

How to follow David Attenborough's request to Tread Lightly in Richmond Park

There are simple things we can all do to help protect the Park and its wildlife:

Take nothing from the Park

- ◆ Wildflowers, nuts, acorns, chestnuts and fungi are essential food sources for birds, bees and deer. Please don't take them
- ◆ Fallen wood is home to many insects — please leave it where it is

Leave nothing behind

- ◆ Take home or clean up anything not naturally found in the park
- ◆ Clear up after your dog
- ◆ Take home your litter or put it in the bins provided so deer don't eat it!

Respect the wildlife

- ◆ Give deer plenty of room, especially during birthing and the rut
- ◆ Keep your dog on a lead in sensitive areas and near animals
- ◆ If you're on foot, stay on established paths and away from the anthills
- ◆ If you're on a bike, stay on the roads and bike trail
- ◆ And please, don't light a fire or barbecue

Nearly all these are also Park regulations. Not following them may incur a fine or prosecution See the regulations on our website www.frp.org.uk

Deer in Richmond Park

600 red and fallow deer roam free in the Park. Please remember that deer are wild animals. It's dangerous to approach them as they see humans and dogs as a threat. This isn't surprising since dogs off-lead sometimes attack and even kill deer.

Deer get nervous and behave unpredictably when people and dogs get too close. At birthing time (May to July) mothers can react very aggressively to protect their young. At the rut (Sept to Nov) male deer can attack people or dogs that get too close.

So, please keep your distance and keep your dogs on leads when deer are nearby. And please don't feed the deer — if you do, they will start pestering picnickers for food.

Leaflet and film produced by the Friends of Richmond Park
Please join us!

With 2500 members and 200 volunteers, The Friends of Richmond Park work to conserve and protect the Park for future generations. For more information, and to join us, see www.frp.org.uk
Registered charity number 1133201



Tread Lightly in Richmond Park National Nature Reserve

Sir David Attenborough says in his recent film:*

“Richmond Park is London's own National Nature Reserve, with thousands of wildlife species. I've lived here for over 60 years and it's been an inspiration to me. But with 5.5 million visitors a year, there is increasing pressure on the Park.”



Sir David Attenborough examining stag beetles living on fallen wood. Photo: Julia Balfour

“There are simple things we can all do to help protect the Park so that it will remain a very special place for generations to come. **Please love it like I do, and Tread Lightly in Richmond Park.**”

* 'Richmond Park - National Nature Reserve' presented by David Attenborough. See this new film at www.richmondparkfilm.org.uk

Help our rare and wonderful acid grassland

Richmond Park's rare acid grassland creates a special habitat that is home and food for many insects, birds and plants. In summer, the grasslands are a wonderful sight with a profusion of colourful wildflowers and thousands of busy flying insects that rely on their nectar.

The distinctive mounds in the open grassland are the nests of yellow meadow ants. Some are over 100 years old. The ants are the main source of food for green woodpeckers. The mounds are delicate and easily damaged by people stepping or jumping on them.



Green woodpecker and ant mound
Photo: Andrew Wilson Instagram @andrewpics

One of the biggest threats to the Park's acid grassland is from dog faeces. They are rich in nutrients that are very damaging to the grassland, so please clear up after your dogs. You are never far from one of the 45 dog waste bins in the Park.

Please leave fallen wood where it is

Fallen wood is both home and food for stag beetles, and many thousands of other small creatures. So it's crucial that people don't disturb or remove wood from the park. Instead please leave it where it is.

Decaying wood is also host to many fungi that thrive when the wood is undisturbed. So please don't build dens. It's better to leave the wood on the ground so that beetles and fungi continue to thrive in Richmond Park.

Help protect the Skylarks

Skylarks nest on the ground in the grassland and are easily disturbed by people and particularly dogs off lead. Once found widely in the Park, their numbers have fallen a lot and their main habitats are protected with signs and fencing during the breeding season from March to June.

Please avoid these nesting areas or, if you do enter them, keep to the paths and keep dogs on leads. Help to keep these birds with their beautiful song in the Park.

Never light a fire or barbeque

Fires and BBQs can easily get out of hand and cause a fire, destroying the rare grasslands, and trees and animals that live there.

Litter harms wildlife

Litter has a serious effect on wildlife — on deer that eat litter and can't digest it and on foxes and rabbits that become under-nourished from eating picnic waste.



This terrified deer was trying to untangle itself from a balloon around its neck. It looks like it may have eaten the string. Photo: Sula Reidinger

The amount of litter has increased in recent years, along with visitor numbers. Please bin your waste or take it with you when you leave the Park. And please don't discard energy gel packs or their tear-off strips. These can be eaten by deer and may kill them.



Discarded gel packs picked up by volunteers
Photo: Steve Sandham