

Friends of Jubilee Country Park

Autumn Newsletter 2016

Chairman's report – by Susan Folkes

May Fayre was our most successful yet, taking over £420 on the day. This was in spite of the cloud of uncertainty over whether an organiser would be found for the Fayre itself. At the eleventh hour the “Carnival Queen Mums” came to the rescue and I was able to heave a sigh of relief at not having to walk the streets selling the plants I had lovingly nurtured since February! A big “Thank You” to everyone who helped to make our stall a success: Alan Saban provided transport for the equipment and plants; Bill Priestly also kindly donated plants; Jennie Randall sold more of her history books; Ros Martin, Marian Clarke, Margaret Harrington, Ian Pannett and Brian Thompson helped man the stall, enrolled two more members. and conducted a local survey for the desirability of a “Wheelchair Friendly Circular Walk” in the Park. This adds to the survey of members conducted by John Bruce earlier in the year. We are now waiting for a feasibility study and cost estimate



In the park, The Landscape Group (TLG) have installed the picnic bench purchased to replace the one vandalised two years ago. This means we now have two outside the picnic area where dog walkers can also rest their weary feet. By the time this goes to press we should have installed a new notice board at Alan's Path Entrance on Southborough Lane. The old one was rotten and the notices often suffered from the weather. These boards are not cheap and we are thankful to Jennie for helping fund this splendid piece of furniture from the sales of her books. TLG have rebuilt the damaged Thornet Wood notice board and it car park has been re-installed by the working party.

TLG in conjunction with the Friends Forum have taken over, from Bromley, the running of courses which will help us in our conservation work. Ros and Ian have successfully completed an Emergency First Aid course joining Hugh Stewart, who attended last year, in now being certified first aiders. John and Ian attended the “Conducting Friends Led Wildlife Friendly Workdays” and recently Marcus Jordan, Annette Rose and I attended a “Freshwater Macroinvertebrates Identification” course at Beeche. Watch out for more information on our ponds in March.

Jennie and John attended the Friends Forum conference in June last year and the minutes for this can be seen on our website in the Reports section.

Our congratulations to two of our former Rangers and Site Managers, Nick and Sarah Hopkins, on the birth of their daughter Ellen Grace in June this year; a sister to Arthur.

John has included an overview of our events this year and our new program for the next six months is attached. Note the additional dusk nature walk on 1st October which will be of interest to people of all age groups.

We are looking for someone to join our events team who is organised and can help out at our talks. We would also like to hear from you if you would like to use your Microsoft Word and Excel skills to help out.

- If you are interested and would like to discuss possible roles, please call me on 077 3970 9383 or email me at jubileecountrypark@yahoo.co.uk..

2016 Wildlife Surveys at Jubilee Country Park - by Marcus Jordan

The wet start to the year followed by hot weather has caused a heavy growth of vegetation, especially in the meadows. Worse, the flag iris has overrun both Thornet Wood pond and Loosestrife pond. These combined factors have had a dire effect on some species of butterfly, especially the Common Blue. The numbers recorded are the worst I have ever known. A full list of butterflies recorded in 2016 can be seen below.

Small mammals were seen under all the refugia, even a weasel was caught in a Longworth trap! In addition to the weasel we recorded wood mouse, bank vole, short tailed field vole, common shrew and pygmy shrew.

It was not a bad year for amphibians except for toads which were caught out by a severe frost whilst they were mating in the ponds. We have seen lots of dead ones. The great crested newt colony was quite successful, being on a par with last year. Six juveniles were sighted at Ray's pond.



Tony Ruffle with Small Mammal

Butterflies recorded:

small skipper	Essex skipper	large skipper
brimstone	large white	small white
green veined white	orange tip	clouded yellow
common blue	holly blue	red admiral
small tortoiseshell	peacock	comma
speckled wood	painted lady	marbled white
gate keeper	meadow brown	ringlet

Many thanks to Tony and Angela Ruffle, and Sue Holland for their help and assistance conducting the surveys.

Walks and Talks - by John Bruce



Bat Walk

Ros Martin and I are currently finalising a programme of events for the next nine months, after a pretty successful first year in the job. Since January we have both afternoon and evening meetings, both attended by at least 20 to 30 members. We are proposing to continue with a mix of meeting times to accommodate both those

who don't like going out on cold dark nights, and those who are busy on work-days.

2016 started with a social and feed-back tea and cakes session where lots of ideas were discussed. In February Sam Pettman, the National Trust Ranger, gave a fascinating presentation on Hawkwood and Petts Wood. Around 40 members and supporters attended our AGM in March when Patrick Phillips and Cllr Colin Smith gave an update on The Landscape Group's new role of managing Bromley's open spaces – and Susan Folkes, Sue Holland and John Bruce reviewed what our Friends group had been up to.

We had a busy April. It started with Jenny Randall leading a history and heritage walk around the park on Sunday morning, then Lawrence Beale Collins of Thames 21 told a full Garden Room about the clean-up of London rivers especially the Ravensbourne. On a chilly and dull April Saturday Marcus Jordan and I led a Spring Walk – a nice walk, but not much to see!

In May Alister Hayes of the London Wildlife Trust took a packed meeting on a journey of about 3 million years to tell us why London, and especially Bromley, has such a varied and exciting ecology and wildlife. In June I led around two dozen members and friends around the park to identify about five dozen wild flowers in bloom – including our corky-fruited water dropwort and many common



Corky-fruited water dropwort

spotted orchids. Marcus was back in the park again in July for his ever popular butterfly walk, and in September for his bat identification trail. We also held our regular “Wheelchair Walk” for the residents of Southmore Court on August 1.

It’s been a great year. Our walks and talks have often picked up new members, and always been well attended. If you would like a particular subject covered, or know of

someone who would make an interesting speaker, do let me or one of the committee know. All ideas welcome.



Common Spotted Orchid

Conservation Work Party

Work proceeded as usual, one unusual task was to clear the pathways of hazards for a “mob match race” between the Petts Wood Runners and Orpington Road Runners. This event took place in the evening and involved around 300 runners completing two 2.5km laps of the park.



The season ended in convivial mood with a BBQ hosted by Alan Saban.

Contacts:

The Friends work with the Council and TLG solely in a conservation and preservation role. To report any of the following, contact Bromley Council’s Customer Service Centre by calling 0300 303 8658 or e-mail landscape.helpdesk@bromley.gov.uk

- Overflowing bins (both dog and rubbish)
- Fallen/dangerous trees
- Anti-social behaviour
- Vandalism/Graffiti
- Dog-related issues (such as dangerous dogs)
- Maintenance issues (such as uncut grass, damaged fencing, gates, dangerous paths etc.)
- Dumped rubbish

To report a Fire or call an Ambulance dial 999

To report an Emergency to the Police call 999

To report a Non-Emergency issue to the Police call 101

Contacts for the Friends of Jubilee Country Park

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