppiced woodland of Gutteridge Wood, we ducked below the A40 into the wetland of Ickenham Marsh, not far from the Metropolitan line, for our journey home.



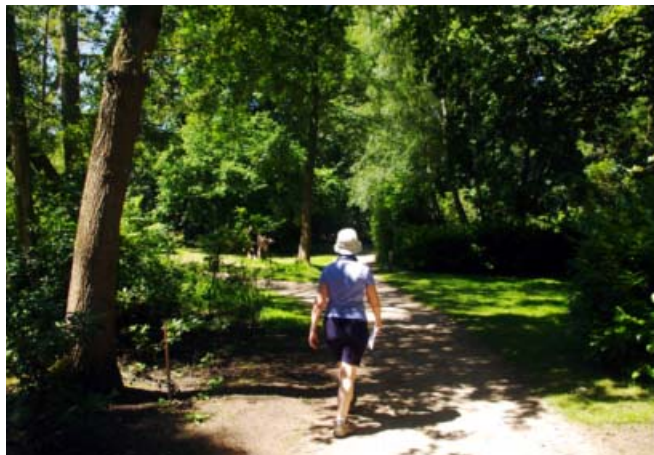
Hampton Ferry

September saw us on the other side of London, at Chislehurst. This famously well-heeled suburb is known to tourists for its caves, but there is some glorious woodland here, as well as the Common into which occasional bits of the village are shoehorned. The National Trust is an important landowner here, for a reason: an inter-war developer planned to chainsaw the woods for housing, only to be stopped by the power of both collective action and individual beneficence. Rightly there's a memorial in the woods to the public-spirited Francis Edelmann, who purchased 47 acres of Pett's Wood in order to prevent development, though alas not one to the hundreds of locals who crowd-funded purchase of 88 acres nearby.



Spindle berry, Scadbury Park

Now of course in woodland it's common to remark on the tree-cover, and throughout this walk we were treated to Oak, Beech and Ash at their best. However the acid soils of this estate, and its neighbour Scadbury Park where we ventured next, are perfect for that unconsidered fern, Bracken. Bracken has a fair claim to being the most successful plant on the planet, widely distributed everywhere bar Antarctica – so, a bit like humans.



Pheasantry Plantation, Bushy Park

This is due in part to its chemical make-up, releasing toxins which inhibit other plants and then, in a blow to humans and other mammals which might consume it, carcinogens into the stomach. Against that, its springtime unfurling is a miracle of fractal mathematics, while in autumn – its first comings just upon us – its transition from green to copper-red lends depth to forest views.



Sudbury Park

Oh and that sweltering day in July? There were two of us. The only other to turn up was the walk leader's wife, but that is enough to count as an official Wren walk. We took, slowly and with plenty of water, a shaded walk through Bushy Park to Hampton, a little ferry across the Thames to the Thames Path, and then from Hampton Court a walk by the Long Water of the sculpted Home Park, back to our start point of Hampton Wick. Even the deer were sticking to the shade.

Lucky dip walk dates

The next planned walks are for Tuesday 4th October, Wednesday 2nd November; end-of-year date to be confirmed.

Meet 10am at Stratford station, outside Jubilee line platforms 13-15. Just turn up, no need to book. Bring a snack, drink and Oyster or Freedom Pass.

Walks are chosen at random from a selection. All are around six miles at a gentle pace.

The next three walks will be the last in this series. But where to? That will be up to you. Possible sites include Wimbledon Common, Crane Park, Totteridge Fields and Rainham Marshes. Join us and help us choose!

Article and pics by Peter Aylmer





The Skylark

by Christina Georgina Rossetti

The earth was green, the sky was blue:
I saw and heard one sunny morn,
A skylark hung between the two,
A singing speck above the corn;

A stage below, in gay accord,
White butterflies danced on the wing,
And still the singing skylark soared,
And silent sank and soared to sing

now & then

In each edition of the Wren newsletter we will be showing you a picture of a street in our area taken around 100 years ago and how it looks today. Just for fun have a guess where this picture was taken (answer back page). If you would like to see your area in this slot why not get in touch and we will see what we can do.



bug life

Pictures and commentary by Rose Stephens

Wren member Rose Stephens is a self-taught naturalist and artist who was born in Newham and still lives there - in Forest Gate, close to Wanstead Flats.

Rose has built up a collection of artwork using various mediums. Through her love of all things to do with nature and her passion for art, she manages to produce work that is original and different from her contemporaries. Her love of nature shines through in her work.

In the past Rose has used photographs as a basis for her work - painting from pictures taken in the area. More recently, she has started to express her fondness of all things natural solely in the media of photography.

Rose has an extraordinary eye for seeing the detail in the nature around her. This she has recently used to her advantage by taking up 'macro' or close-up photography.

You can like Rose's work on her Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/TheNatureofWansteadFlats>



I love these strange looking flies! Sicus ferrugineus in a romantic position at Manor Park Cemetery.



It's worth taking a closer look at crane flies and there are quite a few flying at the moment. There are different species and some can be quite striking when seen up close. This one I think is Tipula maybe vernalis.

This isn't too common but This is the second I have seen this year. It is a Silpha laevigata beetle seen slowly walking across a path in Leyton.



These little yellow-faced bees are really tiny. This one, which was on stonecrop, I think is Hylaeus hyalinatus.

There are lots of these Dereocoris favilinea mirid bugs on the nettles at the moment on Wanstead Flats .



A Wool Carder from the garden. It's nice to see the male patrolling its territory around the Black Horehound.

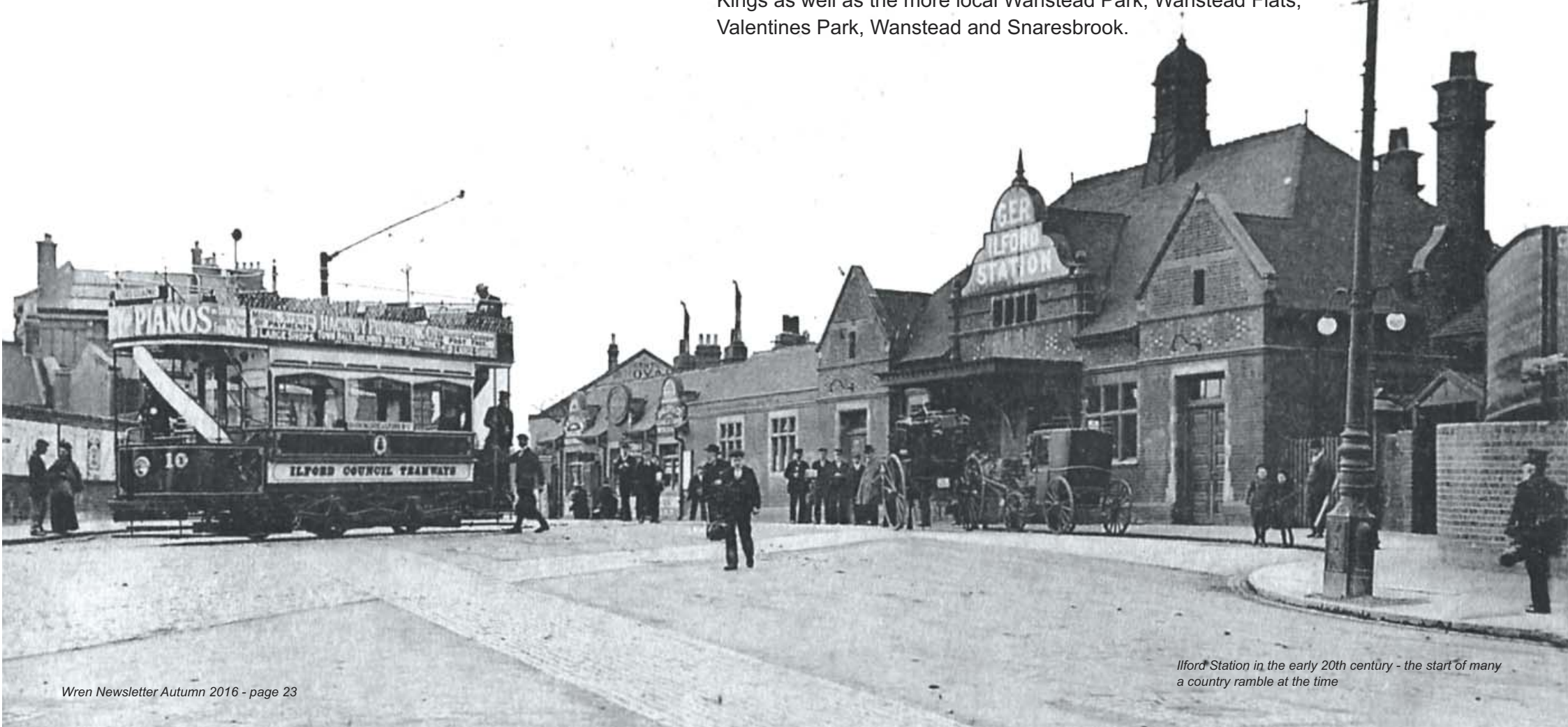
These robberflies have such great camouflage. I think this one had just caught a morsel and was otherwise engaged. It was low down in the grass on Wanstead Flats.



country rambles

Now well out of print, the *South Essex Recorder's Country Rambles around Ilford* was published in 1910. Its author Geo. E. Tasker recounts more rambles in our local area.

The guide describes in detail 26 walks of varying length, starting and ending at a railway station or a tram terminus (as they were) in or near Ilford in Essex. Walks include areas such as Ilford, Aldborough Hatch; Barkingside; Chadwell; Hainault Forest; Seven Kings as well as the more local Wanstead Park, Wanstead Flats, Valentines Park, Wanstead and Snaresbrook.



Ilford Station in the early 20th century - the start of many a country ramble at the time

Route 5

From Cranbrook Wash, Valentines (Central) Park, Perth Road, field paths to Horns, Cranbrook Road and Beehive, Castle, The Drive (about 5 miles)!-



Leaving Ilford Station and turning left into Cranbrook Road, towards Valentines Park in the early 1900s

Entering the main gates of the old Central Park, keep to the right of the boating lake with its row of willows. After crossing over the football and cricket ground to the S. E. corner and through the little gate, turn to the left down Brisbane Road, and take the first road on the right (Quebec Road), which ends in Perth Road with the entrance to a field path almost opposite. (A little way down this path is a private road leading on the left to Middlefield Farm and on the right to Ley Street.)

Close by are the Electric Light Works and Depot of the Ilford Urban Council. Keep along the field path towards the Horns Village until it ends in a little lane called Cocklease Lane (part of the boundary of the ecclesiastical parish of Barkingside). Turn to the left up the lane-following the fire alarm wires-skirting the N. boundary of Middlefield Farm and across a little plank bridge over the Cranbrook. On the left arc seen the farm buildings and Valentines Park, including the Bishop's Walk; on the right is the Horseshoes Hamlet.



Cranbrook Road, the gates of Valentines Park in the early 1900s

The lane from Dr. Barnardo's Homes along the back of the Horseshoes meets the path just before the Cranbrook Road is reached, by Gant's Hill Cottage. (From here it is about 25 minutes' walk to Ilford Station.)

Crossing the road, the path is continued along the hedge of Gant's Hill Cottage. Away on the right can be seen Claybury Asylum, a little nearer is Gaysham Hall Farm with its red-tiled roof, and Hedgeman's Farm just beyond. Turning the bend of the path, the Castle is seen on the left, and the Beehive, with its hotel, in the front. Cutting across the field path between Cranbrook Road and Beehive Lane, keep straight on for a few minutes to a stile which leads across a paddock to another stile at the back of two cottages in Beehive Lane.



Beehive Hotel

Opposite is a small gap in the hedge, which opens on a path running beside a ditch to the bend in Wanstead Lane; follow this path to its junction with that from the Castle {Route 2}, then turn to the left to the Castle and The Drive. Or, if preferred, Beehive Lane can be followed to the Cranbrook Road.

Route 6

From Ilford Station, Cranbrook Road, The Drive, Highlands Gardens, to Wanstead Park (about 4 miles).



The Wash, Cranbrook Road, 1906. Frederick Rees delivers milk in churns for W. Harris Dairy, Albert Road. That's The Drive in the background.

From the Station, proceed along the Cranbrook Road to The Wash, then up The Drive to the end of the Cranbrook Estate. Turn down Highlands Gardens past Highlands (Council) School to the Ilford entrance to Wanstead Park.

After passing through the little spinney by the gate, the path lies across a meadow of 10 acres, which the Ilford Council acquired in 1900 for cricket and football, and also to secure an entrance to the park.



Wanstead Park - the rustic bridge over River Roding at the time of Tasker's walks

At the end of the path is a rustic bridge over the Roding, bearing the following inscription:-"The 'short cut' to Wanstead Park was initiated in 1894 by the Ilford Ratepayers' Association, and opened by W. P. Griggs, Esq., J.P., E.C.C., the donor of this bridge, on 21st June, 1902." After crossing



Wanstead Park. After crossing the bridge, it is immediately evident that here is no ordinary park

the bridge, it is immediately evident that here is no ordinary park such as one is accustomed to find in what may be called "made" parks - e.g., South Park in Green Lane - which, despite the undoubted skill of English landscape gardeners, cannot compare with that greatest of all gardeners - Nature.



Wanstead Park - Heronry Pond (Boating Lake) with the Refreshment Chalet, which once stood on the edge of Chalet Wood, in the background.

This walk will be confined entirely to the park. The fine archway of trees on the right will be taken on the return journey, so bear to the left by the fence, passing in a few yards on the right a path over a small rustic bridge (which leads in 15 minutes by the lake and past one of the Ilford boundary stones to the other end of the archway path just mentioned). Continuing by the fence for a few yards is another path on the right over a brick bridge.

Follow this along between the undergrowth to the grotto. This building was erected about the middle of the 18th century by the second Earl Tylney at a cost of £2,000 for labour only. The value of the materials was probably very much more, as some of the stone was imported specially from Italy, and the interior fittings were very costly. It is said that the last owner of Wanstead House (Miss Tylney-Long) was shut up here for several days by her husband, the Hon. Pole-Wellesley, the profligate nephew of the Great Duke.



Wanstead Park. Workmen clearing the Ornamental Waters, with the Grotto ruins in the background.

Unfortunately, the grotto was burned out on November 20th, 1884, previously to which the public had been admitted at a charge of 6d. If rumour be correct, the fire was not altogether accidental, for certain valuable ornaments were found to have entirely disappeared.

Quite close to the grotto a fine tessellated Roman pavement was found about 1715. A few yards past the grotto are two small cedar trees, from which is a very pretty view across the Ornamental Lake - one of the best in the park.



The Ornamental Waters in Wanstead Park.

Halfway along the path is the decayed stump of a big chestnut tree, one huge bough of which used to overhang the path into the water. It was one of the sights of the park, but was damaged by a gale in 1896, and cut down. The tall trees on the islands in the middle of the lake are tenanted by colonies of rooks, wood pigeons, and other birds, while on Lincoln Island is a large heronry, but the birds are shy and not often seen. The best time to observe them is at sundown in the early spring, during the nesting season, on their return from their feeding grounds. They are easily distinguished from the rooks by the breadth of

their wings and their outstretched necks as they fly rapidly but stately and majestically along. They may sometimes be seen sitting in their nests. Before the cold weather sets in the birds fly south, to return again about the second week in February. The Wanstead heronry is unique in that it is the nearest to London and larger than that at Richmond Park. At one time it was feared that the birds would be driven away by their noisy and quarrelsome neighbours, the rooks. Before the park was opened to the public in 1882, the heronry was on an island at the end of the second lake (then known as the Heronry Pond), but the influx of visitors was too much for these quiet-loving birds, and they changed their quarters to Lincoln Island.



Wanstead Park. Another view of Ornamental Waters

The islands in the Ornamental Lake are a great attraction to visitors, for, besides the heronry and the rookery, they are the home of numerous coot

and water-hens, and were formerly the happy retreat of game and wild duck. Many flocks of the latter the author has seen in his boyhood days flying to or from the park. There are also some very fine trees on the islands.

At the head of the lake the path divides. That to the left leads to Wanstead (see Route 7), so the path to the right must be followed. The gates here are often closed during the breeding season. This part of the park affords many charming prospects of water, wood-land and farm land, to which the much-maligned Roding contributes no small share. It is not generally known that the river at one time flowed right through the Ornamental Lake, but it was diverted very many years ago in order to add a bit more land on the Ilford side to the park. A small dam in the river will be observed, just after passing the corner of the lake, which is used for

replenishing the lake when necessary. During the winters of 1908-9 and 1909-10 gangs of unemployed were engaged to clean out and deepen this lake.

A little farther on, a short cut may be taken by the river across a meadow with views over the fields of High-lands Farm, the Castle, and Cranbrook Estate. The path then follows the bank of the Roding, passing an Ilford boundary stone, and under the long archway of trees mentioned at the beginning of the walk, to the rustic bridge and meadow leading to Ilford. It will take three-quarters of an hour to accomplish the journey from the bridge, round the lake, and back to the bridge, as the path is very

winding in parts. Ilford is very fortunate in having such a beautiful park at its very doors, and yet the author was once told by a park-keeper that he preferred Regent's Park -but that doubtless was because he was born in Wanstead Park.

Taken from the *South Essex Recorder's Country Rambles around Ilford* published in 1910 by Geo. E. Tasker.

Pictures from Tony Morrison's collection



now & then

Were you right ?

The Cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*) by the Ornamental Waters in Wanstead Park, which is shown on Edwardian postcards leaning over the lake as it does now (perhaps more so now). ,Note that in the earlier picture there were two trees, as described earlier in this newsletter in Geo. E. Tasker's walk of 1910.





Wanstead nature club

Report by Gill James

Grass Art People

JUNE: EARTHWORM WATCH & MINIBEAST HUNT

More Citizen Science for our young scientists! We took part in a national survey of earthworms called Earthworm Watch by looking at earthworms on Wanstead Flats and seeing what kind of soil we have. We dug a hole in a recently cleared patch of earth where some tree had been cut down. It was very hard as it had probably never been dug before and had tree roots and lumps of yellow clay. Ruduo was a terrific digger. Then we carefully sifted



Looking for earthworms

through the dark brown surface soil we had dug out and found 6 pale coloured surface- feeding worms, one of which had a 'saddle' which told us it was an adult. Then we poured a mustard powder and water mixture in the hole to see if there were any deep-living worms down there at the bottom. Worms don't like this, so they come out. Mustard must be too hot for their taste, but it does not hurt them. We saw two more longer and darker worms appear!

We also did a test with a few of drops of vinegar to see if the soil fizzed. It did not so we learnt that it was not a limestone soil. We could squeeze handfuls of soil in to sausage and patty shapes which told us it was not a sandy soil but a clay soil. This is typical of the soil in the Thames Valley area where we live.



Sweep-net princesses

We also went looking for minibeasts amongst the lovely waving flowering grasses and found some beautiful spiders carrying their young in egg sacs between their spinners. We identified them as a

wolf spider and a nursery web spider.



Making woodlouse homes

JULY: WOODLICE & OTHER MINIBEASTS

Did you know that a woodlouse has 14 legs? And that we used to swallow them live to cure a tummy ache? That's why some people call them pill bugs. We did an experiment to find out where they prefer to make their home and found out that they prefer being in the dark and they like being damp too. They are not very waterproof like us and dry up quickly and have shells like lobsters. Like worms they are Nature's Recyclers as they like to eat old decaying leaves and wood. So next time you see a woodlouse, don't tread on it, it is doing a useful job! Then we went round Jubilee Pond which looked very pretty in the sunshine with lots of wild flowers out. We had a go at catching butterflies and other creatures such as crickets and ladybirds with our

sweep nets in the long grass. We got a bit hot and thirsty and fed the ducks with some proper duck food pellets.



Summer flower crown

AUGUST: GRASS ART AND GRASSHOPPERS

What do you do on a warm dry August morning? You go hunting minibeasts in the long dry grass! We looked especially for crickets and grasshoppers, the Olympic champion jumpers of the insect world. If they were the same size as us they could jump a whole football pitch in three jumps- that's about 30 meters per jump! We tried it ourselves but we weren't nearly as good. We found lots of late summer flowers in the grass and made wreaths for our hair out of bindweed flowers. We made doll figures out of the long dry yellow grass stalks, tied their arms and legs with raffia Nad gave them

clay faces with mini apples for eyes. They looked like the corn dollies people used to make after the harvest.

SEPTEMBER: POND DIP AND BIRD SONG

A lovely warm day again. We listened to some recorded bird songs we were likely to hear around Jubilee Pond like coot and mallard and were pretty good at guessing which was which. We found guessing the swan's song quite difficult!



The group also had a great time on the swings

Then we went pond dipping and found a lovely fat leech, lots of waterboatmen and dozens of pond snails. The pond snails had clear sacks of eggs attached to themselves and to pondweed. We also saw some small red-bodied dragonflies called common darters flying around. We had a great time on the swings too.



Pond dipping in Jubilee Pond

Then we went to investigate the six large mystery holes which have appeared in the little wood by the changing rooms. We will have to do more detective work to find out who made them.....

The group meet at the changing rooms, Harrow Rd, Wanstead Flats, E11 3QD every month. Sessions are planned for Oct 8th, Nov 12th and Dec 10th. The group is run by Wren committee member Gill James and volunteers.

Why not come along with your youngster to have fun with others learning about our local nature – birds, plants, trees, butterflies, pondlife and insects etc. Only £1.50 a session. To find out more about the group or to register contact gilljames@btinternet.com



events diary

October

Sun 2nd October. 10am - 12.30. Sunday Practical Work

Meet car park adjacent to the Temple, Wanstead Park. Contact Peter Williams 8 555 1358 or 07716 034 164 on the morning. We shall be clearing bramble in the bluebell wood. All gloves and tools provided. Please come in suitable clothes.

Tues 4th October. 10a.m. – around 4p.m. Lucky Dip Walk

Meet Jubilee line platforms 13-15. No need to book, just turn up. Bring a snack, drink and Oyster or Freedom Pass. Walks chosen at random. Around six miles, gentle pace. Contact Peter Aylmer on peteraylmer@hotmail.com or 07884 235784.

Thurs 6th October. 10am - 12.30. Practical Work

Meet car park adjacent to the Temple, Wanstead Park. Contact Peter Williams 8 555 1358 or 07716 034 164 on the morning. All gloves and tools provided. Please come in suitable clothes. It could be muddy. We will be clearing regrowth on the edge of Ornamental Waters.

Sat 8th October, 10am-12pm. Wanstead Nature Club

For children aged 7+. Meet Harrow Road Pavilion, Wanstead Flats, E11 3QD every month. £1.50 a session. To find out more about the group or to register contact gilljames@btinternet.com

Thurs 13th October. 10am - 12.30. Practical Work

Meet car park adjacent to the Temple, Wanstead Park. Contact Peter Williams 8 555 1358 or 07716 034 164 on the morning. All gloves and tools provided. Please come in suitable clothes. It could be muddy.

Sun 16th October. 10am -12.00. Wren Group Visit to East Ham Nature Reserve

We hope there will be a chance to pop into the church too. Meet at main gate next to the interpretation centre. Ample free parking Norman Rd E6 junction High St south, one block north of A13. Contact Peter Williams 8 555 1358 or 07716 034 164.

Sun 23rd October. 10am - 12noon. Fungi Walk

Meet Quaker Meeting House car park entrance, Bush Road E11, near junction with Bushwood. Leader Tricia Moxey. Contact Tim Harris tharris0457@gmail.com

November

Wed 2nd November. 10a.m. – around 4p.m. Lucky Dip Walk

Meet Jubilee line platforms 13-15. No need to book, just turn up. Bring a snack, drink and Oyster or Freedom Pass. Walks chosen at random. Around six miles, gentle pace. Contact Peter Aylmer on peteraylmer@hotmail.com or 07884 235784.

Thurs 3rd November. 10am - 12.30. Practical Work

Meet car park adjacent to the Temple, Wanstead Park. Contact Peter Williams 8 555 1358 or 07716 034 164 on the morning. All gloves and tools provided. Please come in suitable clothes. It could be muddy.

Sun 6th November. 10am - 12.30. Sunday practical work (first Sundays of month Oct/Nov/Dec)

Meet car park adjacent to The Temple, Wanstead Park. Contact Peter Williams 8 555 1358 or 07716 034 164 on the morning. We shall be clearing bramble in Chalet Wood, the bluebell wood. All gloves and tools provided. Please come in suitable clothes.

Mon 7th Nov. 7:30pm Wanstead Golf Club. Free to members

Peter Warne Illustrated Talk: Local Nature Photography (with special reference to Copped Hall)

Sat 12th November. 10am-12pm Wanstead Nature Club

For children aged 7+. Meet Harrow Road Pavilion, Wanstead Flats, E11 3QD every month. Only £1.50 a session. To find out more about the group or to register contact gilljames@btinternet.com

Thurs 24th November. 10am - 12.30. Practical Work

Meet car park adjacent to the Temple, Wanstead Park. Contact Peter Williams 8 555 1358 or 07716 034 164 on the morning. All gloves and tools provided. Please come in suitable clothes. It could be muddy.

Fri 25th November 7pm: Friends of Wanstead Parklands Quiz Night.

Raising funds for improved facilities at the Temple. Wren members £10, FWP members £8. Leytonstone & District Ex-Servicemens Club 2 Harvey Rd, E11 3DB London

More info - www.eventbrite.com/e/quiz-night-friends-of-wanstead-parklands-charity-1167459-tickets-27775030865

December

Thurs 1st December. 10am - 12.30. Thursday Practical Work

Meet car park adjacent to the Temple, Wanstead Park. Contact Peter Williams 8 555 1358 or 07716 034 164 on the morning. All gloves and tools provided. Please come in suitable clothes. It could be muddy.

Sun 4th December. 10am - 12.30. Sunday Practical Work

Meet car park adjacent to the Temple, Wanstead Park. Contact Peter Williams 8 555 1358 or 07716 034 164 on the morning. All gloves and tools provided. Please come in suitable clothes.

Thurs 8th December. 10am - 12.30. Practical Work

Meet car park adjacent to the Temple, Wanstead Park. Contact Peter Williams 8 555 1358 or 07716 034 164 on the morning. All gloves and tools provided. Please come in suitable clothes. It could be muddy.

Sat 10th December. 10am-12pm. Wanstead Nature Club:

For children aged 7+. Meet Harrow Road Pavilion, Wanstead Flats, E11 3QD every month. £1.50 a session. To find out more about the group or to register contact gilljames@btinternet.com

links

Links

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Local

Wanstead Wildlife
<http://www.wansteadwildlife.org.uk/>

Friends of Wanstead Parklands
<http://www.wansteadpark.org.uk/>

RSPB North East London Members Group
<http://www.rspb.org.uk/groups/northeastlondon>

Wanstead Birding Blog
<http://wansteadbirding.blogspot.co.uk/>

Epping Forest
<http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/green-spaces/epping-forest/Pages/default.aspx>

British Naturalists' Association
<http://www.bna-naturalists.org/>

Bushwood Area Residents' Association
<http://www.bara-leytonstone.org.uk/>

East London Nature <http://www.eln.yorkshirefog.co.uk>

East London Birders <http://www.elbf.co.uk/>

Friends of Epping Forest
<http://www.friendsofeppingforest.org.uk/index.htm>

East London Nature <http://www.eastlondonnature.co.uk>

Plenty of info here about walking in Essex - including the forest
<http://trailman.co.uk/>

National

The Wildlife Trust <http://www.wildlifetrusts.org>

BBC Nature <http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature>

BBC Weather <http://www.bbc.co.uk/weather>

British Naturalists Association
<http://www.bna-naturalists.org/>

RSPB <http://www.rspb.org.uk/england/>

UK Safari <http://www.uksafari.com/index.htm>

Natural England <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk>

The British Deer Society
<http://www.bds.org.uk/index.html>

London Natural History Society
<http://www.lnhs.org.uk/>