

# The Friends of Richmond Park



The children's nature collection  
Guardians of the Park's green spaces  
Magic in the Park  
New pests

Shorter days bring much to enjoy in the Park: changing colours and crisp autumn walks, migrating birds, longer hours without traffic (even though they are dark) and later, magically transforming frost and perhaps even, like last year, snow. And our Chair, on the next page, looks forward to winter bringing relief from some of the stresses on the Park.

The Park in all its seasons is celebrated by many of the writers and photographers featured in this issue: we look back over a summer which, despite failing to bring the promised "barbecue" weather, saw many interesting and unusual birds and butterflies in the Park, as well as, less happily, a new pest; we feature the workers who are out in all weathers managing the parkland, and Friends walks leader Peter Burrows-Smith, who is never deterred by mere rain.

We welcome a new contributor, Susanna Ramsey, who writes in this issue about the amazing nature collection she has put together from the Park, and who, with her daughter Katie, will also be providing our regular Children's page.

Marilyn Mason  
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**Cover photos:**

**Front:** *Brass Winter* by Kat Waters, winner of 3rd prize in the 2009 Young People's photo competition, 12–18-years-old category.

**Back:** *Common Tern in the Park* by Kerry Davies. (See also page 4 and [www.wabisabipix.com/p791044815](http://www.wabisabipix.com/p791044815) for more lovely Richmond Park photos by Kerry.)

**HISTORY PROJECT NEEDS YOUR HELP**

**Budding David Baileys out there** – we need photographers with good digital cameras to take photographs of documents and maps, pieces of furniture and other items, and buildings and landscapes linked to the Park's history.

**Military history of Richmond Park** – do you know anyone who was stationed in Richmond Park? We are searching for anecdotes and photographs of Richmond Park's military history.

**Silver (or any other colour!) Surfers** – if you have the odd hour to spare and access to the internet perhaps you could do one of the small research tasks that will help us to populate the story of Richmond Park. Alternatively, you may like to investigate items of interest held at the Kew Records Office.

**Wanted – photographs and stories** about being a member of the Friends. A second history project is the story of the Friends of Richmond Park, including archive documents, photographs etc, for our 50th birthday celebrations in 2011. If you have photographs or stories about the Friends we would love to hear from you.

If you can help with any of the above please contact us at [frp@sky.com](mailto:frp@sky.com) or call Karen Rockell on 07738 493 707.

**We are not alone**

I recently took over as Chairman of the Friends' Forum, which comprises the Chairs of the various Royal Parks Friends groups. So I am now officially the Chair of Chairs! Together the various Friends have 7,000 members (with Greenwich and ourselves the largest), so we have some influence over the large and small issues affecting the Parks.

I am often asked what is happening in the other Royal Parks and whether they have the same problems as Richmond Park. There are eight in London – Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, St James's Park, Green Park, and Regent's Park – and three in the suburbs – Greenwich, Bushy Park and Richmond Parks. Richmond is the largest, twice as large as Bushy and 25 times as large as St James's. However, while the Parks are very different, they have many of the same problems.

The first common problem is the increasing numbers of visitors. This summer represented the highest visitor numbers ever for all the Royal Parks, particularly for those in central London. This affects grassland, facilities, wildlife, clearing up (especially litter), and park maintenance budgets. Add the recent dry weather and all the parks are looking tired; winter will be a welcome relief.

The second common problem is the conflict between amenity (or human use) and conservation. Historically, the parks have survived because they were royal and not used by the general public. But the Parks, especially in central London, now

represent much of the remaining open land in their areas and are under enormous pressure to be used for all sorts of human activity, and more intense activity – a quiet walk or lying in the sun is no longer sufficient.

Large chunks of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens are used for concerts and events, and much of Hyde Park and Greenwich Park will be used for the Olympics (the triathlon and equestrian events respectively). Smaller chunks of Hyde Park are being used for monuments (for example, to the 7/7 bombings though they happened a long way from the Park), and of Regent's, Hyde and St James's Parks for the Mayor's new cycle rental scheme.

The Royal Parks agency's marketing of the parks for entertainment, sports and active leisure (for example, the new central Royal Parks half-marathon) exacerbates the problem. The Parks are experiencing both increased use and increased intensity of use – a "double whammy".



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**Awards to Park volunteers**

In August, at the second annual reception for Richmond Park volunteers, three awards were made for exceptional contributions to Richmond Park: a new TRP award for outstanding contributions to Richmond Park went to Friends Committee members Brian Baker and Sheila Hamilton for their initiative and hard work in setting up and running the Visitor Centre; a new Deer Fund and TRP Trophy for contributions to wildlife in all the Royal Parks was awarded to Piers Eley for his work in leading the Wildlife Group; and the annual Richmond Park Wildlife Group award for contributions to the conservation of wildlife in Richmond Park went to Tim Howard of the Bird Recording Group. All very well deserved!



*Park Manager Simon Richards presents an award to Piers Eley*

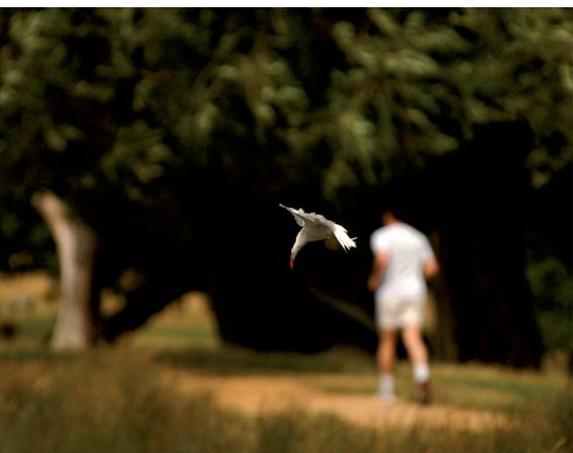
**Summer visitors – and winter ones**

Piers Eley reported an impressive number of butterfly sightings over the summer, including Ringlets (see last newsletter), Purple Hairstreaks, Commas, Small Skippers, Essex Skippers, a Red Admiral, a 6 Spot Burnet, Speckled Woods, Meadow Browns, White Admirals, Gatekeepers, and Small Coppers.

Bird visitors included three Crossbills, a Red Kite, a Common Sandpiper and, for the first time in the Park's history a pair of Common Terns which took up residence on the Pen Ponds this summer, nesting on a small raft put out for the purpose a few years ago. The birds could be seen at close quarters, occasionally diving in to catch a fish (see Kerry Davies' superb photographs on this page and the back cover). Unfortunately their nesting attempt failed, but it is hoped they will return next year to try again.

Also spotted over the summer months were a Hobby hunting dragonflies and another hunting bats, and a Barn Owl. A Dunlin and a Greenshank were seen by Pen Ponds in September, as well as 19 Buzzards one late September afternoon.

As summer visitors such as Warblers, Swallows, House and Sand Martins depart for the south, winter migrants such as Redwings, Fieldfares, Gadwall, Widgeon and Teal will begin to arrive in the Park from further north.



*Close encounter with a tern. Photo by Kerry Davies*

**Oak Processionary Moth**

This destructive pest finally reached the Park this summer. The moth strips oak tree leaves, and the toxic hairs of the caterpillars can cause rashes or eye irritations and, occasionally, breathing problems. Three trees were found to have caterpillar nests but these have now all been inspected and removed. Destroying the caterpillars before they reach adulthood should help to contain the moth population in the Park and across London, but monitoring will continue. If you see any in the Park, please do not try to remove the nests but contact the Park office, 020 8948 3209, richmond@royalparks.gsi.gov.uk; elsewhere



*Oak processionary moth larvae feeding on an oak. Forestry Commission photograph*

**King Henry's Mound view protected**

The local press has reported that London Mayor Boris Johnson has stepped in to protect the view of St Paul's, a move welcomed by the Friends.

**Less noise, please**

Local MP Susan Kramer has launched a petition to get Richmond Park designated as a quiet area by the Government. The petition calls for protection from any increase in flights and for runway alternation to be preserved. She says: "Green spaces are our breath of fresh air and our enjoyment of them is already blighted by flight noise. I want to make sure... that noise over our vital green spaces is not increased."

**"New" pests in the Park**

Natural England has announced that from January 2010 the status of Parakeets and Egyptian and Canada Geese will change, allowing them to be culled where necessary without a licence. This will enable land owners or occupiers (which would include The Royal Parks) to kill the birds if they are causing public health and safety problems, serious damage to crops or disruption to native wildlife. But "this doesn't mean that anyone can go into Richmond Park and just shoot or strangle a parakeet," said the Natural England spokesman. Or, presumably, an Egyptian or Canada Goose.



*Photo by Tony Drakeford*

**William and Massey take up the reins**

The Park's working shire horses, Jed (17 years old) and Forte (20 years old), retired from active duty this summer and a new pair of horses joined the team. William and Massey are just 5 and 6 years old and will be taking over after an induction period this autumn.



*William and Massey. Photo: The Royal Parks*

**Charles Cross**

Friends were sorry to hear of the death in April of Charles Cross, a Friends Committee member for several years up to 2003, and a regular leader of Saturday walks in the Park with his wife Rose.

**Parking in the Park – again**

The Royal Parks has issued a report on the results of the consultation on parking charges and other changes to the Regulations, though it offers no conclusions on whether parking charges should be introduced or not. You can find it at [www.royalparks.org.uk](http://www.royalparks.org.uk) (click on "Amending The Royal Parks Regulations" at the bottom right of the page). If you are unable to access the internet, a hard copy can be printed and made available from the Park office at Holly Lodge, telephone number 0208 948 3209.

**New Park Dogwatch Scheme**

The local Safer Parks team is asking regular dog-walkers and Park visitors to join the new Dogwatch scheme and become the eyes and ears of Richmond Park, helping to prevent and report destructive acts that damage the environment and natural habitats. You would be provided with a pocket size card with useful telephone numbers for the police, the graffiti clean-up team, reporting broken street lights or fly tipping. To help in this way to keep the Park safe for everyone, please contact [kelvin.clarke@met.police.uk](mailto:kelvin.clarke@met.police.uk) or [SPTRichmond@met.police.uk](mailto:SPTRichmond@met.police.uk).

**Award for the Park**

In June Richmond Park was awarded a Green Flag for the third year running, in recognition of achieving the national standard for parks and open spaces in England and Wales.

**Richmond Park History Project Update**

The history project is well under way with volunteers helping to create a database of information, including the identification and cataloguing of all the items in the Hearsurn Family collection. The exciting news is that in January 2010 students from Kingston University will be working with us on specific aspects of the Park's history as part of their history degree. We have also begun discussing possible collaborative projects with other local history organisations, museums and libraries.

**The Park on film**

When Karen Rockell saw the 1953 Ealing comedy "Titfield Thunderbolt" recently, she thought she recognised some of the "countryside"; sure enough, when she looked it up she found that scenes of a steam train running through open woodland before crashing into a tree were indeed filmed in Richmond Park! Could readers please let the history project know of other films and TV programmes (besides "Billy Elliot" and "Anne of The Thousand Days") filmed in the Park?

**Answer to puzzle on page 12**

**MAMMALS:** shrew, rabbit, bank vole, squirrel, deer, wood mouse, pipistrelle bat, fox.  
**BIRDS:** stonechat, woodpecker, snipe, pintail duck, parakeet, mallard duck, Canada goose, treecreeper, skylark  
**INSECTS:** butterfly, grasshopper, ladybird, dragonfly, ant, wasp, stag beetle

**Magic in the Park**

Marilyn Mason

A century and a half ago, when medical science was as likely to kill patients as cure them, and people still sometimes turned to magic and ritual for remedies, Richmond Park had its very own spiritual healing centre, a remarkable tree.

The Shrew Ash was a very ancient gnarled tree near Sheen Gate which, not uncommonly for ash trees, had a reputation for curing sick infants and animals. Mothers would bring children with whooping cough and other ailments to the tree to take part in a secret dawn ritual led by a "shrew mother", or "priestess", or "witch". The ritual involved passing the child over and under a "witch-bar", a wooden bar wedged into the tree, while the "shrew mother" muttered or sang verses, timing her recitation so that a particular word coincided with the first of the sun's rays. If the charm didn't work, it could be blamed on mistiming.

A part of the ash still survived, though damaged, in 1895, when Margaret Ffennell showed photographs of it to the Folklore Society and spoke in some detail to demonstrate that the ash that then existed was the original 300-year-old tree, not a "mere sucker", and that belief in its curative powers had persisted into the second half of the nineteenth century. A Professor Owen, who lived in Sheen Lodge and regularly walked in the Park before sunrise had, in the early 1850s, observed a mother accompanied by sick child and "old dame" heading for the tree, though they changed course when they saw him

and only returned to spend time at the tree when they thought he had gone. At other times he saw similar furtive groups or heard voices in unison near the tree, and always took care not to disturb them. Though he couldn't recall when he had last seen the Shrew Ash in use, a writer in the *Mid-Surrey Times* of 1874 claimed that it was still used and believed in then.

The remains of the ancient tree finally collapsed in the storm of 1987.

With thanks to member Ailie Harrison who sent me Margaret C Ffennell's paper "The Shrew Ash in Richmond Park" (Folklore, 1898) and to David McDowall's *Richmond Park: The Walker's Guide*.



Photo: The Shrew Ash in 1856, showing the "witch-bar" and, seated, a possible "shrew mother"  
 With thanks to the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Local Studies Collection

## Guardians of the Green Spaces

Text and photos by Michael Davison

There must be something very special about a job in Richmond Park that has kept Barry Day loyal to it for his entire working life: 42 years so far, "and I'm not leaving until I retire". Barry is a member of the Estates Team of six who, from their base at Oak Lodge, maintain all the green spaces of the Park – virtually the entire Park in fact, apart from the enclosed gardens of Pembroke Lodge and the Isabella Plantation, and even there they make a contribution.

Barry is the team's principal driver of heavy machinery. I caught up with him midway through his day's work with the monster 100-horse-power Claas tractor, powering an attached forage harvester to cut and shred the summer crop of bracken behind White Lodge. The shredded bracken is piled up to rot for a year before being spread as mulch below the shrubs in the Isabella Plantation. This is just one of many jobs which call for Barry's mechanised assistance: there are also ditches to be dug and cleared with the use of the JCB, foundations to be laid for new paths, and road verges to be mowed so that motorists have a clear sight of deer about to cross the road.

"I came to Richmond Park when I was 17 and I have never found a better job," says Barry, "– away from the rat race, nice Park, nice people – that's it, really."

If Barry Day's long service sets a record that will be hard to beat, some of his younger colleagues are already hoping for a long stay. After only a year at Oak Lodge, Bradley Downes, 39, is already sure that he would like to stay until the end of his working days. To see what keeps him happy, I joined Bradley with



From left to right: Mike Fox, Bradley Downes, Danny Stafford, Peter Kerr and Ian Biggs, at Oak Lodge.

Mike Fox, 42, and Ian Biggs, 27, to watch them laying York slabs as bases for benches in Pembroke Lodge Gardens. As Ian used a power saw to cut slabs to fit a nearly completed base, Bradley and Mike spread topsoil around the edges.

Over at Roehampton Gate, I found two visored figures using heavy-duty trimmers to clear grass, weeds and brambles from a patch behind the car park. In charge was Peter Kerr, only 26 but into his ninth year in the Park; he is the third generation of his family to work for the Royal Parks,



Left to right: Peter Kerr, Bradley Downes, Barry Day, and Ian Biggs, at Bramble Gate, Isabella Plantation

and his father still looks after the pelicans and other birds in St James's Park. Working with Peter was 23-year-old Danny Stafford, an apprentice here to learn all aspects of garden maintenance for his National Vocational Qualification.

One of the attractions of their work, mentioned by several of the team, is the wide variety of jobs they are called on to do: "never the same job two days running, never in the same part of the Park." Proving the point, the next day I found Barry, Bradley, Ian and Peter

preparing a new path at the Bramble Gate to the Isabella Plantation. After Barry had dumped sand-and-gravel hoggin from his truck, the rest of the team raked and rolled it level to provide an all-weather path across a formerly boggy area.

On other days I might have found the team erecting paling fences round veteran or unstable trees; clearing fallen branches and maintaining the horse rides and the Tamsin Trail; caring for the gardens at Holly Lodge and the Park gates; filling potholes in the car parks; restoring the roadside wooden posts (called "Thomson's teeth" after George Thomson, the Park Superintendent who introduced them in the 1960s); or mowing and marking the rugby pitches. In November there are up to 100 new trees to be planted and protected with the wooden cages made at Holly Lodge. In winter, two men are always on call to come in at 4.30am to grit the roads.

How do the team interact with the public? Very amicably, it seems. Occasionally visitors have to be warned off when the team are working with machinery, but more often the public show great interest in the work that is going on. "If they ask me silly questions I give them silly answers," says Barry Day.

One of the delights of our Park is its varied face through the seasons. This beauty is not lost on the Estates Team, busy though they are in all weathers, from 7.30am to 3.30pm, with a mid-morning break. "There is nothing lovelier than being out here in the solitude of a cold crisp winter's day," says Mike Fox, expressing an attitude which seems common to all the Park teams I have talked to for these Newsletter articles. It goes well beyond the simple satisfaction of a job well done and amounts, I sense, to real dedication.

## The Children's Nature Collection

Susanna Ramsey



*Vole skulls from the nature collection*

Over the last two years I have put together a nature collection which I take into local primary schools. It is like a mini natural history museum: an extensive collection of feathers, bones and photos from Richmond Park.

The National Curriculum requires children to look at nature in almost every year of primary school. In Year One children look at "Parts of the Body", "How Animals Move" and "Mother Nature, Designer". Some also study birds. Year Two study "Plants and Animals in Local Habitats" and "Variation", learning how to categorise plants and animals. In Year Four they look at "Habitats", different animals in different habitats, grouping plants and animals, food chains and food sources. Year Six study "Interdependence and Adaptation", learning how animals and plants depend on each other and how different species adapt to different circumstances.

Sometimes the whole school comes in to see the collection, one class at a time. After a short talk, the children look at whatever catches their eye. Sometimes classes come in for a longer session on a particular subject – perhaps Bones or Adaptations. They look at the collection, play a specially designed game such as Feather Bingo or Bone Snap, and then complete a worksheet using the collection: drawing a skull, comparing teeth, finding the smallest bone or softest feather and thinking about why they are different – much more exciting than looking at a book or website!

Deer bones are the most impressive: ribs, a jawbone, leg bones and vertebrae, which the children can link up. There are also rabbit backbones, a complete Jackdaw skeleton, bones from a fox and a wood mouse, woodpecker wing bones and two sets of grass snake backbones, one with ribs and even teeth in the jawbone! The

tinest bones are those dissected from owl pellets. Barn Owl pellets contain perfectly preserved bones from voles and shrews; you can see the ball and socket joints from the voles' hips and the teeth inside their jawbones; their shoulder blades are as small as a child's finger nail and just as transparent; their ribs are minute! There are about forty vole skulls! Children compare these with the deer bones and at the same time, learn about food chains. The objects inside Tawny and Little Owl pellets are more varied but fragmented: beetle wing cases, rabbit claws, baby bird leg bones and a tiny vole tail. What surprises all the classes is how similar the bones are to our own and how much they vary in size.

The feather collection is tremendous: complete wings and tails from a Sparrowhawk, Magpie, Great Spotted Woodpecker and juvenile Robin; Kestrel and Jackdaw tails; Woodcock tail feathers; part wings from a Tawny Owl, Green Woodpecker and Pheasant; feathers from a Chaffinch, Little Owl, Mistle Thrush, Woodpigeon and all kinds of ducks and geese. Children can feel the softness and fringed edges of the owl feathers and compare the stiff Woodpecker tails with the showy tails of the Parakeets. Variations are obvious: the iridescent Magpie feathers, the camouflage of the Woodcock and the brilliant blue Jay wing coverts.

Adaptations become clear when they compare Sparrowhawk talons with the feet of the Robin and Woodpecker. There are different birds' nests too: one woven from deer hair and grass, one lined with mud, and one decorated with moss. There are shells from hatched eggs. (The

children think they are Cadbury's Mini Eggs!) Other more gruesome items are a crow's beak (with tongue!) and a squirrel's paw.

Colourful photos brighten up the collection. One display board shows different birds, focusing on their heads and beaks. Children enjoy looking at the different colours and shapes and like to point out which birds they have seen. Some claim to have seen them all, of course! Another board has photos of fungi, trees and flowers.

Children and teachers find the collection amazing. The "Ooh"s and "Aah"s and general buzz of excitement as they come in are wonderful! Boys especially think the bones are really cool! One boy said he wanted to be a rugby player until he was thirty, and then do my job! One girl said she was going to make a book about nature with her friend when she got home. A very young boy described the collection as "double good, thumbs crossed, and hands in the air!"

The collection has already been to several local schools, where it has been seen by over a thousand children, and has been displayed at the Park Open Day and other local events.

If you would like to find out more, please contact Susanna Ramsey at [sjramsey@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:sjramsey@tiscali.co.uk).

*Richmond Park's status as a National Nature Reserve and Site of Special Scientific Interest means that visitors should remove nothing (except litter) from the Park – but this collection has been assembled for educational purposes with the consent of The Royal Parks.*

# YOUNG FRIENDS OF RICHMOND PARK

by Susanna and Katie Ramsey

## Things to look out for in the Park this Autumn - Underneath the Oak Trees

Look carefully to see if you can find any of these. Do not take the acorns home, as they provide food for the deer and birds. There are several different types of acorn in the Park. Here are four types.

You may also find galls. These are growths formed by tiny insects called gall wasps. When the gall wasp lays its eggs on the tree, it injects it with a chemical. The tree then develops a lump around the egg, called a gall. This provides food and protection for the larvae, while they develop into adults. When it is ready, the young gall wasp makes a hole and crawls out. You might even see the holes in the marble galls.

Name	Description	Photo	Spotted	Name	Description	Photo	Spotted
English Oak Acorns	Acorns grow on long stalks in groups of 1-3. Leaves have very short stalks.		<input type="checkbox"/>	Marble Galls	Small, brown marble size balls.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Red Oak Acorns	Large, rounded acorns grow in a shallow cup, which has no stalk.		<input type="checkbox"/>	Knopper Galls	Knobbly lumps which grow over the acorns.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Turkey Oak Acorns	Acorns sit in a shaggy cup.		<input type="checkbox"/>	Spangle Galls	Tiny circles which form on the underside of oak leaves. (Stand under the tree and look up to see these).		<input type="checkbox"/>
Holm Oak Acorns	Small acorns sit in a very deep cup which is covered in tiny hairs. The leaves are shiny, long, pointed ovals.		<input type="checkbox"/>	Hedgehog Galls	Sticky green balls, covered in spikes, on a stalk.		<input type="checkbox"/>

Read about Susanna's extensive Children's Nature Collection on page 10

### CATEGORY PUZZLE (Answer on page 4).

Can you draw a line from each creature below to its correct category? What do the members of each category have in common?

MAMMALS

BIRDS

INSECTS

Butterfly Pintail duck Deer Wasp Stonechat Rabbit Ant Canada goose Skylark  
Woodpecker Ladybird Parakeet Fox Shrew Bank vole Mallard duck Stag beetle  
Grasshopper Dragonfly Wood mouse Treecreeper Snipe Squirrel Pipistrelle bat

## Peter Burrows-Smith

When I moved from Kew to East Sheen six years ago, amongst other things, to be "near the Park", I had no idea how it would take over my life! I soon joined the Friends, answered an advert for walk leaders and here I am now, on the Committee and totally involved with Walks and Courses, the new Conservation & Ecology Group, and Policing.

The walks are definitely my main interest. On average 40 to 50 people turn up, and we usually offer at least two options, covering wildlife and history. We turn out whatever the weather; another Royal Park recently advertised that a walk would be cancelled if it was raining – we are made of sterner stuff in Richmond!

In addition to the regular "first Saturday of the month" walks, we have a series of special events, mostly featuring birds. These are always very popular, for example, the regular Summer Evening walk in mid July (owls and bats, and even a glow-worm this year!) and the new Dawn Chorus walk in early May. The Boxing Day walk is also very popular, with over 100 turning out last year. Overall, our programme seems very successful.

Quite apart from the assistance from my colleagues in the Friends, we could not arrange such a programme without the regular support and enthusiasm from Park Management and the various Wildlife groups that provide regular leaders. Our walks are free and open to everyone and we therefore get a wide variety of walkers, ranging from those really interested in the Park or special topic to those just wanting to walk in a group and enjoy the Park – all are equally welcome.

Special moments include the time a young father, with his family, was enthralled at the sight of a kingfisher: "I've only seen that on TV before!" My worst moment was the day I led 40 people into the Isabella Plantation and ended up with 20 at Pegs Pond. There was, unfortunately, a gap in the line of walkers and one of our supporters had taken a different turning with part of the group. I now keep well clear of this special area and leave it to the experts! Not everything is a success: we trialled some night "stargazing" walks – we have some good black spots in the Park – but it was thick cloud both times.

The big issue for me in the Park is balancing the huge visitor numbers with conserving the Park – mission impossible! But we hope that informing the public, who are generally very keen to learn, about the Park's rich biodiversity will lead to more understanding and, ultimately, respect and care.

Unfortunately, I tend to visit the Park most at the weekends when it is often very busy. One day I hope to have more time to visit on weekdays, when it is so much more peaceful and enjoyable. Hearing the skylarks in full song has to be one of the real joys of the Park!



"Bird man": on a recent birding walk in the Park, Peter demonstrates what to look out for.

Photo by Chris Ramon

### Children's Photography Competition 2010 - help needed

We have successfully run this competition for three years and are looking forward to an even more successful fourth year. The competition is launched in January, the closing date is in May, with judging is about a week later, and the Prizegiving is in early June. It is never too soon to start organising, and so we are now looking for a considerable number of people with different skills to help the competition run smoothly.

There are plenty of opportunities for those without computer skills; for example: receiving entries through the post; helping to identify local schools and other sources of entries; attending the launch event; helping to organise and to be at the Prizegiving; buying prizes, mounting winning photographs for display; distributing leaflets, and organising a travelling display of winning photographs in libraries and other venues

We also need people with computer skills; for example: producing entry forms, leaflets and posters; e-mailing details to schools; recording the details of entries. Quite a lot of work is already on computer file, and may simply need updating. However, fresh ideas will be welcome.

The above is merely a snapshot of the organisation. We expect people to work singly, in pairs or in small teams, and there will be occasions when all those involved will meet together. There is always back-up and support.

If you would like to help, and for further details, please contact Brian Baker, 203 Park Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT2 5JY; telephone 020 8546 3109; e-mail [briangbaker@greenbee.net](mailto:briangbaker@greenbee.net).

### Queries about the Friends?

For more information about The Friends of Richmond Park see our website, [www.frp.org.uk](http://www.frp.org.uk), or contact or contact Max Lankester, Hon. Secretary, on 020 8940 7898 or [max.lankester@frp.org.uk](mailto:max.lankester@frp.org.uk)

### Friends monthly email

If you would like to subscribe to our monthly email highlighting Friends activities, together with the Park and Isabella Diaries by Simon Richards and his staff, and Bird Notes, please email [cottonbarbara@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cottonbarbara@yahoo.co.uk).

### Subscriptions & membership

Subscription rates: £6 individuals, £10 households and societies. All membership enquiries to Sheila Hamilton on 020 8876 2623. Application forms can be downloaded from [www.frp.org.uk](http://www.frp.org.uk).

### Queries about Park Management?

If you have any observations or concerns about the way the Park is being managed please contact Park Manager Simon Richards at:  
The Royal Parks, Holly Lodge, Richmond Park, Richmond, Surrey, TW10 5HS  
Tel: 020 8948 3209  
Fax: 020 8332 2730  
Email: [richmond@royalparcs.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:richmond@royalparcs.gsi.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.royalparcs.gov.uk](http://www.royalparcs.gov.uk)

Police non-emergency telephone number:  
0300 123 1212

### Friends Committee

Chairman: Ron Crompton  
Vice-Chairmen: Peter Burrows-Smith (Walks and Courses) & Sheila Hamilton (Hon. Membership Secretary)  
Vice Presidents: Richard Carter, David McDowall, John Repsch, Douglas Reynolds, Mary Thorpe, John Waller.

Other committee members: Brian Baker, John Collier, Alison Donaldson, John Karter, Max Lankester (Hon. Secretary), Jack Maunders (Hon. Treasurer), Karen Rockell.

Patron: Lord Rix, CBE

## Friends walks and courses

### WALKS

All welcome. Most walks start at 10.00am from a car park.

Please phone Peter Burrows-Smith on 020 8392 9888 in advance if you need special support or help with the walk, and please keep dogs under control.

### \* WILDLIFE COURSES

are typically a 30-minute talk at Pembroke Lodge followed by a 2-hour walk. Courses are for Friends members only and places must be booked – please call Sue on 0208 549 8975. Coffee/tea provided. There will be no charge.

### See also

[www.frp.org.uk/walks](http://www.frp.org.uk/walks)

There are also free guided walks in Isabella Plantation led by Park staff throughout the year. These walks last about one and a half hours and are publicised on Park notice boards.

Date	What and where
7 Nov, 10.00am	WALK: including Fungi. Meet Pembroke Lodge car park.
5 Dec, 10.00am	WALK: meet at Kingston Gate car park
26 Dec, 10.00am	WALK: meet at Roehampton Gate car park
2 Jan, 10.00am	WALK: meet at Sheen Gate car park
16 Jan, 10.00am	COURSE*: Introduction to Birdwatching
6 Feb, 10.00am	WALK: meet at Pembroke Lodge car park
20 Feb, 10.00am	COURSE*: Birds of Richmond Park
6 March, 10.00am	WALK: meet at Robin Hood Gate car park
20 March, 10.00am	COURSE*: Spring Birds and Bird Song



Autumn stag  
Photo by Michael Davison



**The Friends of Richmond Park**  
**[www.frp.org.uk](http://www.frp.org.uk)**

Richmond Park is  
a National Nature Reserve  
& Site of Special Scientific Interest