



FRIENDS of  
RICHMOND PARK

*Protecting Richmond Park's peace and  
natural beauty for future generations*

SUMMER 2015



**Noise and the Park**

**Poetry in the Park**

**Deer in the city**

**A good spring for birds**

**A new Nature Trail...**

## Welcome

...and goodbye, as this is the last Friends' newsletter I'll be editing. As editor for the past seven years and 21 issues (can it really be that long and so many?), I've met many interesting, well informed and helpful people, and I've learnt a vast amount about the Park – but it's time for a change, both for me and for the Friends. Thank you, everyone who has helped, and I hope that my successor, Vivienne Press, will find the task as worthwhile as I have. But now I'm looking forward to spending more time cycling and walking in the Park and less time reading and writing about it.

*Marilyn Mason*

The Friends has agreed a two year sponsorship arrangement with the local law firm Russell-Cooke, who have previously sponsored our photography competitions, Poems in the Park and our 25th anniversary celebrations in 2011. They also sponsored our Poet's Corner event (see pages 8 – 9) and contribute to conservation projects in the Park. We are pleased to be working with them.

Russell-Cooke say about themselves: "Russell-Cooke is a top 100 law firm with 170 highly-regarded solicitors. We offer specialist advice on most legal matters, personal or professional – from employment-related issues to property transactions, wills and estate planning, family and children, relationship breakdown and the care and protection of the elderly. It is important to us to support the community with whom we work, and we are delighted to sponsor the Friends of Richmond Park. Contact us at our offices in Putney, Kingston or central London or visit our website, [www.russell-cooke.co.uk](http://www.russell-cooke.co.uk), or phone us on 020 8789 9111."

**RUSSELL-COOKE** SOLICITORS

## WANTED – Volunteer Co-ordinator

We're looking for a volunteer to be our volunteer co-ordinator. We have 200 volunteers in various volunteer groups (Visitor Centre, conservation, history project, etc), each of which is managed by a team leader who also recruits new members. We have a volunteer database, managed by another volunteer who sends out communications to all volunteers as needed. The volunteer co-ordinator role is intended to be a "light touch" co-ordination of these arrangements, dealing with matters that run across all the groups (e.g. publicising our volunteering and liaising with The Royal Parks) and leading the team organising the volunteers' "thank you" event in January; the co-ordinator will not be responsible for recruiting new volunteers. The role is likely to be half a day a week at most and could be a Trustee post; the person will be supported initially by Sheila Hamilton and Peter Burrows-Smith. If you are interested, please contact the Chairman at [ron.crompton@frp.org.uk](mailto:ron.crompton@frp.org.uk).

### Cover pictures

**Front cover:** Sir David Attenborough at the inauguration of Poets Corner by Liz Coleman

**Back cover:** Detail from Hind and Calf, a painting by Jan Wilczur

## Noise and the Park

Noise levels in Richmond Park are low. In the centre of the Park they are very low; it is the quietest place in London. On a winter's evening, we have recorded ambient noise levels in the centre equivalent to rustling leaves or a whisper.

The low noise contributes enormously to the peace and tranquillity that is the main reason people come to the Park. It also encourages a rich and thriving wildlife since many species have evolved very sensitive hearing that depends on low noise.

Owls and bats need a low noise environment to locate and hunt their prey – an argument we made against evening outdoor cinema screenings in the Park. High noise levels affect species' behaviour. Some birds sing at higher frequencies in response to noise. Other species can't adapt – noise causes some frogs to call less often and to take longer to find a mate. Noise is increasing everywhere, not just in urban areas. A study of 25 US National Parks found that there were intrusive levels of noise for 25% of daylight hours, mainly from traffic and aircraft. There is a growing view that noise pollution is so ubiquitous that it is an important factor in the large-scale decline in biodiversity.

Quiet places, where the ambient noise level is very low, are especially vulnerable to noise intrusions, because distant or small noises can have a significant impact. The Davies Airports Commission's consultation mentioned this concept of "relative noise" and we wrote to them pointing to the centre of Richmond Park as a prime example.

The Park's greatest noise pollution comes from aircraft. One source is the

irregular but very noisy helicopter flights from Battersea. The other is Heathrow.

About a third of aircraft landing at Heathrow use a flight path just north of the Park, creating a constant intrusion for a mile into the Park. Much worse, up to 20% of flights take off over the centre of the Park. Their scream is deafening. With a third runway it's likely the landing flight path will move south to be over the Park's northern area and two take-off paths, not just one, will be over the Park's middle and south.

Other noise in the Park is less significant but still a problem. Traffic noise creates a constant hum up to half a mile from the peripheral road – enough to impact wildlife, especially birds. Loudspeakers from sporting events destroy the Park's tranquillity for the day. And Ballet School events are a particular concern because of its location close to the quiet centre of the Park.

Because the noise in the Park is much lower than in the surrounding areas there is a tendency not to give it much attention. But it is a real and potentially growing problem for visitors and wildlife. We should not accept any increase in noise pollution and ought to take every opportunity to reduce it.



*Ron Crompton*  
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## Friends' Annual General Meeting



Around 60 members attended the AGM at King's House School in Richmond on Saturday 18 April. The meeting opened with the Chairman's review of a busy year, which included the official opening of the Attenborough Pond by Friends' President David Attenborough, the completion of the Isabella Plantation improvement project, the refurbishment of Poets Corner in Pembroke Lodge Gardens, and the launch of the Beverley Brook Appeal.

Friends' volunteers made a huge contribution during the year, from manning stands at local fairs, stewarding public events in the Park, organising and leading walks and courses and, of course, staffing the Visitor Centre. Over 32,000 people visited the Centre in 2014, generating £28,000 from sales of merchandise and enabling the Friends to contribute significant funds to conservation and improvement work in the Park.

Next on the agenda was a fascinating talk on the Park's trees by Gillian Jonusas, Arboriculturalist for The Royal Parks. There are 120,000 trees in the park, mostly English oak. Of these 1300 are veteran trees – some hundreds of years old – making the Park an internationally significant site for veteran oaks.

Turning to the formal business in the afternoon, Chairman Ron Crompton, Secretary Richard Polson and Treasurer David McLaughlin were all re-elected. There was a special mention for Sheila Hamilton who is standing down after many years as a Trustee and Vice-Chairman. The committee is seeking additional Trustees – if you are interested or want to find out more, please contact Ron Crompton.

*Christine Ecob*

### Sheila Hamilton, Brian Baker and Richard Carter

At the AGM in April Sheila Hamilton stepped down as a Trustee and Vice-Chair of the Friends. Sheila was the Friends' Membership Secretary for many years, set up the Visitor Centre with Brian Baker, and more recently led the development of our volunteering. The Friends would not be what it is today without her. She will still be involved in some aspects of the Friends and becomes a Vice-President so that we can continue to benefit from her wise counsel.

Brian Baker is giving up his remaining management role with the Friends – that of organising the Visitor Centre volunteers. Brian who celebrated his 80th birthday in March, was Hon. Secretary for a number of years and set up and ran the Visitor Centre with Sheila.

Finally, Richard Carter, who was Chairman of the Friends from 2000 to 2003, is stepping down as Vice-President.

We are all very grateful to Sheila, Brian and Richard for all they have done for the Friends and for the Park.

*Ron Crompton*

### Past newsletters

Do you ever want to find an old article from this newsletter? Well, you can read them on our website at

[www.frp.org.uk/friends/newsletter](http://www.frp.org.uk/friends/newsletter). Our policy is to post the previous edition of the newsletter on the website when the next one goes out to members, so that members are always one step ahead of the general public.



*Another lovely photo from Friends' Facebook page by Anne Dixon-Ross*

### Good news on Beverley Brook

The final total for the Beverley Brook public appeal when it closed in March was close to £17,500; match-funding from the Friends and the Visitor Centre took the total raised to £35,000. Based on that demonstration of local support, DEFRA have offered TRP a further £75,000 and there is an application pending for another £10-15,000 from a sympathetic Trust, giving total funding of £125,000. This means that contributions to the Beverley Brook appeal have leveraged six times that sum from other funding sources.

TRP have received a detailed consultant's report on the options for the restoration work, which was presented in May to Sir David Attenborough, the patron of the appeal. He also visited the site to see the likely work for himself, along with Simon Richards, Julia Clark (TRP's Head of Ecology) and our Chairman, Ron Crompton – see photo. Initial work may start this summer with much of the work happening this winter or in 2016.

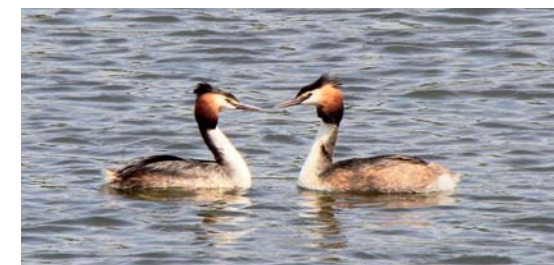


Our May event was a Spring Birds Walk between the Holly Lodge Centre and Pen Ponds, where we were all thrilled to see a pair of Great Crested Grebes (*photograph below by Brian McDonald*) preparing to perform their courtship dance. You can see what this elegant display involves on You Tube at <http://tinyurl.com/o9kz4g3>.

In April we linked up with Susanna Ramsey's Nature Collection for "Meet a Tree", a drop-in session near Pembroke Lodge. Our focus was the Park's rich legacy of ancient trees and the ecology they support – invertebrates and birds in particular. We were not blessed with good weather and visitors were generally few, but those that did find us were enthusiastic, and it was a good opportunity to introduce them to FRP and Discoverers. In June we were in the vicinity of Broomfield Hill car park, once again in partnership with The Nature Collection, to catch visitors to the Isabella Plantation, handing out Discoverers self-guided Isabella Trail leaflets to families and publicising FRP and our "Tread Lightly" messages.

For details of our programme, go to [www.discoverers.frp.org.uk](http://www.discoverers.frp.org.uk) and [www.facebook.com/thefriendsofrichmondpark](http://www.facebook.com/thefriendsofrichmondpark), or email [discoverers@frp.org.uk](mailto:discoverers@frp.org.uk). As always, the Discoverers team welcomes your comments and support.

*Teresa Grafton*



### New face at Holly Lodge



Suzanne (Sue) Edwards (*pictured above*) has replaced Pat Pritchard as The Royal Parks' Office Manager at Holly Lodge. She joined The Royal Parks in 1997 as receptionist in Hyde Park, then moved to The Royal Parks Constabulary and subsequently to Bushy Park as receptionist and then Office Manager from 2002 to 2011. When the Bushy and Richmond Park management teams were merged she moved back to Hyde Park as Office Manager and has now moved to Richmond Park. We are very lucky to have someone with so much experience in the Royal Parks; Sue herself says, "I am now in my dream job and enjoy the Parks and the pleasure it gives the local communities", so it is a good match.

### Linda Lennon leaves

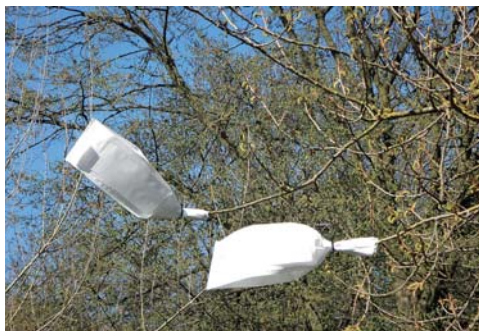
Linda Lennon is leaving her job as Chief Executive of The Royal Parks at the end of July. After 32 years in the public sector she is joining the French company Vinci as Chief Executive for The Olympic Stadium, which Vinci have just started to operate on a 25-year concession (they also operate other stadiums in Europe, including Parc des Princes in Paris). We are very sorry to see Linda go. She has been an inspirational and effective Chief Executive of TRP and very open and

accessible to people such as the Friends. We wish her well in her new role.

Linda's successor is Andrew Scattergood, who comes from Department of Culture, Media and Sport and has a long association with The Royal Parks, most recently working closely with TRP on the preparations for the Olympics. He was the Government representative for the Parks during the planning for the Games, ensuring that the intrinsic qualities of the Parks were understood and protected. We welcome him to the Royal Parks family.

### Black Poplars and white bags

If you've been walking recently along the Tamsin Trail on the north edge of the Park, you may have come across the strange sight of the white bags pictured below attached to a tree. In April four pollinating bags were attached to one of the veteran female Black Poplar trees there. The native Black Poplar, *Populus nigra ssp. betulifolia*, is one of Britain's rarest native trees and, in partnership with the Kew Millennium Seed Bank, The Royal Parks are helping to ensure the survival of the species. Inside the pollinating bags catkins from known male native Black Poplars in the Park were attached to the female flowers of this tree. Once pollination had occurred, the seed was collected in the bags and sent to Kew.



### Isabella leaflets and minibus service

The Isabella Plantation Project has produced new leaflets, covering information on rhododendrons, sensory walks from Broomfield Hill and Peg's Pond, the story of plant hunters, things to do for the under-5s, disabled access to the Plantation, and transport to it.

Until August 26 there is a free minibus service every Wednesday to Isabella on a circuit starting at Danebury Avenue (in the Roehampton Estate) and going anti-clockwise to Roehampton Gate, Broomfield Hill, Kingston Gate, Ham Cross, then the Peg's Pond entrance to Isabella, Richmond Gate, Sheen Gate and back to Danebury Avenue. It starts at 10.10, 11.20, 12.30, 13.45 and 14.50 and takes about an hour to do the circuit. You can see the leaflets and the bus timetable at [www.royalparcs.org.uk/parks/richmond-park/richmond-park-attractions/isabella-plantation/visitor-information](http://www.royalparcs.org.uk/parks/richmond-park/richmond-park-attractions/isabella-plantation/visitor-information).

### Good news on policing

On the May Bank Holiday, there were three officers and three special constables assigned to the Park, and they were kept busy ticketing illegally parked cars and on other duties. Our thanks to the temporary Chief Inspector for the Royal Parks Police, Bob Woulfe, and the Park's Sergeant, Michael Boulton, for making this happen.

### Wikipedia on Richmond Park

If you haven't seen the Wikipedia entry on Richmond Park, we highly recommend it. It has a wealth of detail on the Park's history, buildings and natural features, plus its appearance in books, art and film. There is also a good section on the Friends.

### Midsummer horse-drawn carriage rides

It was possible in mid-June to enjoy a magical ride in Richmond Park in a four-person horse-drawn Landau carriage (*pictured below*). These carriage rides are fund-raisers for Operation Centaur, which promotes the relevance of the horse as a contemporary working animal in urban communities, in conservation projects, cultural heritage work, well-being interventions and community engagement. There will be winter rides later this year – find out more at <http://operationcentaur.com>.



### Polo in the Park

Polo returned to Richmond Park during June after a 20-year absence. Players from the Ham Polo Club staged a practice three-chukka match on four successive Wednesday afternoons. It is an appropriate venue – the second oldest polo match in the country was held in Richmond Park in June 1870. Before the match the field was prepared by the team of Shire Horses, Murdoch and Tom, who are often to be seen bracken-rolling in the Park.

*With thanks to Ron Crompton, Richard Gray, Park Management and Operation Centaur for news items and photos.*





To commemorate the restoration of Poets Corner and its memorial dedicated to 18th-century poet James Thomson, the Friends organised a special event of poetry and prose associated with Richmond Park, read by well known local actors, at Pembroke Lodge on 17 June. Poets Corner and the memorial were restored mostly thanks to a private donation and additional funding from the Friends.



A small inauguration event (*pictured on the left*) at Poets Corner, with Sir David Attenborough unveiling the new board with the dedication to Thomson, was followed by an afternoon of readings in Pembroke Lodge by actors Julian Glover (*pictured far left in the photo above right*), Stella Gonet (*next left in the photo*), Julia Watson (*middle right in the photo*), and Anthony Calf (*on the right in the photo*). The Friends also commissioned a poem by T S Eliot-award-winner David Harsent (*pictured bottom right*), who premiered "A Dream of Richmond Park" to 140 invited guests.



Friends Patron Sir David Attenborough and Chairman Ron Crompton (*middle photos on the right*) addressed the audience on conservation measures set up in response to the threats to the wildlife and environment of Richmond Park, and Richard Gray introduced the texts and readers. The readings reflected the Park's wildlife, beauty and history, and David Harsent's new poem echoed the Friends' conservation message: "Tread lightly and leave no mark in Richmond Park". The poem is reproduced in full on the following pages.

See more details and photos on the website, and look out for videos of the events.

*Richard Gray  
Photos by Liz Coleman*



**A Dream of Richmond Park**  
*David Harsent*



The trees  
Pollarded veterans, the amputees, the hollow oaks,  
hornbeam and black poplar, sing gently down the wind; lean in to them

and you'll hear it, centuries old, song of longing,  
song of loss, kings come to dust,  
crowds of shadows that follow where you walk.

\*

*Your feet go light on the ground  
in your waking dream of the park  
as if you were lost in green  
as if you could somehow tread but leave no mark.*

\*

The birds  
In flight they are lost to themselves.  
A kestrel straddles the wind, a sparrowhawk  
goes between trees, goes low to the ground, songbirds

are small machines who have "songbird" by heart...  
A heron stoops to the water, folded and packed  
back into itself, heron-as-hieroglyph.

\*

*Your feet go light on the ground  
in your waking dream of the park  
as if you were lost in green  
as if you could somehow tread but leave no mark.*

\*

The butterflies  
The gatekeeper is drawn to ragwort, to bracken, to edgelands,  
the large skipper is branded  
if male, if female untouched, brimstone and green-veined white

go to the bramble-flower, small blue to the creeping thistle, the purple hairstreak flies spirals... That churn



of wings in the air is a storm at sea, is  
landslip, is seismic shift.

\*

*Your feet go light on the ground  
in your waking dream of the park  
as if you were lost in green  
as if you could somehow tread but  
leave no mark.*

\*

The deer  
Like us they die and replenish, like us  
they seem  
no different from those they replace  
unless you get close, unless there's a  
reason to know.

Like us they go by habit, like us by  
need. They sculpt  
each tree to the browse-line; they shed  
their velvet, go head to head, bell to the  
breaking dawn.

\*

*Your feet go light on the ground  
in your waking dream of the park  
as if you were lost in green  
as if you could somehow tread but  
leave no mark.*

\*

The beetles  
So many that they outnumber all else,  
so many that one in five  
of all named creatures is one of these,  
so many  
that their crawling sets up an echo: dor  
and minotaur,

image of Khepri god of the sunrise,  
heart-scarab, death-scarab,  
cut in bone, in stone, a living brooch  
tethered to her breast, soupçon doused  
in chocolate, doused in honey.

\*

*Your feet go light on the ground  
in your waking dream of the park  
as if you were lost in green  
as if you could somehow tread but  
leave no mark.*

\*

The bats  
No good reputation: creatures of the  
night and hot for blood, they live  
on the edge of hunger, hedged-in by light  
from the urban badlands, getting  
through their night-long haul

of three-thousand midges to hold their  
flying-weight, soprano  
pipistrelle, bandit pipistrelle, they come  
to your window, they tap the glass, they  
show their teeth.

\*

*Your feet go light on the ground  
in your waking dream of the park  
as if you were lost in green  
as if you could somehow tread but  
leave no mark.*

\*

The flowers  
Think of the risk in names, the way a  
name  
is capture, the way that name and  
named  
must possess each other, how calling a  
name calls in

its shadow-sign, how name will bypass  
name to summon up  
some hidden meaning: Good Friday Grass,  
Tormentil, Hawkbit, Goat's Beard,  
Lady's Bed Straw.

\*

*Your feet go light on the ground  
in your waking dream of the park  
as if you were lost in green  
as if you could somehow tread but  
leave no mark.*

\*

The Park  
Imagine it under rain when everything  
slips to a blur,  
in sunlight or snowlight, imagine  
darkness coming in or darkness  
lifting... imagine your feet

light on the ground as in a waking dream,  
and the park now boundless, where you  
fail to find yourself, go trackless in  
trackless green.

## Deer in the City

The Hearsam Collection, based at  
Pembroke Lodge, has received funding  
from the Heritage Lottery Fund for an  
exciting new project, "Deer in the City",  
which includes a programme of free  
public activities in the Park this summer  
along with an exhibition at Pembroke  
Lodge, open from this July to next  
January.

All this is being organised by the  
Hearsam Collection in partnership with  
the Friends and The Royal Parks, and  
is very much in line with the Friends'  
objective to advance public education  
about the Park. By sharing the  
fascinating history of the wild deer, the  
Hearsam Collection will highlight the  
importance of protecting Richmond  
Park's unique landscape and the well-  
being of its most iconic residents.

Visitors will learn how deer have been  
an essential part of Richmond Park  
since its creation, and how these wild  
animals have survived in the growing  
urban landscape of London over the  
last 400 years. The Park's landscape  
and historic buildings reflect the deer's  
presence. White Lodge, now home to  
the Royal Ballet School, was founded  
as a royal hunting  
lodge in the 1720s.  
Pembroke Lodge was  
originally a cottage for  
a mole-catcher, whose  
job was to eradicate  
molehills that made  
hunting on horseback a  
hazardous pursuit.

The programme will  
include: an exhibition  
showing how the  
deer's presence has  
shaped the Park over  
the centuries; heritage  
walks led by volunteers

*Robert Wood*

from the Friends which will highlight  
relevant buildings and areas in the  
Park; and talks by local experts. In  
collaboration with The Holly Lodge  
Centre, there will be hands-on  
workshops for children and families to  
take part in arts and craft activities  
related to deer.

Activities will be based around a pop-up  
pavilion just outside the gates to  
Pembroke Lodge, operating from 23  
July to 20 August. The project will also  
reach out through digital media to those  
unable to visit the Park in person.

### About The Hearsam Collection

The Hearsam Collection  
(hearsamcollection.org.uk) is a  
registered charity that collects,  
preserves and shares the unique  
heritage of Richmond Park. It has a  
diverse range of historical material  
covering the last four centuries, with  
over 5,000 items, including antique  
prints, paintings, maps, postcards,  
photographs, documents, books and  
press cuttings. Volunteers from the  
Friends have been cataloguing them.



The story of the wild deer in Richmond Park

Thursday 23rd July to Thursday 20th August 2015  
At Pembroke Lodge, Richmond Park, TW10 5HX





### Spring birds

The importance of the Park as a stopover, as well as a wintering area, for Stonechats, was emphasised by the 33 birds present on March 6, perhaps the highest number ever recorded in the Park in spring and indeed in the London area. All had gone by the next day, apart from a lone female which lingered in the bracken of Lawn Field.

This area, already recognised as important for passage birds and breeding Reed Buntings, produced a remarkable series of Wheatear records with at least 32 seen there this spring (*painting of a Wheatear above by Jan Wilczur*), along with 9 Whinchats. These migrant chats used to favour the old riding ring on The Bog and the cattle enclosure, but the removal of the former and the early opening of the latter probably caused their shift to Lawn Field. The rarest bird of the spring was the Rock Pipit found on the shoreline of Upper Pen Pond that was recently cleared of Rhododendron: another addition to the growing list of species using this undisturbed area and only the second record for the Park – the first being in 1949. The first of two Short-eared Owls flew through on the 24th. Brambling, Bullfinch, Pheasant and Rook were also noteworthy.

Two Firecrests were seen and heard at the beginning of April. The 6th was a day of raptor passage with four Peregrines, two Red Kites and nine Buzzards observed. The middle of the month saw the arrival of a few more species, including Whitethroat, Sedge and Willow Warblers, Common Tern and most notably two Redstarts. A male Ring Ouzel was found on the 15th along with a male White Wagtail – the Continental form of Pied. A Cuckoo called on the 21st, the first of at least



four this spring, and another male Ring Ouzel was found. Typically elusive, it stayed at least a couple of days. Four Green Sandpipers on the 22nd, including three in a flooded bunker on the golf course, were a surprise.

An unseasonably stormy day on May 6 resulted in a mass arrival of 200 Swallows over the Pen Ponds. An overflying

Shelduck was the highlight of the Spring Bird Count on the 9th, which produced 72 species and was a good effort considering the unpromising weather conditions. A couple of Greenland Wheatears, a larger version of the form that breeds in the UK, paused on the 22nd on their long journey north. This sub-species performs one of the longest trans-oceanic crossings of any songbird – 4,500 miles from sub-Saharan Africa to its breeding areas in Greenland and North-east Canada, via the North Atlantic. Any undisturbed area of suitable habitat on the way is clearly important as somewhere to rest and refuel.

*Jan Wilczur*

### Worms

The Earthworm Society of GB carried out a survey in Richmond Park in May this year and found an additional four species, bringing the total recorded in the Park to 19. There are 27 recorded species in the UK so the Park is home to 70% of the UK's species of earthworm!

### “Nature red in tooth and claw”

Parakeets are becoming prey for London's growing number of raptors and owls, according to a study in the latest issue of the journal *British Birds* detailing regular observations in London's parks, especially Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens.

### Holly Lodge Centre Nature Trail

Fresh from Poet's Corner (see pages 8 – 9), Sir David Attenborough opened the Holly Lodge Centre's new 2.5 acre Nature Trail on 29 June. The Trail creates a wonderful environment for the Centre's nature-related educational activities for mainstream and special needs primary schools, linked to the “Living Things and their Habitats” part of the new National Curriculum. It is also designed to have on it as many as possible of the species found in the Park.

Some of the Trail's features give the schoolchildren hands-on experience of the natural world; others demonstrate a variety of wildlife habitats – and show how children can help wildlife to live in their gardens or school grounds.

For special needs children the Nature Trail has features such as a raised pond so that wheelchair-users can do pond-dipping and “sensory boxes” positioned at wheelchair height so that people with sensory impairments can touch, smell, and get close to nature.

The Trail has two hibernaculum. One is above ground (see picture below). It offers a safe haven for a wide range of

species and with the Centre's new endoscope, visitors can explore the life that has taken up residence. The other is below ground – a covered pit with four entry/exit points, aimed at amphibians and reptiles. The Trail's



*A Nuthatch on a Holly Lodge Centre bird-feeder*

grey heron spends a good deal of time waiting on the front porch!

There is also a bird feeding station with viewing screens, used to teach children how to identify common Park birds and how birds live through the year.

Throughout the site there are logs that can be turned over to reveal “minibeasts”.

One set of logs is on a raised bank for visitors in wheelchairs. On a good day children can find worms, centipedes, slugs, spiders, newts, lizards and various beetles. There are similar reptile panels (metal sheeting that retains its warmth) to attract frogs, toads, lizards, grass snakes – and even voles, which make beautiful tunnels through the long grass under the panels.

On the west side of the site there is a “No Go Wood” where there are numerous log and branch piles and a large stag beetle loggery, created as permanent habitats. Children are told how important it is that wildlife habitats remain untouched, however tempting it may be to explore them, so that all species have a safe refuge.

To enable activities all year, the Centre has log seating covered by a unique leaf-shaped sail shade to keep classes dry on wetter days. It has also planted a new hedgerow to protect the site from cold north winds. In time, the hedgerow will become a habitat in its own right and another place to explore for wildlife.



*Stewart Perkes  
Photos:  
Stewart Perkes*

**Membership and Subscriptions**

If you are currently not receiving the monthly Friends' email bulletin and would like to, please email me at [bulletins@frp.org.uk](mailto:bulletins@frp.org.uk) with the subject "Add to bulletin".

Can I also remind you that membership rates have changed for 2015 onwards, from £6 to £10 for individual membership and £10 to £15 for household and society memberships. If you pay by standing order then you will need to amend this amount.

*Chris Mason (Membership)*

**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: 0300 061 2200 Email: [richmond@royalparks.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:richmond@royalparks.gsi.gov.uk) Website: [www.royalparks.gov.uk](http://www.royalparks.gov.uk)

**VOLUNTEERS WANTED to help with communications, walks and courses**

In the last few months our appeals have successfully found volunteers to help with graphics, organising volunteers, help at fairs and the Poet's Corner event.

However, we still need someone to help with the content of our communications – especially our website and monthly bulletin – and someone to organise our walks and courses programme. If you think you can help, please email our Chairman at [ron.crompton@frp.org.uk](mailto:ron.crompton@frp.org.uk).

**Trustees**

**Chairman:** Ron Crompton

**Vice-Chairman:** Peter Burrows-Smith (Conservation & Ecology; Walks & Courses)

**Other Trustees:** Nick Coleman (Website, Campaigning), Teresa Grafton (Education), Richard Gray (Marketing), P J Greeves (Events), Rachel Hirschler (History Project), David McLaughlin (Hon. Treasurer), Chris Mason (Membership), John Peake (Visitor Centre), Richard Polson (Hon. Secretary)

**Vice-Presidents:** Brian Baker, John Collier, Sheila Hamilton, Max Lankester, Douglas Reynolds

**President:** vacant

**Patrons:** Sir David Attenborough, Baroness Kramer of Richmond Park, Lord Rix CBE, Dame Jacqueline Wilson

**Queries about Friends?**

See [www.frp.org.uk](http://www.frp.org.uk), or contact [secretary@frp.org.uk](mailto:secretary@frp.org.uk).

**Police non-emergency telephone number: 101**

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Please pass it on to a friend or recycle it when you have finished with it.

**Friends' walks and courses**

**WALKS**

All welcome. Most, though not all, walks are on Saturdays and 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.

\* **COURSES** are typically a 30-minute talk at Pembroke Lodge followed by a two-hour walk. Courses are for members of the Friends only and places must be booked – please contact Sue: [sue.gibbons@npl.co.uk](mailto:sue.gibbons@npl.co.uk). Coffee/tea provided. There will be no charge.

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

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                     | Time          | What and where                                      |
|--------------------------|---------------|---|
| 18 July                  | 10.00am       | COURSE: <b>Butterflies</b>                          |
| 1 Aug                    | 10.00am       | WALK: meet at Kingston Gate car park                |
| 5 Sept                   | 10.00am       | WALK: meet at Robin Hood Gate car park              |
| 3 Oct                    | 10.00am       | WALK: meet at Sheen Gate car park                   |
| 10 Oct                   | 10.00am       | COURSE: <b>Deer</b>                                 |
| 24 Oct                   | 10.00am       | COURSE: <b>Fungi</b>                                |
| 7 Nov                    | 10.00am       | WALK: meet at Pembroke Lodge car park               |
| <b>+</b><br>Every Friday | <u>9.30am</u> | INFORMAL BIRD WALKS: meet at Pen Ponds coffee kiosk |

**Other dates for your diary**

Thurs 5.30 - 23 July 7.00pm **Holly Lodge Centre Open House** Visit the Centre and the Holly Lodge yard and new Nature Trail (see page 13). Visits include tea/coffee, a short talk and a tour. To book, email [pealey@thehollylodgecentre.org.uk](mailto:pealey@thehollylodgecentre.org.uk) or phone 020 8940 8730.

Sunday 2 Aug **Prudential Ride London cycle event** – Park closed to cars.

Sunday 13 Sept **Richmond Park Open Day**, including guided tours of the new Holly Lodge Centre Nature Trail. Meet the people and organisations that work, manage or provide services in the Park. Free, but a charge will be made for parking at Holly Lodge.





Registered charity No. 1133201  
[www.frp.org.uk](http://www.frp.org.uk)

*Richmond Park is a National Nature Reserve, a Site of Special Scientific Interest  
and a Special Area of Conservation*