

Summer 2019

# wren

Wildlife & Conservation Group

*Common Tern - pic by Mary Holden*

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# a word from the chair .....

Science has provided the answers to so many of the world's mysteries that it can be tempting to think that there is little left to learn, or that only expert scientists have something to offer in any particular field. I am increasingly reminded that both of these negative assumptions are myths.

Recently, an amateur expert, David Carr, has visited Wanstead Flats a couple of times to study our local spiders. Not only has he found new species for the local area, but some of these finds are classified as scarce or rare nationally as well. I am thrilled to say that David is coming back for a special field trip on 27 July (part of a weekend of events) that the Wren Group has jointly organised with the London Natural History Society (see the events section for more details). Even if you only drop by for 20-30 minutes to see what David has found, you have a chance of seeing a rare spider.

David has spent years building his knowledge. But, even relative beginners can contribute significantly to

particular fields of natural science; I recently found a couple of plant galls on oak caused by midges that have not been recorded locally before. In the case of these species (*Arnoldia libera* and *Polystepha malpighii*), there is very little to be found online or even in the scientific literature and an opportunity for even amateur observations and records to help push the boundaries of science in these areas.



Everyone has something to contribute to biodiversity science - from the rarest butterfly to the most common backyard weed new discoveries are being made all the time and every observation counts. It can also be great fun - I even created my own Wikipedia page the other day for the sap sucking bug *Trioza remota*.

I even created my first ever Wikipedia page for a species that didn't have one, the other day (the sap-sucking bug, *Trioza remota*, in case you want to go and have a look). It was quick, easy, and felt satisfying.

Whereas, in the past, birders would keep their records

in notebooks that may never really be opened again, websites like BirdTrack are easy to provide updates and the collection of data allow ornithologists to build an accurate understanding of bird population trends and changes. The RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch every January is another excellent example of citizen science where tens of thousands of people contribute to one of the biggest bird surveys in the country.

In this age of technological connection, apps like iNaturalist allow anyone to submit photos of their finds, software can help offer identification suggestions, and then online communities further help with identification and share ideas. This way, we are building up a better picture of what is out there than ever before. As machine learning and ID software become more sophisticated, I only hope that us mere humans don't stop learning fieldcraft and accumulating personal knowledge for our surrounds; that is surely the only way we truly connect with the natural world around us.

James Heal  
Chair Wren Group

Why not confirm and share your observations - take a look at the iNaturalist website and App <https://www.inaturalist.org>



# spring bird report

Spring passage migration may not be quite as productive (from a birding perspective) as autumn, but the added benefit of returning summer breeding migrants, makes it a favourite time of year. Report by James Heal.

*Wheatear -pic by Jonathan Lethbridge*



One of the first spring migrants to be seen locally is normally Wheatear, and so it was this year. The first Wheatear of the year is always a special moment, so-much so that the patch birders add to the drama by holding a sweepstake. Yours truly picked the lucky day this year and Tony B found the bird by Alexandra lake ('Alex') on 17 March (only a day later than the first returning one found in London); I took the photo reproduced here a little later that morning when it had moved to the Broom fields on the Flats.



*One of the first spring migrants to be seen locally is the Wheatear - pic by James Heal*

A few days later the first Sand Martin and the first House Martin appeared back on the same day (23 March). This was about average for Sand Martin, but was extraordinarily early for House Martin; in fact this

smashed our earliest-seen record by a whopping ten days. And it was not the only record to be broken this spring.

Our first Swift appeared back on 17 April, another early record. Sadly, a much more worrying record has probably also been broken this spring with our hirundines; and that is the shockingly low numbers of Swallow that we have seen pass through. In fact, BirdTrack stats tell us that our observations are in line with the low numbers seen so far this year across the country.

On the 2nd April - joint earliest date - our first Common Redstart for the year appeared on the island of Alex. This good looking male bird stayed for a few days, occasionally ventured across to fly-catch around the birches on the shore before disappearing into the dense vegetation on the island again.

Chiffchaff started singing from mid March, but Willow Warbler have been very scarce locally this year, with several of us having missed them altogether so far (perhaps suggesting that no breeding territories have been established). I am pleased to say, though, that the story for many other warblers has been more positive, in terms of raw numbers. This has been reassuring following the extensive habitat damage caused by last-summer's fire.

Blackcap territories seem healthy, we have had a few Garden Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat numbers are marginally down, and - despite fears to the contrary -

numbers of Common Whitethroat seen or heard singing are very high this year. What we don't know is what the impact of larger numbers of Whitethroat competing over smaller potential territories means for the future; as they are condensed into the reduced amount of scrub.



*Good news for the Cetti's Warbler. This once-scarce bird has been sighted for the first time in two years in the scrub by Alex lake and it looks like it has been joined by a mate - pic by Nick Croft*

On the same day that our first spring Wheatear appeared (17 March), Marco J also found our first Cetti's Warbler for two years, singing in the scrub by Alexandra Lake. As many of you will know, this once-scarce bird has been spreading well through the country, and the great news is that, the Alex bird appears to have been joined by a mate and has hopefully bred successfully, and we also have another bird by the Roding in the Old Sewage Works.

It has also been a very good spring for 'Acros'. The *Acrocephalus*, or reed-dwelling warblers, are most

numerously represented by Reed Warbler. The first one appeared on 1 May, and I am pleased to report that we have a record of five of them singing on the patch; two on the Roding and three by Shoulder-of-Mutton. The closely related Sedge Warbler also made an appearance on the Roding. I say 'made an appearance', but I largely mean 'made itself heard'. This was actually a 'bogey bird' for me on the patch and so I was pleased to finally get it on my list on 17 April (hat-tip to fellow Wren committee member, Bob V, the finder), a day in which another 'bogey bird' also succumbed to become a notch on my list: Green Sandpiper (found by Rob S on Alex).



*Reed Warbler - pic by Nick Croft*

But let's get back to 'Acros'. There was a brief period of time for local birders when this genus of birds seemed to be our entire focus. The birds above were all showing up on the patch, I found a singing Reed Warbler at Canary Wharf - a first for me and a rather incongruous

record for such a built-up area, and London's first ever Great Reed Warbler was found at Crossness in South London (a bird I unashamedly twitched). Then, a non-local visitor thought they heard a Marsh Warbler in Wanstead Park on Heronry - this would be a truly astonishing find if correct so all of the local birders mobilised. The first three there did hear some interesting calls - amidst the cacophony or more typical bird-song - and there is even a recording. We have yet to hear if that is enough for a conclusive outcome on that particular rarity.



*White Stork - pic by Nick Croft*

The best conclusive warbler find this spring was a Wood Warbler in Long Wood, identified first as an oddity by a visitor and then identified and confirmed by our very own Tim H. This was the first one on the patch for four years, and it occasionally sang from high in the canopy and then showed its lovely bright features every now and again slightly lower down.

Whilst on the topic of rarities, another sighting which is absolutely undisputed was a fly-over White Stork on 16 April. This huge bird was tracked by several birders as it made its way north-west across London and Nick C was lucky enough to pick it up as it crossed Wanstead Flats (a truly amazing addition to our patch list (only two off 200 now)).

On the last day of March, we were treated to a wonderful find from Rob S: a drake Garganey on Jubilee Pond. These summer ducks are notoriously shy and skulking (not often a word we use to describe our local ducks, apart from Teal, perhaps) and this bird was, indeed, very skittish, but being out in the open on a small body of water like Jubilee, meant that we were all afforded great views of this stunning patch rarity.

On the weekend after the Garganey appeared, another duck graced our year-list: Mandarin. This gaudy import has established some feral populations (including just



*Garganey - pic by Jonathan Lethbridge*



*Yellow Wagtail - pic by Nick Croft*

Nick also had a beautiful Yellow Wagtail on Alex, pottering about on the shore, on 30 April. Whilst we always have several passage fly-overs in the spring (and many more in the autumn), this species is rarely seen on the deck, so a nice find.

Other birds of note this spring have included: Whinchats on 21 April and 7 May, with the latter being a particularly showy individual; flyover White-fronted Goose on 26 March; Pheasant on 3 April; Ring Ouzel on 11 April; Short-eared Owl on 16 April; Shelduck on 4 May; Yellow-legged Gull on 6 May; and Spotted Flycatcher on 7 May. Overall, some pretty good birding.



*Mandarin Duck - pic by James Heal*

up at the road at Connaught Water) but are often used to humans and to being fed. And so it was with this bird, found by Nick on Alexandra Lake on 6 April, it was the opposite of shy. It swam directly towards any of the birders who came to see it and would waddle out of the water expectantly.

Report by James Heal



## 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 ahead). If you would like to see your area in this slot why not get in touch and we will see what we can do.



# counting species

article by Tricia Moxey

The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) is an independent international body established in 2012 with now over 130 member states around the world.

A recent Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services by IPBES focused on the state of nature, ecosystems and the ways human civilizations interact with the natural world, as well as tracking progress on key international initiatives. The report highlighted that around 25 per cent of species in plant and animal groups are vulnerable and at risk of becoming extinct within decades.

Whilst these global initiatives are out of the reach of most of us - naturalist Tricia Moxey makes the point that we all have a part to play in this science. By recording and sharing our observations of the biodiversity in our own areas, we can help create research quality data for scientists working to better understand and protect nature.

On 6 May the results of a Global Assessment Study about the universal importance of biodiversity was presented to more than 130 government delegations for their approval at the UNESCO headquarter in Paris. This report features the work of 400 experts from at least 50 countries, co-ordinated by the Bonn-based Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

The report highlighted that nearly one million species are at risk becoming extinct within decades, while current efforts to conserve the earth's resources will likely fail without radical action. Many of these are familiar species with a wow factor or ones of economic importance to humans.



Our very own local expert Tricia Moxey pointing out the many varieties of species on our own doorstep - pic by Mary Holden

The report also examines five main drivers of this change to biodiversity and ecosystem over the past 50 years, identifying them as: changes in land and sea use; direct exploitation of organisms; climate change, pollution, and invasion of alien species.

Whilst this gives rise to considerable concerns on a global scale sadly so many people have become indifferent to and isolated from the natural world and there are too few who can reliably identify the more unusual, but vitally important species.

So how do we engage with individuals to help them understand more about the organisms which live alongside us and how they are vital for our survival?

Various efforts are being trialled to encourage people to find out more about what lives in their local patch. One such scheme is to take part in the City Nature Challenge which has in three years become a global event. It started in 2016 as a Citizen Science Day, dreamt up by the teams at Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County and California Academy of Sciences as a fun way

to capitalize on their home cities' friendly rivalry by holding an event around urban biodiversity. The first event was an eight-day competition between Los Angeles and San Francisco, engaging residents and visitors to look closely for what inhabits these two cities.

Over 1,000 people made 20,000 observations cataloguing approximately 1,600 species

in each location with several new records for both areas. With effective publicity, there was so much excitement from people in other cities in the USA that it went national in 2017 and in 2018 it became an international event!

To participate individuals, log into iNaturalist and upload photographs of their sightings of plants and animals. These are verified by experts in the iNaturalist community. By using this technique to

encourage anyone to take photographs of what they find, it is reaching out to so many more people with a bump of curiosity coupled with a competitive edge! Guidance is provided to ensure that relevant details such as hairs, spines patterns on petals or wings are recorded. If the photographer is unsure about the kind of organism noticed, then there are helpful tips to help with identification.

## One in four species at risk of extinction

Human activities "threaten more species now than ever before" – a finding based on the fact that around 25 per cent of species in plant and animal groups are vulnerable.

*IPBES' 2019 Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*



*The recent and dramatic population decline of the Skylark put it on Red List. It is also very rare in our area - pic by Tony Morrison*

This type of activity can be instructive as well as helping to build up baseline information about local biodiversity. Collectively the members of the Wren Group have been finding and recording an impressive array of species in the southern portion of Epping Forest for years as well as engaging with others to help them improve their knowledge of the natural world.

**Every observation can contribute to biodiversity science, from the rarest butterfly to the most common backyard weed.** *iNaturalist*

In 2019 the Wren Group was invited by Field Studies Council (FSC) London to participate in London's attempt to record as many organisms as possible in this year's Capital City Nature Challenge, which was co-ordinated by the staff from the Natural History Museum. Although

hopes were high over the last weekend in April, the weather was not entirely ideal being rather wet and windy. The planned moth trapping event at Temple yielded no moths, although the bats were more co-operative flying over the nearby Heronry Pond. The butterfly walk arranged for the Sunday afternoon and co-led by May Webber of Butterfly Conservation provided a dozen of us with the chance to find some of the interesting plants and a few insects, but sadly no butterflies.



*The Green Hairstreak appears to be doing very well on the Flats - this once locally scarce butterfly is now a regular sight in the patches of long grass surrounding many of the copse's across Wanstead Flats - pic by Nick Croft*

A number of photographs were uploaded by Mary Holden as per the instructions, so the Wanstead records added to the final score to 1,113 different species for the whole of London. Over that weekend 278 Londoners managed to upload 5,475 individual photographic observations over the weekend, but of course this is just



*Great Crested Grebe, Wanstead Park. Having some success locally after some difficult years.- pic by Jonathan Lethbridge*

a small snapshot of what actually can be observed within the environs of London. This was an interesting first-time exercise for myself and the others who participated in this challenge and would be interested in doing something similar next year. We did however engage with members of the public who learnt something about the varied biodiversity of Wanstead Park.

And on a positive note new species are being identified every year.

Article by Tricia Moxey

There is more information about this project on line

<https://www.inaturalist.org>

[www.field-studies-council.org](http://www.field-studies-council.org)



# cows moooving back home .....

Could cows be coming back to the south of the forest ?

by Mark Gorman



For more than 1000 years cattle grazing has been a tradition in Epping Forest, with cows wandering across many parts of the forest, including Wanstead Flats. Until the 1850s a great cattle market was held every year on Wanstead Flats, with cows brought from all over the country to what was said to be some of the best grazing land in England.



*Cows on Wanstead Flats. Cattle once grazed freely throughout Epping Forest and many of them made their way down to Wanstead Flats. They were a common sight in the summer months and the cause of occasional traffic hold-ups as they wandered across the roads.*

The tradition of cattle grazing in the forest began to decline in the last century, and came under severe threat with the BSE outbreak in 1996. After these cattle were removed from most of the forest, including Wanstead Flats with just the few remaining cows left grazing in a small area of forest heathland. This small herd did however become the nucleus of the re-establishment of more widespread grazing at Fairmead and Chingford from 2002.



*English Longhorn cattle have already been re-introduced to parts of the Forest. Here is one grazing in Chingford Plain. They may look formidable but they are really gentle giants. Pic by Tony Morrison*

Now there is good news for those who have hoped to see the return of the cows to our part of Epping Forest. The Epping Forest Conservators are planning a trial grazing project, to be implemented on the East Plain in Wanstead Park (the area between the tea hut and the Temple). To keep the cows in the area of the Plain, 1800m of “invisible fencing” – a cable buried about 15cm below the surface will be installed. The cows wear collars which pick up a signal when they get near the cable, triggering a stimulus which deters them from crossing the barrier. This has been working successfully in other parts of the forest, and the intention now is to trial cattle grazing using this method from September 2020.

The Epping Forest managers hope that this will be a way of managing the acid grassland in Wanstead Park, with its distinctive ant-hills and important butterfly populations. Experience of cattle grazing

elsewhere in the forest has shown that, as well as upholding an ancient forest tradition, it bring significant benefits to the Forest’s ecosystem, allowing more flower and plant species to flourish than mowing would. It will also be a means of testing management of other areas of Wanstead Park, including the Long Walk just inside the Warren Road entrance. As for the cattle themselves, Epping Forest’s cows are Longhorns, one of the rarer breeds of British cattle, known both for their docile nature and their liking for rough grazing.



*Cows wandering down Capel Road in 1990s - before the BSE crisis, cows could often be seen in the late summer munching happily in people’s front gardens and bringing local transport to a standstill. Ask any local person though and they will say they would love to have them back again.*

The conservators recognise that community support will be a key factor in the project’s success, and plan to start a consultation period during 2019. So if all goes to plan, we will hopefully see cows back on their old stamping ground in the not too distant future.



# nature on your doorstep

## The Natural History of a St John's Churchyard

On Saturday 15 June at the invitation of the Wren Conservation Group I was able to lead a couple of guided nature walks in the churchyard as part of the Community Bio-diversity Day at St John's Leytonstone. This turned out to be a warm day with some sunshine and was great opportunity introduce local people to what might be living in this green urban oasis which is managed as a wildlife haven.

With the help of James Heal, Tim Harris and Tony Madgwick, it was possible to point out the features of different trees, a number of flowering plants, galls and assorted invertebrates to local residents. The small children and adults were delighted to find so many Harlequin Ladybirds, Thick-kneed Flower Beetles, Garden Snails and Honey Bees and show them a Hairy Yellow-face Bee *Hylaeus hylinatus* and a Spotted Longhorn *Rutpela maculate*. We chatted about various other names for Cleavers and Herb Robert as well as learning from one young man how to play 'conkers' with ribwort plantain flower heads!



With additional help from Kathy Harnett the initial list of 86 species noted within churchyard includes 10 birds, 26 assorted invertebrates and 50 plants. I am sure that more will be noted on future visits.

Whilst you can take wonderful close up shots of wildlife on a camera phone, this does not compare to a careful examination of a wild plant as you learn by touch and smell some other identification features. Watching how a ladybird crawls up a grass stem, a grasshopper jump, a

butterfly open and close its wings or a robin sing are just as important too and will help embed these features in our brains. We learn more effectively by doing and just having the occasional bit of fun with plants is instructive too!

So, when was the last time you made a daisy chain or played shooting ribwort plantain flowerheads?

Article by Tricia Moxey



# bygone Wanstead park

Taken from 'Round London' Publishing Company's *Gossiping Rambles in Suburban Essex, Epping Forest and Beyond*, published in 1908 and written by Charles William Burdett. His guide gives a marvellous setting of scene at the beginning of the last century at a time of transformation from the village era to the urban townscape we know today.

Researched by Tony Morrison  
Pic Wanstead Park, The Glade c1920



# Wanstead park

Quitting the precincts of the few bricks showing the old foundations of the house we turn to the left, and either follow the legitimate pathway or make a short cut across the gravel pits to the entrance to Wanstead Park, entering by a little wicket-gate. Some of its many beauties are indicated in the following verses:-

Dear Wanstead Park! what joys are thine,  
How many a shady nook,  
Where I may at my ease recline,  
Or saunter with a book.

The cuckoo shouts his loud clear note  
And waits his mate's reply;  
The Thristle (Song Thrush) swells her speckled throat  
With songs that pierce the sky.

Across the glade a rabbit runs,  
His scut raised high in air,  
He thinks he hears the keeper's guns,  
And hies him to his lair.

Bold robin pipes his cheerful strain,  
His notes rise higher and higher,  
Alas! he hears a rival's song  
His bosom flames with fire.

The blackbird trills a roundelay,  
O lovely gush of sound!  
Which through the quivering summer's day  
Fills all the air around.

The linnet flits from tree to tree,

While twittering songs of love,  
And hush! there steals across the Lea  
The cooing of the dove.

The insects hum in mazy round,  
The leaves are whispering too;  
A brown rat glides along the ground,  
And disappears from view.

High overhead the solemn crow  
Wheels in his homeward flight,  
Then settles on some tree's top bough  
As gently falls the night.

Dear Wanstead Park what joys are thine  
Through all the changeful year,  
Thy beauties to this heart of mine,  
Are dear and yet more dear!

Among thy glades the children play,  
Light-hearted, happy, free,  
'Till Nature flings her mantle grey  
O'er bird, and flower, and tree.

Long may I know those pleasant glades,  
Long may my heart rejoice  
To wander 'neath thy leafy shades  
Entranced by nature's voice!

"That voice which never did betray  
The heart whose love is true"  
So sang sweet Wordsworth in his day;  
Dear Wanstead Park—Adieu!

To those who are acquainted with this charming spot, the above lines will seem but a feeble reflex of its many attractions. If we take into account the fact that the Park is but six miles or so from Liverpool Street, it is matter for wonder that so

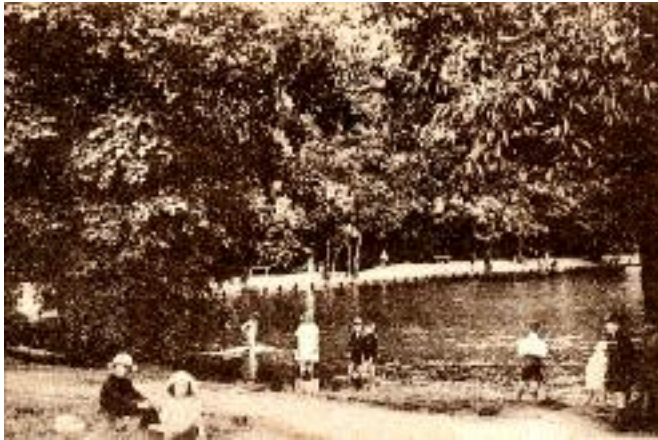
many scenes of lovely wildness can yet be found there. Shady walks and bosky dells abound; there are fine glades and open meadow-like spaces; the River Roding, small but pretty, winds its cheerful way along a pebbly channel towards the ever-waiting Thames, lying just below at the end of Barking Creek; in summer and winter, spring and autumn there is always something to attract the eye and please the fancy. When the foliage on the trees is at its best; when the ponds and lakes are full of the flush of summer life, one might easily imagine oneself to be a hundred miles away from the rush and roar of London. The air is full of sweet scents and sounds; the brilliant dragon fly in his glittering coat of fire with his gauzy wing trembling in the palpitating air; the hum of insect life, the softened sound of the cawing of the rooks, the shrill note of blackbird and thrush fill the heart with delight.



In the spring the glades are carpeted with the lowly bluebell, the honeysuckle hangs in patches here and there, while the stately heron and the ubiquitous crow may be seen busily engaged in

household cares upon the swaying tops of the high trees of Lincoln Island.

It must be admitted that the distinctly rural character of the park has been to some extent affected by the rapid and indeed phenomenal growth of the suburbs of East and West Ham during the last ten or fifteen years.



We are now in a scene of sylvan beauty the like of which it would be hard to find anywhere else in England, certainly not within many miles of the metropolis. Epping Forest has many beauty spots, which in their own way are unrivalled, but Wanstead Park in summer time is so sweet and restful that one's senses are at once charmed and ravished by it. Let us take the path on our left hand. This leads us in a few minutes to the ornamental water in which are situated Lincoln Island, Rook Island, etc., and our ears and eyes are at once provided with sweet sounds and lovely scenes. As we saunter along the pathway we note perchance the stately heron, his long legs outspread behind him as he sails majestically over the tops of the high trees; or we see a shy

moorhen silently stealing away to the safe shelter of the opposite bank. A little further along we note the flapping wings of several ducks which are chasing each other into the recesses of Rook Island. Lovely patches of water-lilies adorn the placid surface of the lake, spreading out their broad leaves to the rays of the cheerful sunlight which streams through the overhanging branches of willow, beech and chestnut.

"Men may Come and Men may Go."

On our extreme left is the River Roding, lurking sleepily in little pools and hollows, or hurriedly waking up to the fact that it has yet several miles to go ere it reaches Barking Creek on its way to the waiting Thames; rushing over its pebbly bed now with quite a noisy clatter, as one who should say, " See what I can do if I really try!



### The Grotto

By and bye we cross over a pretty little meadow which is within the park, and strike into a path leading along the opposite side of the lake, until we reach a spot which all visitors stop to admire, a



picture of rare beauty. It is The Grotto, now a sad ruin, empty shell. It never was anything, but a pleasure freak, and possesses no historical interest, but its splendid setting across the long stretch of water, embosomed among the trees, its quaint air of antiquity, its ruinous appearance, have made it the subject of countless pictures by pen, pencil, and camera. (Incidentally, it may be mentioned that permission to use a camera in the park must be obtained from the City of London authorities at the Guildhall, E.C.; and the right to fish in the ornamental water can be obtained from "The Temple" in the park itself. Tickets for fishing are 2s. per day. The lakes other than the ornamental water are free. The extent of the park is about 184 acres, of which about 30 acres are water.)

Formerly the Grotto was more picturesque than at present, if we may judge from photographs and written descriptions.

It is improbable that any such building would be erected to-day, as they are no longer in vogue. But the somewhat meretricious style of that day, that of Louis XIV. was widely spread, and showed itself

in many forms. Everywhere the bizarre was sought; this grotto was merely a symptom of the disease. It has the appearance of an ancient ruin, and was always designed to have that effect, so much so that strangers often think it to be at least several hundred years old. As a matter of fact its age is about 150 years. Its primary cost is said to have been £2,000, the after additions amounting to more than ten times that sum. Its roof was dome shaped, the inside being highly ornamented with pebbles, shells, crystals, and rare and costly stones. A remarkable tessellated pavement made of small deer bones, costing many thousands of pounds was one of its attractions, a fine stained glass window was another. Not less than £30,000 is said to have been spent upon its embellishment. This sum may be grossly exaggerated, but when all deductions have been made it remains a fact that quite a fortune was spent upon it. When Wanstead House was destroyed, the Grotto, either by design or accident, was left untouched. The view from its windows was most enchanting. At this point the lake opens out into lovely bays and little promontories, the banks verdant in summer or majestically stern in winter, with hundreds of trees dipping their long branches into the mirrored surface below, in which aquatic plants and birds abound.

At one time the Roding flowed directly into the lake at this spot, but was afterwards diverted into its present channel. In November, 1884, a destructive fire broke out in the Grotto, and the place was wrecked. The domed roof has quite gone, the tessellated pavement is no more, the ancient glories have departed, never to return. A small waterway at the rear gives shelter to the park keepers' punt, but the boats laden with ladies in silks and satins, their bosoms glittering with

precious stones are but dim memories of the past. "Nought now remains, .Save these sad relics of departed pomp, These spoils of time, a monumental pile ! Which to the rain its mournful tale relates, And warns us not to trust to fleeting dreams." Richard Jago. "Kenilworth Castle."



## The Short Cut

Having mused and rested long enough, we proceed to further investigation of the park, taking a path which leads through the undergrowth in a diagonal direction, afterwards crossing a fine open glade (of which there are several) until we reach a pretty rustic bridge leading to what is known as the Short Cut from Ilford. An inscription upon it informs us "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." This has been a great boon to thousands. It also affords a ready means of communication with Cranbrook Park, Ilford, and the Valentines, of which more anon.

We retrace our steps for a few yards, entering upon a path close at hand, which winds in and out among the undergrowth, until at length we emerge close by the keepers' lodges, and "The Temple" before referred to. Close by is the pretty little pavilion or chalet, used as a refreshment room, and forming quite a pretty picture with its deep setting of green forest trees. There is a fine open meadow-like space here, used for lawn tennis, hockey, cricket, etc., well patronised by sundry clubs. On the right are also the links of the Wanstead Park Golf Club, but these are not actually in the park itself.

Crossing the open we have now come to the Perch Pond and Bathing Lake on our Herons, left hand, with the so called Heronry Pond on our right. This latter pond was originally the home of these large birds, but they have not inhabited it for quite a number of years, preferring Lincoln Island in the ornamental lake instead. They do not seem to mind the people in the park at all, but are greatly bothered by the thieving rooks, who chase them unmercifully. Heronry Pond has recently been deepened and much altered in shape (the work of the unemployed, 1906-7) and is again a large sheet of water, but at present somewhat ugly in appearance. Nature is already smoothing away its asperities with her gentle fingers; in a few more years it will look more like its former self. Crossing between the two lakes we make our exit into Wanstead Park Avenue, at the top of which are electric cars to Manor Park Station. Soon we are en route for Liverpool Street glad to have seen this beautiful park, rejoicing that it is open to the people for ever.

by Tony Morrison





## Breath

*by J. Daniel Beaudry*

Tree, gather up my thoughts  
like the clouds in your branches.  
Draw up my soul  
like the waters in your root.  
In the arteries of your trunk  
bring me together.  
Through your leaves  
breathe out the sky.



Should we all be responsible for planting

# more trees?

by Susie Knox

More vegetation is a key strategy in the battle to step back from the brink of uncontrollable climate change. Around the world, ambitious tree-planting schemes are being proposed, and there are renewed calls to address the vast areas of tropical forest being lost to agriculture, mining, infrastructure development and intensifying fires caused by global warming (some 8.9 million acres last year).

The Committee on Climate Change has said that in the UK, 1.5 billion trees would be needed by 2050 to help achieve zero net carbon. Michael Gove, the former environment secretary, has promised a national campaign of tree planting, with pledges of funding for 10 million new rural trees and 130,000 urban trees by 2022. Even Redbridge Council, in partnership with Trees for Cities, is set to plant over 15,000 trees through community projects.

What rarely gets talked about is the role of private gardens as a space for more vegetation – which seems bizarre bearing in mind that, in London, it is estimated that around 25% of land is garden space.

That's why more vegetation is one of the five pillars of Wanstead's new environment initiative – **Cleaner Greener Wanstead**.

**Cleaner Greener Wanstead** is a campaign to encourage everyone in the area to do more to address climate change, pollution and loss of biodiversity. It is a call to action for individuals, businesses and organisations to consider the sustainability of how they live or operate now, and

make active changes that will have a positive impact on the environment, focusing on several key priorities.

## Priorities for a cleaner, greener Wanstead

**CLEANER JOURNEYS** to cut back on fossil fuels and improve air quality.

**MORE PLANTS & TREES** to give wildlife a helping hand and suck up carbon.

**LESS PLASTIC, WASTE & LITTER** – it's blighting Wanstead and overwhelming our planet.

**SUSTAINABLE HOMES & PREMISES** through energy efficiency and features like green roofs, solar panels and less paving.

**LOWER IMPACT LIVING & WORKING** – so that our choices and buying power support the environment rather than trashing it.

There is no one single thing we can do to address the environment crisis, but planting more vegetation is probably the closest thing we've got.

The list of benefits of greenery in urban settings is almost endless – it sequesters carbon, supports



*The recent trend to pave over front gardens to provide off street parking is creating urban deserts.*

*The loss of plants and green spaces can have a profound impact on our wider environment, climate and wildlife. Animals such as hedgehogs, moths, birds and bees lose their homes and are driven away. Reduced contact with nature and green spaces has also been proven to be detrimental to our own health and wellbeing.*

*We need to reverse this trend for the sake of the nation's health, for wildlife, to help combat pollution, reduce heat waves and to protect the UK's homes from flooding.*



biodiversity, improves air quality, keeps things cooler during heat waves, helps manage surface water runoff during heavy rain and creates a vibe where people are more likely to get out of their cars and walk or cycle. And it's not just the environment that benefits. A wealth of evidence shows that being in a green environment improves physical and mental health, and even helps children do better at school. In fact, a recent study found

Nearly 1 in 4 UK front gardens are completely paved over

5 million front gardens have no plants growing in them

Three times as many front gardens are paved compared to ten years ago

*Royal Horticultural Society Survey 2015*

that spending just two hours per week in green spaces is linked to people feeling happier and healthier. We're lucky in Wanstead to have some fantastic parks nearby, but wouldn't it be better just to have to step outside your home to get your green fix? Most scientists agree that the simplest thing a person can do to address their carbon footprint

is plant a tree. There are an estimated 3.8 million front and back gardens in Greater London alone. Is it just me or are we missing a massive opportunity here? Surely we can do better than Mr Gove's 130,000 new urban trees? Perhaps the time has come to aim for more trees and vegetation in every garden.

For ideas on sustainable living visit [www.cleanergreenerwanstead.org](http://www.cleanergreenerwanstead.org) or follow the project on Facebook or Instagram.

For ideas on wildlife-friendly plants and trees for your garden visit [www.wildwanstead.org](http://www.wildwanstead.org)

article by Susie Knox



**The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now**

I believe that this proverb says as much about people as it does trees.

If a child is taught to understand and care about nature then I believe he or she is likely to grow to be a better person for it. The proverb also implies that it's never too late to learn. 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.

Ed

# the temple over time

Regular visitors to Wanstead Park will know that the Temple houses a museum to the history of Wanstead House and the features in its grounds. One of the most prominent surviving features is the Temple itself. A recent exhibition there looked in more depth at how it has been used since it was first built around 1760.



The owner of Wanstead House at the time was John, 2nd Earl Tylney (1712-1784). He had been on the Grand Tour of Europe and inspired by Roman architecture he wanted a classical Temple in his garden. While in Florence in 1753 John met the young architect William Chambers, later famous for Somerset House in London, who designed a small circular temple for him.

Chambers' design was not used but a simple 'Tuscan' style building was built. Originally it was free-standing with a portico of four stone columns. It was placed at the end of a double avenue of trees on a low brick-built mound, concealing a ground floor-room, which was entered from behind. Wings were added shortly after the building was finished and certainly by 1779.



*Originally the Temple consisted of the central free standing portico with four stone Roman Doric columns*

In that year a plan shows the Temple as a poultry house and an inventory suggests that it then housed a menagerie, which we know existed at Wanstead from at

least the 1760s. Exotic aviary may be a better description; the keeping of exotic birds was then very fashionable.



*The rear of the Temple looking more like the original humble uses of poultry house, managerie and stables*

The 2nd Earl died childless in 1784 and the Wanstead Estate passed to his nephew James Tylney-Long. His daughter Catherine became one of the richest heiresses in the country when she came of age at the end of 1810. She was courted by royalty among others. Her choice of husband, the Regency rake, William Wellesley-Pole, nephew of the Duke of Wellington, was unfortunate. Together the couple, bearing the faintly ridiculous surname Pole-Tylney-Long-Wellesley, lavished money on the house, the estate, themselves and a huge entourage to the extent that they were forced to sell first the contents and then the very structure of Wanstead House. It was demolished in 1824.

The sale of the contents took place over six weeks in the summer of 1822. It included the outbuildings, and the Temple was described as item No.55, Gamekeeper's

Cottage, with three beds, numerous nets and traps, including '5 men traps', plus many guns. Outside, there were 7 dog kennels, several bird coops and 'the erection of the Pheasantry, with 3 partitions and net over, 48ft square'.

After Wanstead House was demolished, its grounds were mortgaged and managed by trustees of the Pole-Tylney-Long-Wellesley family. They stripped the park of its assets, chopping down trees, including the avenue in front of the Temple. The grounds, parts let out for grazing, parts for arable farming, were overseen by gamekeepers who continued to live at the Temple.

This name Temple first appears on the Ordnance Survey map in 1863, but it is not listed as such on census returns until 1881, when it is described as a 'shooting box'. It then housed no less than three families but a year later the Corporation of London opened Wanstead Park to the public following its purchase from the then owner Lord Cowley. William Puffett, a carpenter born in 1820, was appointed Head Keeper, as he had been 'for many years in charge of the grounds and the Grotto'. He



*The interior of the Temple showing its current use of a fine museum and gallery*

moved into the Temple, along with his son Robert (born 1853), who had been appointed as one of three Underkeepers. After the Grotto burnt down in 1884 Puffett senior moved into the newly built Refreshment Chalet in front of the building and ran this until 1902.



*The Temple at the turn of the last century - at the time a keeper's residence*

The Epping Forest Committee kept one room within the Temple for its own use on its regular visits to the Forest. Once a month the members would expect dinner. Robert Puffett was instructed by the Superintendent to shoot ducks for the meal, which was cooked by his wife, and Puffett and George Paveley, the resident staff, would serve at table dressed in their white summer uniforms.

From 1882 until 1960 the Temple's main function was to house Forest keepers and their families. Two families generally lived there. Outside there were stables, a tool shed, a duck pond and duck shed, as well as a ferret hutch for frequent ratting parties. Keepers entered the building from behind. The front lawn and portico were out of bounds. The Committee room in the south wing

could be accessed via a short flight of steps leading to door (both now removed). The Temple was never open to the public, and was not particularly visible, shrouded as the front was in bushes, with trees around the enclosure.

The building suffered bomb damage in both World Wars but was patched up. It continued in use as a domestic building until new lodges were built alongside at the end of the 1950s, into which the Keepers moved. In 1990 an extensive landscape survey of Wanstead Park recommended reinstating the original view of the Temple at the end of a double avenue of trees and sweet chestnut trees were subsequently planted. The building then underwent a major overhaul, completed in May 1997. More authentic, glazed black pantiles were placed on the roof. Paint was stripped off the brickwork which was repointed. Internally, a new wooden staircase was inserted in the southern wing, now the public stairs, and the upstairs rooms were restored as close as possible to their 18th-century appearance. Afterwards, the shrubs and trees masking the front of the building were removed.

Starting with Open House weekend in 1996, by 2006 the Temple was open to the public one weekend in four, with craft activities and guided walks offered. The cleared garden became the venue from 2000 for the annual Music In the Park event and then also for summer theatre performances as well. As part of the public consultation in early 2015 plans were unveiled for the Temple to become the main visitor hub for Wanstead Park. Its future is secure but it needs our support.

Article by Steve Denford



*Steve Denford works for the heritage team for Epping Forest Visitor Services. He has produced a number of exhibitions on the history of Wanstead House and Park at the Temple. A London blue badge guide, he also leads walks in Epping Forest. Article first published September 2015.*

## Temple Opening Times

The Temple is open every weekend during the summer with a programme of events and temporary exhibitions.

Family play box activity: get building on Saturday 3rd - Sunday 4th August 2019. 12pm-5pm. Free

Family play box activity: get building on Saturday 3rd - Sunday 4th August 2019. 12pm-5pm. Free

Open air theatre – Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Friday 9th August 2019. 7-9.15pm.  
Booking required: [eppingforest.eventbrite.com](http://eppingforest.eventbrite.com) or 020 7332 1911. Adult £14.95, Child (2-16) £8.95, Family (2 adults + 2 children) £40.

Family play box activity: get building on Saturday 17th - Sunday 18th August. 12pm-5pm. Free

More: [www.skiddle.com/whats-on/London/The-Temple-Wanstead-Park/Family-play-box-activity-Get-building/13581974/](http://www.skiddle.com/whats-on/London/The-Temple-Wanstead-Park/Family-play-box-activity-Get-building/13581974/)

# let them eat bread

## Official Statement on Bread from the Queen's Swan Marker

As many of you know there has been a lot of debate about feeding swans and other waterfowl bread.

We have always maintained that feeding them bread is fine, Today we received a this statement from The Queen's Swan Marker, David Barber, MVO, endorsed by Professor Christopher Perrins of the Edward Grey Institute of Field Ornithology at Oxford University.

"There has been a great deal of press coverage in recent months regarding the 'Ban the Bread' campaign which is confusing many members of the public who like to feed swans.

Supporters of the campaign claim that bread should not be fed to swans on the grounds that it is bad for them. This is not correct. Swans have been fed bread for many hundreds of years without causing any ill effects. While bread may not be the best dietary option for swans compared to their natural food such as river weed, it has become a very important source of energy for them, supplementing their natural diet and helping them to survive the cold winter months when vegetation is very scarce.

There is no good reason not to feed bread to swans, provided it is not mouldy. Most households have surplus bread and children have always enjoyed feeding swans with their parents. The 'Ban the Bread' campaign is already having a deleterious impact upon the swan population; I am receiving reports of underweight cygnets and adult birds, and a number of swans from large flocks have begun to wander into roads in search of food. This poses the further risk of swans being hit by vehicles. Malnutrition also increases their vulnerability to fatal diseases like avian-flu which has caused the deaths of many mute swans and other waterfowl in the past.

Furthermore, there have been statements made in the media claiming that feeding bread causes angel-wing in swans. Angel-wing is a condition where a cygnet develops a deformed wing. Professor Christopher Perrins, LVO, FRS of the Department of Zoology at Oxford University stated, 'There is no evidence of a connection between feeding bread and angel-wing; at least some cygnets develop this condition without ever having seen any bread'.

I therefore encourage members of the public to continue feeding swans to help improve their chances of survival, especially through the winter."

We'd like to thank everyone for their support and we hope that this will help these beautiful birds.

<http://www.theswansanctuary.org.uk>





# the sea starts here

Every minute, every single day, the equivalent of a lorry load of plastic enters our oceans. In the name of profit and convenience, we are literally choking our planet with a substance that just will not just go away.

According to a report by Eunomia in 2016 an estimated 12 million tonnes of plastic – everything from plastic bottles and bags to microbeads – end up in our oceans each year. That's a lorry load of rubbish a minute.

Travelling on ocean currents this plastic is now turning up in every corner of our planet – from Cornish beaches, to uninhabited Pacific islands. It is even being found trapped in Arctic ice.

## 80% of the plastic polluting our oceans comes from the cities

Our oceans are slowly turning into a plastic soup and the effects on ocean life are devastating. Larger pieces of plastic are choking and entangling turtles and seabirds and, when broken down, the smaller pieces are clogging the stomachs of creatures who mistake it for food, from tiny zooplankton to whales. Plastic is now entering every level of the ocean food chain and eventually ending up in the seafood on our plates.



*Juvenile Herring Gull with plastic rubbish in its beak. In 2015, a study by Australian and British scientists determined that 90 percent of seabirds living today have ingested some form of plastic, mistaking it for food. If plastic consumption continues at its current rate, 99 percent of seabirds will carry plastic in their guts by 2050.*

## Plastic Pollution - Facts & Stats

- ❑ Plastic pollution can now be found on every beach in the world, from busy tourist beaches to uninhabited, tropical islands nowhere is safe.
- ❑ Scientists have recently discovered microplastics embedded deep in the Arctic ice.
- ❑ In 1950, the world's population of 2.5 billion produced 1.5 million tons of plastic; in 2016, a global population of more than 7 billion people produced over 320 million tons of plastic. This is set to double by 2034.
- ❑ Every day approximately 8 million pieces of plastic pollution find their way into our oceans.
- ❑ There may now be around 5.25 trillion macro and microplastic pieces floating in the open ocean. Weighing up to 269,000 tonnes.
- ❑ Plastics consistently make up 60 to 90% of all marine debris studied.
- ❑ Approx 5,000 items of marine plastic pollution have been found per mile of beach in the UK.
- ❑ Over 150 plastic bottles litter each mile of UK beaches.
- ❑ Recent studies have revealed marine plastic pollution in 100% of marine turtles, 59% of whales, 36% of seals and 40% of seabird species examined.
- ❑ 100,000 marine mammals and turtles and 1 million sea birds are killed by marine plastic pollution annually.

Plastic enters our oceans through a variety of ways; bad industries, poorly managed bins and landfill sites near the coast, lost fishing gear, waste dumped by shipping, rubbish dumped in the sea or into our rivers as refuse – to mention but a few. We are all aware by now that there are things we can do to help stem this tide of plastic pollution; we can support new laws to phase out non-essential plastics, we can lobby supermarkets and corporations to use less, we can buy less single-use plastics and shop more responsibly and we can recycle.



*Larger pieces of plastic break down and end up being consumed by small marine species - these are eaten by larger marine species and eventually end up in our food chain.*

However there is another, less obvious, way that plastic finds its way into our oceans.

80% of the plastic that pollutes our oceans comes from cities? Much of the rubbish we throw on our streets, such as cigarette butts, wrappings, chewing gum (yes that's plastic) drops down drains and ends up in the

oceans. Similarly - many of the products we use daily are flushed down toilets, including wet wipes, cotton buds and sanitary products. Some of the larger pieces of plastic are filtered out before they enter our seas but the smaller pieces are too small to be filtered out by waste water plants and end up being consumed by small marine species, eventually even ending up in our food chain. Microfibres are even released into waterways when we wash our clothes in the washing machine.

## Here's What We Can Do

- ❑ Don't forget the four R's: **REFUSE - REUSE - REDUCE - RECYCLE!**
- ❑ Most of us don't know that the first step in protecting the oceans is to throw our rubbish into the bin - not on the street or beach.
- ❑ Don't flush plastics down the toilet
- ❑ Buy and reuse carrier bags (preferably from cloth) instead of plastic bags.
- ❑ Don't chew gum! Gum is made of synthetic rubber, which is also plastic.
- ❑ Refuse single-use

plastic straws. If you need a straw to drink, carry your own reusable one instead.

- ❑ Purchase food from bulk bins as much as possible, using your own reusable containers.
- ❑ If you do have to buy containers for food, reuse those containers for storing left-overs or buying bulk.
- ❑ Make your own sandwiches and don't buy pre-packed.
- ❑ Get a reusable bottle or mug for your drinks. All major beverage shops will happily fill your own cup and water re-fill stations are becoming more popular.
- ❑ Try to use sustainable and nature-friendly soaps and cleaning products.
- ❑ Avoid cleaning-products with micro-beads. These micro-beads are often made of plastics.
- ❑ Use a safety razor with replaceable, recyclable blades instead of disposable ones.
- ❑ Plastic microfibers from synthetic clothing travel unseen from washing machines and

into our waterways.

- ❑ Opt for clothing made from natural fibres like cotton and linen, or use special washing in your machine.
- ❑ Buy less stuff or buy second-hand !
- ❑ Wash clothes at low temperatures and don't spin-dry.
- ❑ Check around your own home for containers, bags and other items you can reuse, or purchase reusable items - like bottles, mugs, cloth shopping bags.

by Tony Morrison

[www.eunomia.co.uk/reports-tools/plastics-in-the-marine-environment](http://www.eunomia.co.uk/reports-tools/plastics-in-the-marine-environment)



# now & then

## Were you right ?

The Lodge, Bush Wood in 1906 and again in 2002. Today the site is so overgrown the lodge is no longer visible.



# events diary

## Summer Programme:

**Sat 27<sup>th</sup> July:** 10.30. Spider Field Trip. Joint organised between London Natural History Society and the Wren Group and led by Davis Carr. Meet Centre Road Car Park, Wanstead Flats. Bring lunch if you want to stay all day.

**Sat 3rd Aug:** 1.00-3.00pm. Guided Nature Walk of East Ham Nature Reserve! Hosted by Green Hands Newham. One of the largest church yards in Britain, this seven-acre site has been a nature reserve since 1977, providing a haven for a huge range of plants and animals: everything from lizards to rare snails, and blue bells to black caps. It's a great to wander around, have a sit down, and to learn about the wildlife around us in our seemingly urban settings. We're also very lucky to be guided along the way by Penny Evans, a knowledgeable and experienced volunteer at the reserve. Meet 1 Norman Road, East Ham, E6 6HN.  
<https://www.facebook.com/events/685498295235176>

**Thurs 8th Aug:** 1-3pm. Minibeast/Bug Hunt in Wanstead Park. Joint venture between Friends of Wanstead Park and FSC. Children must be accompanied. Child £5 accompanying adult free. Meet Temple, Wanstead Park. Goto FSC website for more details and to book [www.field-studies-council.org](http://www.field-studies-council.org)

**Wed 21st Aug:** Many of us will remember the nature rambles led by Peter Aylmer over the last few years, until he moved to Essex last summer. But now, after popular pressure, he has agreed to run one last nature ramble for Wren later this summer. See pp 33 for more details. To join us, please let Kathy Baker know you are coming by emailing [kathys.baker@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kathys.baker@yahoo.co.uk)

**Wed 21st Aug:** 2 sessions am and pm - 10-12pm and 1-3pm. Trees of the Forest in Wanstead Park. Joint venture between Friends of Wanstead Park and FSC. Children must be accompanied. Child £5 accompanying adult free. Meet Temple, Wanstead Park. Goto FSC website for more details and to book [www.field-studies-council.org](http://www.field-studies-council.org)

**Fri 30th Aug:** 7.30-10pm. Nocturnal (Bat) Walk in Wanstead Park. Explore the diversity of bat species after dark and learn how they use sound to see. We will use bat detectors to hear them & learn more about the species we find. Joint venture between Friends of Wanstead Park and FSC. Children must be accompanied. Child £5 accompanying adult free. Meet Temple, Wanstead Park. Go to FSC website for more details and to book [www.field-studies-council.org](http://www.field-studies-council.org)

**Sat 14th Sept:** 2 sessions am and pm - 10-12am and 1-3pm. Bushcraft in Wanstead Park. Bushcraft isn't just about lighting fires, there is much more to it. Bushcraft and survival techniques are a useful life skill and include activities such as making shelters, tracking and foraging for food and water. Joint venture between Friends of Wanstead Park and FSC. Children must be accompanied. Child £5 accompanying adult free. Meet Temple, Wanstead Park. Goto FSC website for more details and to book [www.field-studies-council.org](http://www.field-studies-council.org)

**Sun 15th Sept:** 9am-5pm. The Annual Epping Forest Celebration Walk (Previously known as the Centenary

Walk) Walk the entire length of the Forest in a day or take part in one section.

Meet junction of Capel Road and Forest Drive, Manor Park. [www.efht.org.uk](http://www.efht.org.uk) [enquiries@efht.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@efht.org.uk)



*Note: Events are subject to change and confirmation. Please look out for email updates or check the Wren Facebook page for updates*

# links

Got any links to go on this page? Get in touch [wreneditor@talktalk.net](mailto:wreneditor@talktalk.net)

Wren links page <http://www.wrengroup.org.uk/links>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/WrenOrg>

Twitter <https://twitter.com/wrenwildlife>

## 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/>

Wild Wanstead - greening up the local area

[www.wildwanstead.org](http://www.wildwanstead.org)

## National

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

British Naturalists Association

<http://www.bna-naturalists.org>

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

Field Studies Council (FSC)

<https://www.field-studies-council.org>

London Natural History Society

<http://www.lnhs.org.uk/>

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

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

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

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

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

# .... and finally

## One last Wren Group Nature Ramble

Many of us will remember the nature rambles led by Peter Aylmer over the last few years, until he moved to Essex last summer. But now, after popular pressure, he has agreed to run one last nature ramble for Wren later this summer.

To join us, please let Kathy Baker know you are coming by emailing [kathys.baker@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kathys.baker@yahoo.co.uk)

We will be walking about seven miles, mostly beside the River Stort on the Essex / Hertfordshire boundary. We will pass through the nature reserve of Hunsdon Mead and the open spaces of Harlow's Town Park to reach the Gibberd Garden on Harlow's boundary. With spaces including lawns, pools, a lime tree avenue and arboretum, the Garden - created by Harlow's master planner Sir Frederick Gibberd - is full of sculptures and decorative objects from the miniature to Portland stone columns rescued from Coutts Bank on the Strand.

Date: Wednesday 21 August

Travel: Take the 10.00 train from Stratford to Bishop's Stortford

(usually platform 11) and alight at Roydon at 10.39 where Peter will meet us. Buy a return ticket to Harlow Mill station as we will be returning from there. An off-peak return costs £15.50, less with railcard; those with Freedom Pass should ask for a return from zone 6 to Harlow Mill which costs under £7. Please note there is a £5 admission charge to the garden (£4 for over 60s).

Refreshments: There will be an early coffee stop and a picnic opportunity by the river later on. There is a café in the Gibberd Garden, but picnics are not allowed there.

Kathy Baker



# Litter kills

People's rubbish doesn't look nice and spoils the enjoyment of our green spaces for everyone. But aside from its environmental impact, flytips and other litter also pose a real hazard to wildlife.

If you see a flytip or excess litter on Epping Forest land please report it. Call 020 8532 1010 (24 hours) or mail [epping.forest@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:epping.forest@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

