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The background of the right half of the page is a close-up photograph of autumn leaves in shades of yellow and green, with a soft focus.

autumn 2012

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

a word from the chair

Hello everyone.

So, London 2012, the Olympic and Paralympic extravaganza, is over.

Maybe not everyone agrees but I thoroughly enjoyed the whole thing and was even lucky enough to get tickets for a few events. I've spoken to people who aren't even interested in sport who have told me how much they enjoyed the sense of togetherness, with people of all nationalities converging on our area in a spirit of shared purpose, and hundreds of uniformed volunteers on buses and tubes (at least two of

the 'Games Makers' were Wren Group members). Watching the amazing opening ceremony I had to pinch myself to believe that the focus of the world's media was right here in the East End. Of course, the big issue now is 'legacy' – how the area will benefit from its new sports facilities, additional housing and employment opportunities. Time will tell, but we have our own legacy issues even closer to home, on Wanstead Flats.

The Wren Group opposed the use of part of Wanstead Flats as a police muster station for a variety of reasons that I still believe were valid. However, I feel that the disruption created by the construction and operation of the site were less than most people feared, and noise and light pollution were kept to a minimum. Wildlife on the rest of Wanstead Flats wasn't adversely

affected. And one day I was even approached by a police officer who came out to look for our Wryneck! It is now important that the Fairground site is restored to a good condition, and that the City of London is able to spend the money it received for the muster station deal in a way that really enhances Jubilee Pond for wildlife and people. After a wet summer, the pond is now looking better than I can ever remember but there is so much that can be done to improve it further.

Maybe the final word should be about the Olympians of the natural world. As you read this there will be birds weighing just a few grams fattening themselves up in local hawthorn bushes and bramble scrub in preparation for journeys of thousands of kilometers to sub-Saharan Africa. I was reminded of this in early September when I saw an even more fragile Monarch butterfly, which had just crossed the Atlantic Ocean. The world of nature is truly remarkable.

Don't forget to look at our new website www.wrengroup.org.uk from time to time, and if you have a story or photos you'd like to air online, why not send them in?



Best Wishes, Tim



a word from the editor

Welcome to the autumn edition of the **wren** newsletter. Thanks for all the kind words about the new style newsletter and thanks for all the great contributions – keep them coming in.

Remember that this is an 'electric' newsletter meaning that it is designed to be read online and not printed. Not printing the newsletter saves trees and the environment

which is what the **wren** group is all about. Having said this, you might want to print out the puzzle page so that you can use a pen to complete it.

Being an online newsletter also means that all the internet links are live so you can click and go to that site while still keeping your wren newsletter open in the background.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter. But remember - this is your newsletter and can't be produced without your contributions and support. If you have any views, news or stories please let me know. Similarly, if you have taken any interesting photos please send them in – I will put them in the gallery in both the newsletter and on the website. You can get in touch with me by e-mail at editor@wrengroup.org.uk

Wren group walk

Sunday 24th June 2012

The Wren Group's June walk in their 'Nature in the Park' series (the park being Wanstead Park, of course) took place on a day of very mixed weather conditions – one moment blue skies and sunshine; other, more frequent moments, grey skies and intermittent

out was Sand Spurrey (a member of the Pink family) - but would any of us have noticed this, and the other equally miniscule plants, if not made to look for them? These plants situated along the path are obviously robust, to survive the continuous trampling of human (and sometimes canine) feet. Much more visible to us, on either side of the pathway, were the very tall grasses covering The Plain. Was it my imagination, or did these splendid grasses look even taller this year? Perhaps all the recent persistent rainfall had something to do with this, as all of the vegetation appeared to be very lush. The shapes and the textures of the grasses were exquisite, and when the sun shone on them, they glistened, and the wind made them perform a rhythmic swaying dance.



Biting Stonecrop

showers. A typical British summer's day! We were supposed to be looking out for dragonflies, damselflies and butterflies on this particular walk, but the weather conditions didn't bode well. However, undaunted, our group set off to see what 'nature' we could.

We first walked through the area of the park known as The Plain, situated behind the Tea Hut. We'd only gone a hundred yards or so, when Paul Ferris suggested we look down at the gravelly path beneath us, to see what plants we could notice. On closer inspection, tiny clusters of plants became apparent, and one of the plants Paul pointed

There were lovely bands of colour formed by these grasses – swathes of pink, orange, red, brown, gold, and various shades of green - quite a stunning spectacle for passersby to enjoy. One particular grass I admire is called Yorkshire Fog, described in one of my books as "a variable, tufted perennial with grey-green downy stems. Flower heads are tightly packed at first but then spread; comprising reddish-tipped, grey-green, 2 flowered spikelets." (I think the spikelets are more pinkish than reddish-tipped, but colour perceptions vary.) Other plants seen in this area were Ribwort Plantain and Buck's-horn Plantain; and Few-leaved Hawkweed - this last plant looks similar to a dandelion

flower. There are quite a few varieties of these similar looking 'yellow flowers' (members of the Daisy family), which I always find difficult to identify individually.

Further along the path we stopped to examine a gall on an Elm tree. A



Wren veteran Paul Ferris in full flow at the walkabout on 24th June in Wanstead Park.

gall is an abnormal growth produced by a plant or other host under the influence of another organism – usually fungi or invertebrates (often, tiny wasps). Galls can also be caused by viruses and bacteria. The growth provides food and shelter for the gall-causing organism, and does not do

any harm to the host plant. After further investigation later, Paul found that this particular gall was called *Eriosoma lanuginosum*. On the same tree was an odd looking 'creature', which was the larvae of a Harlequin Ladybird (not our native ladybird, but an invasive species). Ladybird larvae look nothing like what they eventually evolve into, which surprised some of the people on our walk, who had not seen the larvae before.

We continued on to the top end of Perch Pond, near the overflow grate – which was very much living up to its name this day, as water was rapidly overflowing into it from the pond, as the water level was higher than usual. The bank at this end of the pond usually has an abundant display of plants and wildflowers at this time of year but, unfortunately, this wasn't the case on our visit. It was clear to us that the bank had recently been mown back quite harshly. Paul told us that he had commented on this drastic cutting down of the wildflowers in this spot for a few years now, but that the City of London maintain that they have to do it to comply with the Reservoirs Act. However, as Paul went on to say to us, surely such mowing could be done at a more appropriate time, ie after the flowers have blossomed and then died back? Not only are the flowers a pleasurable sight for park visitors, but they act as a wildlife habitat, attracting a wide variety of insects, including dragonflies and damselflies.

There was a smattering of damselflies whilst we were there, but not as many as usual. One of our group also noticed a black 'smudge' on a reed in the pond just a few feet out from the bank. This was the egg sac of a spider, and even though this small patch of plants was now separated from the bank by the mowing work, at least some of the spiderlings would be able to make it to the bank when they dispersed. One method they might use is 'ballooning' – being carried on a current of air. Who knew

that spiders could fly?! The species involved here was probably *Tetragnatha extensa*, and these usually nest near water, so this may well be a problem that is familiar to them.

We then walked around the Old Sewage



Eriosoma lanuginosum gall - Aphid

Works area (a.k.a the Exchange Lands), which is a good area for all kinds of wildflowers - sometimes even orchids - and wildlife in general. Some of the more common plants we saw in this area were: Bird's-foot Trefoil (a member of the Pea family) - a sprawling perennial, mainly yellow, but which sometimes has splotches of red in it too. Apparently the pods are splayed like a bird's foot when ripe, hence its name; Common Mallow, which has purple-veined pink flower petals; Oxeye Daisy, which has a white flower-head, with a yellow floret in the middle; Yarrow, an upright, flat-

topped plant, with tiny clusters of white flowers (sometimes with a hint of pink); and both Red and White Clover. One corner of land was carpeted with a low-growing sedum - Biting Stonecrop - whose flowers had lovely bright yellow star shaped petals.

Another plant commonly seen in the OSW on our walk was Mugwort (a herb). This plant was once used for flavouring beer, before the introduction of hops. The name of the plant may not be derived from 'mug' (the drinking vessel), but from 'moughte' (a moth or maggot), as it was thought useful in keeping off the attack of moths. Amazing what facts you discover in researching the names and properties/uses of these plants! We also came across Russian Comfrey, a perennial herb with large, hairy, broad leaves and small bell-shaped flowers of cream and purple. This plant is used as a fertiliser by organic gardeners. Bees are very attracted to Comfrey. I've sometimes noticed that some bees are too big to fit into the flower to obtain their nectar fill - so they 'cheat', by going to the back of the flower and biting a tiny hole into it! This way they can drink the nectar, but unfortunately they don't pollinate the flower this way.

We really saw too many plants to name here, but one final mention of a plant we saw was Dogwood. Paul showed us how you can identify this deciduous shrub: gently tear one of its leaves in half, and tiny 'strings' will appear between the torn halves of the leaf.

And I've researched the origins of the name of the plant: apparently the twigs were once used to make butchers' skewers, which used to be known as 'dags' or 'dogs', so the name means 'skewer wood'.



Red Admiral - This strong-flying migratory species may be seen throughout Britain and Ireland and in almost any habitat, from sea-shore to town centres and the tops of mountains.

By the way, we did manage to see some dragonflies and damselflies and butterflies on this walk: several Banded Demoiselles (gorgeous azure blue males, and emerald green females), which flitted along the River Roding resembling fairy creatures; about ten Blue-tailed damselflies; one male Common Blue or Azure damselfly; and for the butterflies - two Small Heaths, one Large White, and one Red Admiral. So, it wasn't all about wildflowers instead after all!

Article and pics by Kathy Hartnett



epping forest discovered!

City of London Corporation
Yvette Woodhouse - July 2012

Twenty five local primary schools have enjoyed participating in 'Discovering Epping Forest (DEF)' since 2009.



DEF is a three year educational programme, which has been made possible by Heritage Lottery Funding, as part of the wider Epping Forest 'Branching Out' project. Sadly we are now in the third and final year of funding but are working hard to identify potential sponsors

to enable us to continue the programme.

More than 75 teachers and approximately 2,250 children have benefitted from attending six education modules per year, hosted by four learning providers in Epping Forest, City of London Corporation, Epping Forest Field Centre, Epping Forest Centenary Trust and Suntrap Forest Education Centre. Pupils have experienced the Forest's varied habitats in all seasons and weather conditions, discovering that it is a great place to learn and have fun.

A workshop for the participating teachers ('Epping Forest Champions') took place on 29 June. This was a chance for everybody involved to contribute to the evaluation of the project, to celebrate its successes and to plan for ongoing, future use of the Forest by local schools.

Although the current DEF project is coming to an end it leaves a lasting legacy of enthusiastic children who are keen to return to the Forest and a network of teachers who plan to continue to use the online teaching support material available for anyone who wishes to bring children to learn in the Forest (available soon). In addition, we really hope to be able to perpetuate the scheme with the help of our education partners and sponsors in the future.

A short film has been made celebrating DEF and will be available soon on the Epping Forest website,

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/eppingforestlearning

A local teacher involved in the workshop said: "We have enjoyed how the children were able to learn to appreciate nature and we have been taught how easy it is to access the Forest. The practical sessions were very valuable, enabling learning to be sustained in the children's memory for longer."



Superintendent of Epping Forest, Paul Thomson, said: "Discovering Epping Forest has been a huge success. We are proud of the lasting legacy of DEF, with local schools now empowered to use the Forest as a fantastic, free learning resource. We would love to be able to continue this fabulous education project and welcome contact from any potential sponsors."



flowers in the rain

*"The mother of months in meadow or plain
Fills the shadows and windy places
With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain"*

(A.C. Swinburne)

On Thursday, 12th July, four members of the Wren Group joined Tricia Moxey for an evening walk to look at the wild flowers in the Exchange Lands between Wanstead Park and the City of London Cemetery. This rough ground, once mown by Redbridge Council, has been left to run fairly wild by its current owners, and there is a wide variety of wild flowers and a few that have escaped from local gardens or nearby allotments, such as fennel and marjoram.

According to Tricia's handout, Paul Ferris has listed



Goat's Rue

around 250 species growing here and he had brought with him the flower of Gallant Soldier, a relation of Shaggy Soldier. English wild flowers have wonderful names! By the end of the walk, he had found another species to add



Black Horehound

to his list for the area - probably a type of Musk Mallow.

We avoided the Giant Hogweed and the spines of the Compass Plant and Prickly Lettuce, and picked out the more attractive flowers of Russian Comfrey, Black Horehound and Great Bindweed, Great and Dark Mullein (Verbascum), Rose of Sharon, Scentless Mayweed, Weld (a mignonette), Cinquefoil, the strange bulbils of the aromatic Crow Garlic, and Yarrow and Mallow by the bucketload. With so many flowers to choose from, we concentrated on the pea family. We saw large areas of White Clover, Red Clover, Haresfoot Clover and the attractive lilac or white Goat's Rue (a newcomer that is spreading perhaps too rapidly). And there was also Hop Trefoil, Hairy Tare, Grass Vetchling, Common Vetch and Black Medick. Last, but by no means least, there were the larger and more obvious magenta-pink flowers of the Everlasting Pea. Tricia's hand lens was needed to identify some species. For example, the two stamens of the blossom of a hawthorn giving away its identity as Midland Hawthorn. There was no time to identify the many beautiful grasses.

And, of course, it rained. It was raining when we began, it was raining an hour and a half later when we finished. But, to misquote Lord Bowen,

*"The rain, it raineth on the just
And also on the unjust fella;
But chiefly on the just, because ...*

..... they decide to do something really enjoyable - like looking at flowers).



Everlasting Pea

Thanks to Tricia Moxey and Paul Ferris for sharing their knowledge with us on such a wet evening.

Ruth Palmer Pics Kathy Hartnett



new visitor centre reveals stunning views

City of London Corporation

HRH The Duke of Gloucester, the official Ranger of Epping Forest, formally opened Epping Forest's new 'The View' visitor centre in July.

The event marked the climax of the hugely successful redevelopment of the entire Epping Forest Gateway, where three exciting visitor attractions mark the entrance to the internationally acclaimed open space.

The Epping Forest Gateway on Rangers Road - only a short walk from Chingford station - centres on the Grade II* listed Queen Elizabeth's

Hunting Lodge, which dates to 1543. It is now complemented by a new visitor centre at The View, the Butler's Retreat café situated in a restored 19th century barn and attractive new landscaping.

All of these developments have been made possible with the generous support of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), which awarded the City of London Corporation £4.76m towards its Branching Out project. Related landscaping improvements include the accessible trail at nearby Connaught Water and car park resurfacing.

'The View' is a stunning contemporary building by architects Freeland Rees Roberts. Its bold but simple, transparent façade links the former

Victorian coach house and stables, inviting visitors upstairs to enjoy the views of the Forest from the external timber walkway, as royalty once did from the adjacent hunting lodge.



HRH The Duke of Gloucester, the official Ranger of Epping Forest, formally opening Epping Forest's new 'The View' visitor centre back in July.

It is a fully accessible building, incorporating a new learning and community room, featuring sustainable solar panels and a rain water harvester, as well as the use of traditional materials to harmonise with its setting.

Exhibition designers CodSteaks have used this exciting space to tell the story of Epping Forest in a highly original way, based on research at the London Metropolitan Archives and the City of London Corporation's museum collection. The enthralling display is designed to appeal to all ages. Who saved Epping Forest in the first place? Who lives there now? The answers to these and other questions may surprise you.

There is also a shop offering great quality, Forest-related items for sale and a community room available for hire.

However, the main attraction remains the Forest itself, so there will be plenty of ideas for places to visit and things to do, whether you're new to the Forest or not.



Access to the View is free and no booking is required. Temporary exhibitions will also be staged throughout the year.

Alderman Gordon Haines, Chairman of the City of London Corporation's Epping Forest and Commons Committee, said:

"The new Epping Forest Centre is a wonderful asset to visitors, to all London's communities and to the City of London Corporation. We are very grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund for enabling us to realise this dream of telling the fascinating and important story of Epping Forest in a new and relevant way."

Carole Souter, Chief Executive of the Heritage

Lottery Fund, said:

"Epping Forest is a remarkable part of our natural heritage, famed for its ancient pollarded trees, which have survived for hundreds of years. As the main funder of the Branching Out project, the Heritage Lottery Fund is pleased to be celebrating the completion of this wonderful new visitor centre and proud to have forged close working ties with the City of London Corporation."



Rear view of the new visitor centre showing the viewing gallery

The new centre is open every day throughout the year, apart from Christmas day, with staff and volunteers on hand to help you make the most of your visit.

For more information please visit www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/eppingforest or telephone 020 8532 1010.

the borough top

Article by Peter Aylmer

If you ever see a walker hanging around on Sidney Road, between the houses on its north and Centre Road, don't be alarmed. They are probably collecting a 'borough top'. For it is somewhere around here that the London Borough of Newham ascends to its maximum elevation, officially 15m / 49ft.



Somewhere around here in Sidney Road, Forest Gate lies Newham's 'Borough Top'

It's none too easy to identify the precise location. The borough boundary runs along the northern edge of the road, with an extension around the gardens of their houses; all that lies beyond is Redbridge. So step off the Newham-maintained pavement and onto the Flats, or outside the boundary fence of the gardens, and you're in another country.

The official list for these things, the Database of British Hills www.hills-database.co.uk gives a grid reference of TQ 402860 for the summit. That's a 100m-square, so quite imprecise in a flat area. Mapping software, which continuously interpolates heights, shows an elevation of 16m / 52ft in one of the gardens of nos 6 to 14, in square TQ 403860 – the next square to the east. Home-owners are unlikely to be keen though to be asked for access from groups of obsessives.

Because there are indeed such people, who set out to walk to the highest points of various local government areas. The London Boroughs list is perhaps the least involving of them all; many are under tarmac. Perhaps the nicest borough top is the high point for Waltham Forest, Pole Hill in Epping Forest. Another fine spot within the one-time Great Forest of Essex, Cabin Hill in what is now Hainault Forest Country Park, is the top of Redbridge.

The tops of the historic counties of the UK are rather more of a walker's challenge. There are around 90 of these, depending a bit on definitions; they even have their own guide book, The UK's County Tops published by

Cicerone Press. The Long-Distance Walkers Association keep a register of all those who have visited the Great Britain tops, and with just 47 completions recorded so far, it's a more exclusive club than Everest. It needs, of course, strong mountain skills to cope with Bidean nam Bian, Ben Nevis, Snowdon and the rest, but it gives too an opportunity to scour some wonderful corners of our beautiful island. And Boring Field (sic) in Huntingdonshire.



Peter on one of his wilder hiking trips. Peter is a recent member to the group and it is hoped that he will treat us to more of his hiking experiences in the near future.

And just in case doubts have been growing as you read: yes, the 26m / 84ft Beckton Alp has a higher elevation than Sidney Road. But that is man-made, as the spoil from Beckton gasworks, not the result of natural process. Or else we might be hooking ourselves to the outside of the Orbit tower, just to get a tick on a list.





bird report

By Tim Harris

Joy unbounded at the Hawthorn of Plenty

Autumn migration tends to be a slower affair than the frantic northbound rush of spring. Then, our migrant species are striving to get to their breeding grounds as fast as possible in order to grab the best territories. In autumn, the energy consuming business of raising a new generation is done for another year and the migrants can head back to the Mediterranean or sub-Saharan Africa. They have time to stop off along the way if they find good feeding – or if they are forced to a stop by bad weather.

In the London area we can see the first southbound Green Sandpipers as early as late June, but things don't really start to get going until August, before the migration becomes a torrent in September and October. Much of this movement goes unseen, with night-flying migrants passing straight over our area if weather conditions are favourable. And we won't notice most day-flying Barn Swallows, wagtails and pipits unless they are flying across open areas with broad horizons.

But every so often, weather conditions deteriorate at night, after birds have set off, and they find it easier to pitch down in some suitable habitat and wait for things to improve. Birders call this phenomenon a fall. (The Americans call it a fall-out.) That is exactly what happened in the early hours of 25 August, when a weak frontal system moved east across southern England, bringing with it a band of rain and drizzle. The small band of birders who ventured onto Wanstead Flats that morning, in gloom and drizzle, thought that conditions may be good for



The wrynecks (genus Jynx) are a small but distinctive group of small Old World woodpeckers. Like the true woodpeckers, wrynecks have large heads, long tongues which they use to extract their insect prey and zygodactyl feet, with two toes pointing forward, and two backwards. However, they lack the stiff tail feathers that the true woodpeckers use when climbing trees, so they are more likely than their relatives to perch on a branch rather than an upright trunk. (Wikipedia) (Pic Nick Croft)

a fall, but early indications weren't promising. In fact, there seemed to be very few birds of any description. Then, at 8.30, Tony Brown raised his bin to a bird in a hawthorn in the scrubby area on Lakehouse Road. It took a couple of seconds before it dawned on him that he was looking at a Wryneck ... the second on the Flats in three autumns. His companion, Stu Fisher, confirmed the identification and Steve Thorpe and me quickly rushed to the scene.



This one tree was visited by a juvenile Pied Flycatcher, both male and female Common Redstarts, no less than three Lesser Whitethroats, a Garden Warbler, two Willow Warblers and numerous Common Whitethroats, Chiffchaffs and Blackcaps. That's in addition to the resident Blue and Great Tits, Wrens, Dunnocks and Blackbirds. No wonder it was later dubbed the "hawthorn of plenty."

The bird showed sporadically at various points in the day. It had no particular reason to move on: there were plenty of anthills for feeding and the brambles and hawthorns provided protective cover. I, and a growing crowd of others, spent several hours staring at that group of hawthorns and the results were a revelation.

The Wryneck was enjoyed by many during its six-day stay. First dates for other returning migrants are as follows: the first Spotted Flycatcher was on 2 August and subsequently there were seven birds on Wanstead Flats on one day. The first Northern Wheatear was on 7 August, two days later than last year. Common Redstart put in its first autumn appearance on 11 August, and subsequently there were more than ten birds, including four on one day. The first Whinchat was on 16 August, and the first of half a dozen Pied Flycatchers was on Lincoln Island in Wanstead Park on 18th. A Cuckoo was on the Flats briefly on 1 September, the latest Common Swifts (at the time of writing) were five over Alexandra Lake on 3rd and a Tree Pipit was in the same area on 4-5th. In addition there was a regular trickle of Yellow Wagtails moving south across the Flats in August and early September. Far less expected was a Marsh Harrier over Cat and Dog Pond on 26 August. And half a dozen Common Crossbills were noted flying over during the period.

Since our area is not well endowed with waders, a good early autumn crop deserves a mention. Dan Hennessy picked up two Black-tailed Godwits flying over the Alex on 31 July, an exceptional local record. There was a Green Sandpiper on the Roding, by the old sewage works, on 12 August and the next day a Common Sandpiper began a short residence at Jubilee Pond. On 7 September a Greenshank heard by Nick Croft near Alexandra Lake was the first locally since 1985.

Article by Tim Harris, pics by Nick Croft



sunday in the park

19th August nature meet by Tony Quatrone

A goodly sized group assembled in sunshine outside the tea bar, a mix of long term members, newcomers and previous tasters. During the walk four new people signed up. Welcome! A slow wander took the group along the northern bank of the Heronry and around the Shoulder of Mutton ponds then back to the tea bar. Paul Ferris has some excellent photos from the day showcased for August on the home page of the Wanstead Wildlife website.

Black Tailed Skimmer



Several types of insects were observed. Small Red-eyed Damselflies were spotted near the tea bar along with Common Blue and Azure types including several mating pairs.



The Common Darter (Sympetrum striolatum) is a dragonfly of the family Libellulidae native to Eurasia. It is one of the most common dragonflies in Europe, occurring in a wide variety of water bodies, though with a preference for breeding in still water such as ponds and lakes. In the south of its range adults are on the wing all year round. (pic by Tony Quatrine)

Common Darter dragonfly males paused long enough for photos to be taken and both a male and female Emperor were along the pond edge, the former seen laying eggs. A Black-tailed Skimmer conveniently sunned itself on the shoreline exposed by falling water level on the Shoulder of Mutton. Gatekeeper, Small Copper, Meadow Brown and Large

White butterflies were seen. An eagle-eyed Paul drew our attention to a Horse Chestnut by the Mutton with tiny Leaf Miner adults and the abandoned protective sheath of a Psyche casta moth sticking out from a crack in the bark. Paul also found both Knopper and Oak Apple galls caused by gall wasps on the same young Oak tree.

The usual throng of water fowl graced the heronry including Great Crested and Little Grebes, a trio of Tufted Ducks, probably dispersants from those hatched earlier in the year on the Alexandra or Jubilee Ponds. A rarer visitor in the form of a Common Sandpiper was viewed through binoculars on the far side bank of the Heronry. Common Kingfisher, Great Spotted and Green Woodpeckers were seen or heard. In the waters of the Heronry 'tiddlers' darted along the edge, large whelk-like water snails floated upside down, and a school of larger Rudd darted and fed in the gap between the first island and the bank. A larger dead Carp (10" long) was floating on the surface at the far end of the pond.

Although much plant life was beaten down by weather and people many plants were noted. A patch of Heath Bedstraw was prostrate among the grass of The Plain; strong and vibrant growths of Michelmas Daisy, Gypsy Wort, Water Mint, and New Zealand Pygmy Weed were growing on the pond edges.



Common Darters are ambush predators, waiting on a prominent perch - such as a leaf or the top of a gate - until prey fly past, whereupon they will fly after it. They are territorial on breeding waters, often attempting to chase off much bigger dragonflies such as Southern Hawkers. (Source Wikipedia) (pic by Tony Quatrine)

The weather clouded over and a threat of rain prompted a hasty return to the teabar for some light refreshment and chat. Some of us stayed on to join and enjoy the bonus of a Biodiversity talk and walk organised by the Epping Forest service that extended the pleasure and interest of the day for several more hours.

Article by Tony Quatrine



wildlife going for gold

Article and pics by Jackie Morrison

The Summer 2012 quarterly would be incomplete without mention of the massive physical transformation that has taken place in our area, namely the creation of the Olympic Park.

Before retiring, I had been involved in reviewing the proposals for the Park and its forerunner, Stratford City. Huge plans had covered my desk and floor. Prior to this, I had made few visits to the area. Lying north of the busy noisy Stratford High Street it was a place of unexpected contrast. Here was a mysterious web of waterways, forgotten canals and overgrown towpaths with little access. No doubt these were a far cry from the optimistic days of their construction. Grey, grimy streets of nineteenth and early twentieth century industry adjoined. It felt an unsafe place to explore or linger.

On the day of my visit to the Park it was hard to overlay mentally these remembered scenes on the views now before me. But, whatever one may think of the Games, I found the Park a brilliant improvement. The waterways are cleaned with not a submerged traffic cone or trolley in sight. Instead they provide a glittering framework to the Park and pedestrian routes that link its various parts. Extensive riverside and wetlands areas have been kept, enhanced, and created for us to enjoy along with the flora and fauna that are already settling in. Trees and swathes of wildflower planting enliven, colour and soften extensive areas for sitting out. Along with other visitors, I watched in awe and happiness charms of goldfinches flitting, chirruping and feeding on seed heads. Rising up they made a bold contrast to human endeavour. In all, I found the Park a very uplifting experience and a reminder of the power of nature to adapt and bring us joy. I hope it will be a legacy that lives on for us all.



august bank holiday in the park

Reading of the many thousands that flocked from West Ham and East Ham to the seaside, one would almost think for the moment that the districts were empty on Bank Holiday. But anyone who was out and about recognised that this was not the case. Despite the fact that the Great Eastern Railway carried 121,371 passengers to suburban stations, and the London and Tilbury, 40,000 to Southend, there were droves of people all over the district who were holiday-making close to home. The opening of the new line of municipal electric tram cars to Wanstead Flats saw every car packed; in fact, Monday must have made Mr. Blain's heart glad. Every recreation ground had its teeming multitudes, but the great thing seemed to be a visit to Wanstead Park.

With light fleecy clouds overhead which travelled slowly across the sky and veiled the face of the sun from time to time - with a soft wind blowing from the south, and rustling the trees in the groves, Wanstead Park on Monday was a glorious place for a holiday, and some thousands of people caught time by the forelock and revelled for hours in the beauties of that fine playground.



By ten o'clock the number of people in the park was not large, but after that time they arrived in hundreds. Tram after tram, at intervals of about three minutes, came gliding up from East Ham and Manor Park, and deposited loads of happy holiday-makers at the entrance of Wanstead Park Avenue. These people were augmented by the large number who walked to the park from Forest Gate, Leytonstone, Wanstead and Ilford, so that by mid-day, Wanstead Park was pleasantly full.



Wanstead Park 1904

The crowd - although a large one - was good-tempered and good-mannered. It was drawn from that strata of society who believe that, after all, enjoyment is not to be found in drinking and street singing. There in the quiet nooks beneath the trees, by the waterside, where the white and golden water-lilies swayed gently to and fro by the action of the breeze, in the glade, which commands a view of the lake beneath, could be seen groups of men, women and children enjoying the peacefulness of the scene.

Of course, the great attraction for the more

boisterous of the children was paddling in the lake. Tiddlers had a lively day on Monday; the mere sight of one led to quite a commotion, and sometimes to a capture. And when this desirable end was brought about, the marmalade or pickle jar was requisitioned and tiddler was borne away to scenes anew. But when the tiddler refused to be beguiled, a forward movement was made on the small frogs - many of which were carried away in pickle bottles and delight to meet a speedy death in the dry and unsexed realm known as dad's garden, in order to complete a small boy's holiday.

When the sun had passed its meridian, and begun to throw shadows to the west, you could come across groups seated beneath the umbrageous foliage of the trees, and revelling in all the delights of a picnic. But some of those picnic baskets must have been terribly heavy if the sweat poured down father's face, and his ejaculatory expressions count for aught. But there - ginger beer is enclosed in very heavy bottles. But when the cloth was spread and 'dad' had wiped his brow for the last time, all thought of the trouble departed. Then comes mother's turn, and - but who has not known the joys of a picnic in his or her youth?

In the ornamental water, where the angler is not allowed to play his seductive art, a crowd gathers to watch the movements of a shoal of small roach. They are "on the feed" as the anglers put it, and fight valiantly for the small pieces of bread which have been thrown in for the ducks. Their small tails stir to life the otherwise placid face of the waters, and the crowd on the bank hazards conjectures as to the species of the fish. But suddenly there is a whirr, and from the sedges on the opposite side of

the pool, half flies, half swims, a coot, and seizes the pieces of bread nearest mid-stream. Back again goes the half-terrified bird - gay in its summer plumage - and a minute afterwards it can be seen sharing its prize with its more sombre mate.



Wanstead Park at the turn of the last century

These are but a few of the quiet amusements which helped to make the Bank Holidays a pleasant one for the many thousands who visited Wanstead Park.

An extract from the East Ham Echo, 5th August 1904:

Bank Holidays began with an Act of Parliament in 1871. There were four holidays and two 'Common Law' holidays (Good Friday and Christmas Day). Other days have been added since. The August Bank Holiday occurred on the first Monday of the month until 1971 since when it falls on the last Monday in August

Article by Tony Morrison (pics belong to author but he didn't actually take them)





Wanstead nature club

For children aged 7-13 years

Bring your youngster along to have fun with others learning about our local nature - birds, plants, trees, butterflies, pondlife, insects etc.

We meet at the changing rooms building, Harrow Road, Wanstead Flats E11 3QD the forth Saturday of every month 10 a.m. - 12a.m.

Run by local volunteers. Only £1.50 a session
To find out more and register to join please contact
Gill James 0208 989 4898

[e-mail gill.james@btinternet.com](mailto:gill.james@btinternet.com)

Supported by The Wren Wildlife & Conservation Group
and the City of London

Wanstead nature club

Report by Gill James - July 2012

Eleven children today - summer holidays have begun and the Olympics start next week.

Epping Forest Branching Out Officer Alison Tapply was waiting for us at her camp in Bush Wood, along with volunteer helper Ian, with two Wild Play activities- whittling sticks and making Forest Guardians!

At the entrance a Forest Guardian gazed down at us from a tree, and a tarpaulin had been laid down for us on the damp ground for the children to sit on, with three hammocks slung from holly trees around. First Alison opened a box of very sharp whittling knives and gave us a talk about how to handle them safely. After we passed the knives around and learned how to use them without cutting ourselves we sharpened/whittled our holly sticks successfully and then went to a clearing in the wood to see how far we could throw them.

Then we made some great Forest Guardians- faces and creatures, from deer to Gruffalo, fashioned from damp clay , decorated with found objects like acorns, leaves and feathers. Fascinating to see how you can make use of forest materials and make things for free. Thank you Alison and Ian.



Coming events;

September 29th September, 10-12 noon. Harrow Road changing rooms.
Pond dipping in Jubilee Pond: claws and jaws in a pond near you!



scouts making a difference in epping forest

**John Park, City of London Corporation
August 2012**

The City of London Corporation were delighted to once again work with the Scouts and Epping Forest Centenary Trust to host the 24th annual Epping Forest conservation project.

Explorer Scouts and Ranger Guides (aged 14-18), with over 20 Scout Leaders, from all over the UK, came together in Epping Forest for a unique camping experience in August.

Working in Epping Forest, a unique open space of national and international conservation importance, Scouts can really make an impact on conservation and access in the Forest.

Activities included:

- Improving access for all at Connaught Water by constructing a boardwalk, helping people, especially those with mobility requirements, to get closer to nature and

enhance their lakeside experience in Epping Forest of walking amongst the reeds and observing colourful dragonflies and other aquatic wildlife.

- Removing reeds at Bulrush Pond, giving the scouts a chance to get mucky and create an improved yet more diverse habitat for wildlife.
- Clearance work along the Woodchip Ride near Great Monk Wood. Widening and enhancing this important habitat to support rare butterflies in the area whilst helping to provide excellent views of some of the Forest's finest pollarded beech trees.
- Linking up Forest glades in Bury Wood by removing invasive holly growth. This work will help to re-establish and reconnect lost open grassy areas, creating natural corridors for wildlife whilst re-exposing ancient pollards.

Amidst the hard work, the Scouts also enjoy themselves, making new friends, learning new conservation skills and developing team working abilities. This experience directly contributes to their Duke of Edinburgh Awards, Environmental Partnership Award, various scouting badges, university applications and future job opportunities.

Superintendent of Epping Forest, Paul Thomson, said: "We are all really excited to once again be welcoming the Scouts into

Epping Forest. The work they will do here really will make a difference and help us to improve some of Epping Forest's wonderful assets."

Jack, an explorer participant from last year, said: "I love the camp and I love the Forest..."



Scouts working in Bullrush Pond last year

For more information on Epping Forest please visit www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/eppingforest, for more information on the Scouts please visit www.scouts.org.uk and for more information on Epping Forest Centenary Trust please visit www.efct.info

For further details please contact John Park,
email: john.park@cityoflondon.gov.uk



august invertebrate report

August was a disturbed month for invertebrates, or at least my perception of them. As much of this year seems to have been, the weather was changeable and unpredictable, particularly at the beginning of the month, and I suspect that many insects had a hard time of it.

However, on the 1st of the month I managed to do some grass cutting in the garden and disturbed a **Swallow-tailed Moth**. In the evening I put out the moth trap and by the morning I found that it had attracted more than 25 species, and over 50 specimens, including three species new to the area: two micro-moths - a **Barred Fruit-tree Tortrix** and **Cydia splendana** – and a macro-moth – a **Dusky Sallow**. It might be worth mentioning that the micro-moths are mostly the smaller, less obvious moths, whilst the “macros” are the bigger ones. This is not a scientific distinction, but because of the size difference macro-moths tend to have gained English names whilst many of the micros are only known by their scientific ones.

On 2nd August, two **Speckled Wood** butterflies were observed flying around each other. This species is usually the most familiar of butterflies in my garden during the summer, but has been somewhat missing from

sightings for about a month. Also missing so far had been the **Purple Hairstreaks** that tend to fly around the tops of the Oak trees by Capel Road, and later feed on the pear tree in the next-door garden. I had seen one, but that was at Childerditch in deeper Essex. Another new species turned up in the moth trap on 3/4



Common Darter Dragonfly

August: the small grass moth ***Agriphila straminella***.

On 8th August a visit to Leyton Flats and into Gilbert's Slade on a very warm day provided an opportunity to see how some invertebrates were faring after such a poor summer, and other than from the moth traps! On the approach to the pond, a large dark green



Hoverfly - Eristalis Tenax

dragonfly perched motionless on a grass stem. From its rather transparent wing-colour it looked to be a young female specimen of an **Emperor**. The smaller of the two Hollow Ponds was busy with small red dragonflies: approaching the pond, one or two **Common Darters** were basking in their usual situations on gravelly tracks, while by the pond and over the water were numbers of **Ruddy Darters** – which are



Emperor Dragonfly egg laying - Britain's bulkiest dragonfly. It rarely settles, even eating its prey in flight. Both sexes have a bright, apple-green thorax and green or blue eyes. The costa is bright yellow. They often fly with the rear of the abdomen bent slightly downwards. The male has a sky blue abdomen with a central dark line. The female has a green abdomen, similarly marked, which may become blue in warm weather.

generally less common on Wanstead Flats and in the Park. These were busy patrolling as individuals and in some cases depositing eggs into the water as a flying pair. There were some damselflies about too, of course, including the **Blue-tailed Damselfly**. In the low vegetation away from the pond large web-sheets were noticeable, and a funnel-weaver (or funnel-web)

spider ***Agelena labyrinthica*** was seen to emerge at a wondrous speed when an insect touched its web. It retreated just as quickly when it failed to catch it.

The Capel Road moth trap on 8/9th August produced yet more new species for the area, a **Black Arches** and a rather dramatic **Tiger Moth**, which turned out to be not the more usual Garden Tiger but a **Jersey Tiger**. Now this one was particularly interesting because – as its name might suggest – is more of a Continental species, although there are colonies in London. However, in Tim Harris' moth trap at the other end of the Flats to me was another, caught on



Jersey Tiger Moth - Aside from being frequent in the Channel Islands, this species was rarely seen in the British Isles in Victorian times. It was described by Kirby as, "a great rarity in the South of England, except one locality in Devonshire." Since then however it has spread more widely in Devon and Cornwall, and has recently been seen more frequently in southern England, especially in the Isle of Wight, northern Kent, and south London. They have been seen regularly and in numbers every year in London since 2004, so it is probable that they have established a breeding colony. (Wikipedia)

the same night. My one (or another) was still in my garden the next day, and subsequently I started getting reports from more casual observers of sightings of this noticeable insect. It turned out that there had been a substantial arrival from the Continent.

Tim Harris' moth trap on the Lakehouse Estate on the 8/9th August produced 11 species of micro-moths, including a **Ringed China-mark**, which was a new species for the area, and 23 macro-moths of 14 species. The next night my moth trap produced another new species – a **Least Yellow Underwing** – and later in the day Tim Harris reported **Purple Hairstreaks** at last – about four flying around the tops of an Oak tree in Bush Wood. Afterwards I had some sightings of this species in their usual spot: flying around the Oak trees opposite my house in Capel Road.

By this time the weather was more amenable overnight for moths and my trap on 12/13th August had 93 specimens of 37 species including two new ones for the area – a **Tawny Speckled Pug** and a **European Corn-borer** – which is also something of a migrant moth from the Continent. Also of note were the eighteen specimens of **Tree-lichen Beauty**, many of which were not inside the trap but part-camouflaged against the garden bench on which the trap was sitting.

At my Capel Road moth trap overnight on 14/15th August, I used a less powerful lamp of only 6w and put the trap much closer to the house. It still attracted – amongst others – two



Hoverfly - *Eristalis Tenax*

The larva of E. tenax is a rat-tailed maggot. It lives in drainage ditches, pools around manure piles, sewage, and similar places containing water badly polluted with organic matter.

The adult fly that emerges from the pupa is harmless. It looks somewhat like a drone honey bee, and likely gains some degree of protection from this resemblance to a stinging insect. The adults are called drone flies because of this resemblance.

new species: ***Ypsolopha scabrella*** and a species of ***Spilonota*** - which although not fully identifiable was certainly a new species record for this area.

The night of the 16/17th was the most productive so far. I used the 40w trap and had a job the next morning sorting through 121 specimens of 32 species. The Lakehouse trap had 39 individuals of 23 species. These traps, by the way, catch the moths live; they are attracted to the light and make their way into a box below where they usually settle down into the crevasses of egg-boxes. After the catch is examined, they are freed into vegetation where they are less likely to get gobbled up by birds.

You can see that the first half of the month was much given over to moths, but on Sunday 19th the Wren Wildlife and Conservation Group organised a walk looking at a variety of wildlife themes including birds, plants and insects. Amongst the latter, butterflies were not very plentiful, with perhaps **Gatekeeper** and **Speckled Wood** being the most commonly seen. There were also some **Meadow Browns**, **Small Heath**, a few **Whites**, a **Small Copper** and a **Holly Blue**. One larval case of a **Six-spot Burnet moth** was found, plus the



Common Blue Damselfly - lives up to its name in colour. Our most common damselfly, it is found around almost any waterbody and can also be found away from breeding sites in grassland and woodland. It is a regular visitor to gardens and is on the wing from the end of May through to September.

larval case of a **Bagworm – *Psyche casta***. The cases of the latter can often be found attached to vegetation, but also to smooth walls and woodwork. They consist of blades of dry grass which the caterpillar constructs so

that it can hide whilst feeding, but is also used to protect the pupa whilst hatching. In addition to these two moth species, hundreds of the tiny Horse-chestnut Leaf Miner moths *Cameraria ohridella* – which cause the damage to Horse-chestnut trees – were observed on a tree trunk.



Migrant Hawker - is one of the smaller species of hawker dragonflies. It can be found away from water but for breeding it prefers still or slow-flowing water and can tolerate brackish sites. The flight period is from July to the end of October. This species occurs in North Africa and much of Europe as far north as the Baltic region.

The dragonflies and damselflies over and around Heronry Pond elicited a lot of interest, as **Emperor dragonflies** were patrolling and egg-laying as well as slightly smaller species that may have been either **Southern** or **Migrant Hawkers**. More positive, **Brown Hawkers** were much in evidence, as well as some **Common Darters**, and there was a **Black-tailed Skimmer** by the Shoulder of Mutton Pond. One **Banded Demoiselle** flew past by the Heronry Pond, which seemed a bit



Bush Cricket - Metrioptera roeselii. Roesel's bush-crickets have only one generation every year. In the summer and autumn, the sword-like ovipositor of the female adult is used to cut open plant stems (usually grasses) and lay the egg pods inside. They emerge in May as nymphs. Adults tend to emerge in late June to early July. When the climate is mild enough, some can still be found at the end of October. Brachypterous forms disperse through the environment by walking along roadside grasses and ditches.

as **Common Blue** and **Azure**.

We also found a couple of species of spider, one of which was ***Enoplognatha ovata***, and observed some hoverflies including the larger species ***Myathropa florea*** and ***Volucella inanis***. A nice example of **Roesel's Bush-cricket** was observed by some of the group.

Following from the Wren Group walk I joined a day-course from the Field Study Centre (FSC). The participants were busy "sweeping" the Plain with nets for invertebrates. Amongst their haul were **Speckled** and **Oak Bush-crickets**, **Meadow** and **Field Grasshoppers**, a **Stripe-winged Grasshopper**, a **Bishop's Mitre bug** and the spider ***Xysticus cristatus***.

Folk-festivals
and

the like took up my time at the end of the month, so I didn't do any moth-trapping or wildlifeing much at all. However, early on the warm morning of 28th a large-ish dragonfly landed in my garden and posed nicely whilst I took pictures – a **Migrant Hawker**.

Report by Paul Ferris



late in the season for this species, and other damselfly species included numbers of both **Red-eyed** and **Small Red-eyed** damselflies as well

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.



spare a thought for our feathered friends

Now that winter is coming it's time to thank our feathered friends and offer them a helping hand during the colder months

Many people like to supplement their garden birds' diet with extra food – especially in the winter. This can be a real life-saver in harsh weather. What benefits the birds also benefits us with the addition of beautiful wild creatures and hours of entertainment.

People have fed birds for many years simply for their own pleasure, but there is more to it than that. The massive loss of habitat in the wider countryside has meant that birds have retreated back to where there is still food - surviving hedgerows, nature reserves and privately owned wildlife friendly areas – of which gardens form the major part.

There is also an important knock-on effect for the organic gardener – birds will get used to searching for food in your garden and will search for greenfly, caterpillars and snails during the rest of the year.

The main questions that are asked about feeding are: **When? Where? and What?**



Bluetit feeding - dawn and dusk are the key times of day to ensure there is food available, especially during these colder months.

When?

Although a fair proportion of our birds migrate south in the winter in order to carry on eating their main food-source, insects, our resident birds have to compete with birds, such as thrushes and blackbirds, that have migrated here from northern countries, such as Scandinavia.

After the glut of autumn fruits has passed, and insects are no longer flying, winter is the real time to feed the birds.

When should I stop?

There are two schools of thought on this. One says you should stop (gradually) once winter is over and more natural foods are available; the other says that stopping increases the stress to birds when they are already under pressure building nests, defending territories etc. It is true that allowing blue tits to feed their young on peanuts is likely to cause their death as the young birds can't digest the nuts.

You could strike a happy medium and switch to other foods, perhaps hanging up the bone from the Sunday joint, or other such high protein food. There should be plenty of natural food available in the garden in summer with caterpillars and greenfly etc. in abundance, but many people continue feeding, especially with wild bird seed mix – available from most good pet shops.

Where?

Different species of birds have different feeding

habits. Hanging food is ideal for members of the tit family, so using the many different peanut dispensers on the market is fine. Site it high enough up so that cats can't get at it. A good idea is to put it near to roses or other shrubs where you may have trouble with greenfly or caterpillars – they will be found too!



Sparrows feeding - simply nail an old tin or plastic dish to a pole in the ground for a quick and easy feeder

If the food is too exposed, the birds may be in danger from predators, so it is best to provide cover nearby, like trees or hedges.

Bird tables are suited to most types of bird and have the benefit of being off the ground so other foraging animals like squirrels, mice and rats can't get at it. A roof to the bird table helps to keep rain off but is not essential. Don't be tempted by "the rustic look" – this makes it very easy for a cat to climb, and birds rarely have success if they nest in one of those quaint bird tables that have a nest box attached – they are just too busy.

Many birds prefer to eat on the ground, so put food on the lawn – well away from shrubs which can be hiding a cat. Don't put too much out at once – if it's still there when night comes rodents and other pests will have a field day!

If you have old trees, you can smear fats and fix nuts into crevices in the trunk, which nuthatches, treecreepers and woodpeckers adore.

Fresh water should be provided at all times, in a shallow container so birds can drink and bath without danger of drowning. If the bird bath is on the ground or in the form of a pond, then other animals, such as hedgehogs will use it and it is important to have sloping sides so that animals can get in and out.

What?

Putting out a good mixed feed on bird tables and in feeders will encourage most urban birds into gardens, providing them with essential energy.

It is also important to provide the birds with access to clean water to drink and bathe in. Bird baths and feeding stations should be regularly cleaned.

- High energy foods, various nuts and seeds.
- Fat balls [seeds mixed with fat] will be popular additions to your feeding stations and are readily available to buy.
- Live mealworms

- ❑ Soaked bread (white or brown) – dry bread swells in the stomach.
- ❑ Apples, cut in half and put on a table or the ground are excellent for blackbirds and robins.
- ❑ Leftovers - Dried fruit, cake, cooked rice, unsalted bacon rinds, cooked rice, spare dog or cat food, leftover grated cheese and the remnants from the bottom of your cereal packet can all be left out for birds, so long as they are finely chopped.



Many birds prefer to eat on the ground, so put food on the lawn – well away from shrubs which can be hiding a cat.

Never give birds milk as they cannot digest it. Avoid cooked oats but uncooked are fine. But no spicy or salty foods, or foods that have "gone off".

Wildlife-friendly gardening

Investing in certain plants will provide natural food sources for your birds either directly with fruits and seeds or indirectly by attracting insects and invertebrates.

A range of flowering and fruiting seasons is important - holly and ivy produce their berries in winter so planting these will help birds during the leanest times.

Stop birds such as robins going hungry over the winter by planting some spindle - their berries are a vital source of energy.

Remember: a weed is simply a plant that is growing in the wrong place.

Nettles attract insects and insects attract birds, so leaving a couple of patches of nettles out of the way will help bring birds to the garden.

Brambles require more gardening work to keep them in check but they provide wonderful fruit and excellent cover from predators for tits and other small birds.

Delaying your annual pruning of herbaceous and berry-bearing plants until late winter will allow the seed-loving birds their fill.

Leave it alone

However, the easiest and cheapest way to provide food for birds and other wild visitors is to do

nothing - if you abandon using slug-killer and pesticides, birds and other wildlife will feed on the bounty of invertebrate snacks you have left for them.



*Parakeets like this Ring-necked are becoming more and more common at feeding stations in the **wren** area.*

For more bird feeding advice visit the RSPB website <http://www.rspb.org.uk/>

Article by Tony Morrison (with a good deal of help from the internet)



gallery

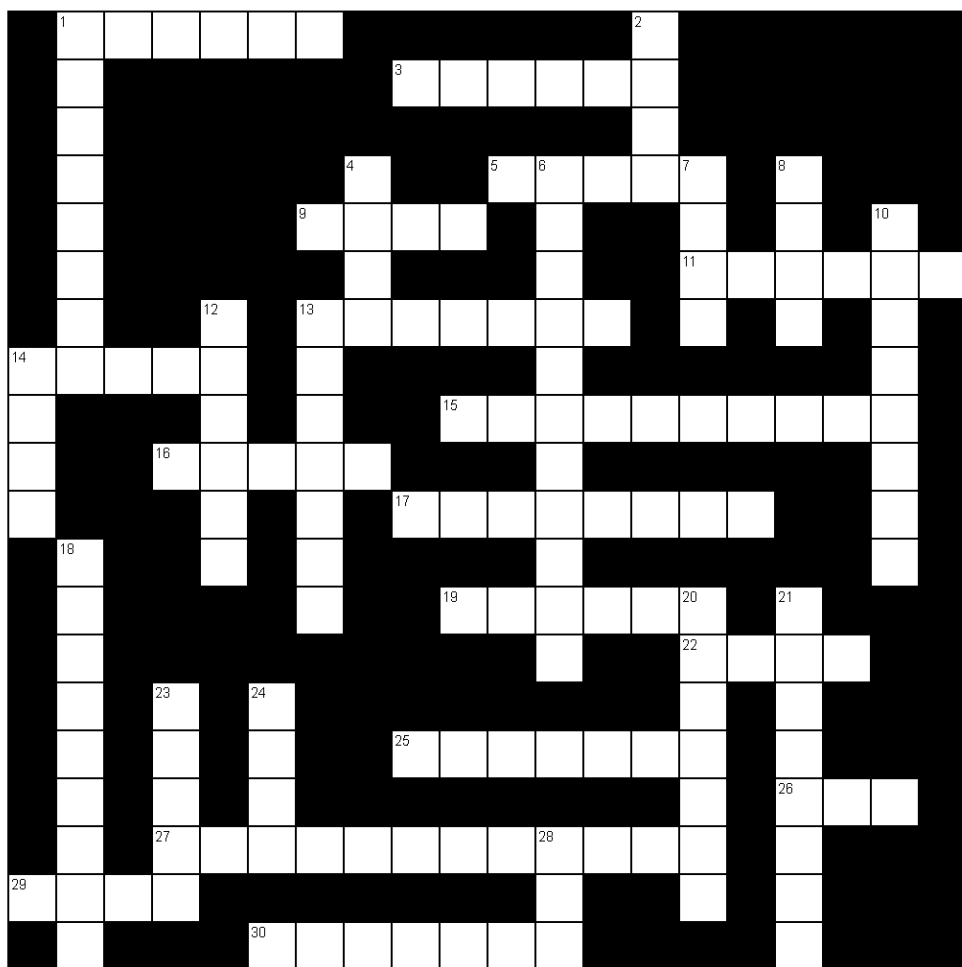


Swans & signets by Linda Tillbrook
Everlasting Pea by Kathy Hartnett
Longhorn Cow by Tony Morrison
Silver-Y Moth by Tim Harris

Fox cub by Kathy Baker
Fungi by Sofia Benajeh
Dandelion by Tony Morrison
Small Skipper by Linda Tillbrook

Please e-mail your pictures to editor@wrengroup.org.uk

Wren crossword



Across

1. This arthropodarthropod is a great little spinner (6)
3. This ol' crow's a bit of a 'tea leaf' (6)
5. Fruit of the oak (5)
9. These small rodents are right little squeakers (4)
11. This tree is a bit of a cry baby (6)
13. As light as a (7)
14. Plant life (5)
15. Frogs, toads and newts are all these (10)
16. A bush with spikey green leaves and red berries at Xmas (5)
17. Contaminated: rendered unwholesome (8)
19. They all fall down in the autumn (6)
22. Traditional unit of measure for land (4)
25. Something that is not artificial or an imitation (7)
26. Colour of the holly berry at Xmas (3)
27. Preservation or restoration from loss, damage, or neglect (12)
29. Clothing for trees or so says this old dog (4)
30. The natural home of a plant or animal. (7)

Down

1. A little grey nut muncher (8)
2. This animal can be a bit expensive (4)
4. What bees live in (4)
6. When I grow up I'm gonna be a butterfly (11)
7. This amphibian has been known to like a drink (4)
8. Small cylindrical mammal with velvety fur likes living underground (4)
10. The art, science, and craft of tending woodlands (8)
12. The uppermost layer of vegetation in woodland (6)
13. Leaves in general (7)
14. A prince if you dare give him a kiss (4)
18. These animals prefer it when the sun goes down (9)
20. A baby tree (7)
21. This rose is very proper indeed (8)
23. You don't want to make this duck noise if you get sick (5)
24. Was once an ugly duckling (4)
28. Small stocky bird sometimes feeling blue (3)

find the word

Can you find the following words hidden in the box below. Answers on following page - amphibian, newt, bark, bat, forest, primrose, conservation, caterpillar, fledgeling, wing, vegetation, toad, toadstool, nocturnal, kingfisher, glade, wren, mole, rook, leaf

C	O	N	S	E	R	V	A	T	I	O	N	O	L	P
A	Q	G	P	O	R	E	R	P	X	M	O	L	E	M
T	H	L	O	T	N	G	I	A	O	G	C	R	A	Q
E	A	A	M	P	H	I	B	I	A	N	T	E	F	B
R	O	D	D	I	E	T	Y	O	K	E	U	B	B	H
P	O	E	D	T	O	A	D	X	P	W	R	E	N	F
I	Y	I	A	I	J	T	Q	S	O	T	N	T	P	L
L	X	W	B	K	G	I	L	P	G	E	A	D	Z	E
L	P	B	A	T	O	O	I	F	B	A	L	U	A	D
A	E	F	R	S	U	N	R	O	D	A	B	R	O	G
R	O	O	K	G	P	R	P	R	I	M	R	O	S	E
U	O	E	O	B	Z	E	X	E	D	U	J	E	D	L
S	A	K	I	N	G	F	I	S	H	E	R	O	E	I
A	T	R	V	B	G	T	E	T	X	B	F	U	G	N
T	O	A	D	S	T	O	O	L	S	K	W	I	N	G

C	O	N	S	E	R	V	A	T	I	O	N	O	L	P
A	Q	G	P	O	R	E	R	P	X	M	O	L	E	M
T	H	L	O	T	N	G	I	A	O	G	C	R	A	Q
E	A	A	M	P	H	I	B	I	A	N	T	E	F	B
R	O	D	D	I	E	T	Y	O	K	E	U	B	B	H
P	O	E	D	T	O	A	D	X	P	W	R	E	N	F
I	Y	I	A	I	J	T	Q	S	O	T	N	T	P	L
L	X	W	B	K	G	I	L	P	G	E	A	D	Z	E
L	P	B	A	T	O	O	I	F	B	A	L	U	A	D
A	E	F	R	S	U	N	R	O	D	A	B	R	O	G
R	O	O	K	G	P	R	P	R	I	M	R	O	S	E
U	O	E	O	B	Z	E	X	E	D	U	J	E	D	L
S	A	K	I	N	G	F	I	S	H	E	R	O	E	I
A	T	R	V	B	G	T	E	T	X	B	F	U	G	N
T	O	A	D	S	T	O	O	L	S	K	W	I	N	G



events diary

Below are up and coming wren events for the autumn season. Dates are correct at the time of publishing the newsletter but please check with the event leader beforehand.

September 2012

*Sunday 16th, Water birds in Wanstead Park, 10a.m. at the Refreshment Kiosk, Wanstead Park Join us for a walk around the lakes of Wanstead Park as we count the water birds. We will be checking on this summer's breeding success and watching out for ducks that have returned for the winter. The results of our counts are sent to the British Trust for Ornithology. If the weather is warm, there may also be butterflies and dragonflies to watch and photograph. The walk will last for about 2 hours.

Contact Tim Harris Tel: 07505 482 4898
tharris@windmillbooks.co.uk

*Monday 17th, The Wonderful World of Fungi, 7.30p.m. at Wanstead House, 21 The Green, Wanstead E11 2NT
Local naturalist Tricia Moxey will give an illustrated presentation on the fascinating kingdom of fungi. £xx non-members, £x members. There will be a raffle.

Contact Tim Harris Tel: 07505 482 4898/
tharris@windmillbooks.co.uk

*Saturday 29th, Nature Club, 10a.m.–12p.m. in

Harrow Road changing rooms, Harrow Road E11 3QD

Claws and jaws in a pond near you! The nature club will be pond-dipping in Jubilee Pond. For children aged 7–13.

Contact Gill James Tel: 0208 989 4898 /
gilljames@btinternet.com

October 2012

*7th October - Lincoln Island clearance ready for the show of wild daffodils and bluebells in the spring. Note this will involve crossing the water in a small boat, and clambering up the bank onto the island.

Great fun but it requires a certain degree of mobility

Contact Peter Williams Tel: 020 8555 1358
wrengroup.distribute@gmail.com

*Sunday 14th, Water birds in Wanstead Park, 10a.m. at the Refreshment Kiosk, Wanstead Park
Contact Tim Harris Tel: 07505 482 4898/
tharris@windmillbooks.co.uk

*Saturday 27th, Nature Club, 10a.m.–12p.m. in Harrow Road changing rooms, Harrow Road E11 3QD
Contact Gill James Tel: 0208 989 4898 /
gilljames@btinternet.com

*Sunday 28th, Fungi Walk in Bush Wood, 10.30a.m. outside Friends Meeting House, Bush

Road. Tricia Moxey will lead the walk.

November 2012

*4th November - Chalet Wood clearance ready for the show of bluebells in the spring
Contact Peter Williams Tel: 020 8555 1358
wrengroup.distribute@gmail.com

*Sunday 18th, Water birds in Wanstead Park, 10a.m. at the Refreshment Kiosk, Wanstead Park
Contact Tim Harris Tel: 07505 482 4898/
tharris@windmillbooks.co.uk

*Saturday 24th, Nature Club, 10a.m.–12p.m. in Harrow Road changing rooms, Harrow Road E11 3QD
Contact Gill James Tel: 0208 989 4898 /
gilljames@btinternet.com

December 2012

*2nd December - Chalet Wood again if it needs further attention this time accompanied by mince pies and mulled wine
Contact Peter Williams Tel: 020 8555 1358
wrengroup.distribute@gmail.com

*Sunday 16th, Water birds in Wanstead Park, 10a.m. at the Refreshment Kiosk, Wanstead Park. With mince pies!
Contact Tim Harris Tel: 07505 482 4898/
tharris@windmillbooks.co.uk

*Saturday 22nd, Nature Club, 10a.m.–12p.m. in Harrow Road changing rooms, Harrow Road E11 3QD
Contact Gill James Tel: 0208 989 4898 /
gilljames@btinternet.com

and finally

We have a new member of the Southern Forest Keeper Team. Thibaud Madelin previously worked for the National Trust on the River and Godalming Navigations, near Guildford in Surrey. There he was involved in looking after a 5 miles length of river, including trees and vegetation management, water levels control through weir operation and community work with volunteers and local groups. Before that he spent time with the City of London at Burnham Beeches. His background is in nature conservation, particularly ancient tree management, through an early career as a large event and festival organiser.

Thibaud says “I look forward to getting to grips with the challenges of helping to preserve the Forest as well as meeting the many enthusiastic local people that enjoy it every day.”

Thibaud has been assigned Wanstead Park as his ‘patch’ and building on all the good work that has already taken place there, with a particular emphasis on developing more volunteer opportunities through a regular ongoing maintenance program.

Feel free to say hi if you see Thibaud around the Park or mail him on thibaud.madelin@cityoflondon.gov.uk



now & then

Were you right ?

Answer
The Keepers Lodge in Bush
Wood taken in 1906 and how it
looks today.