

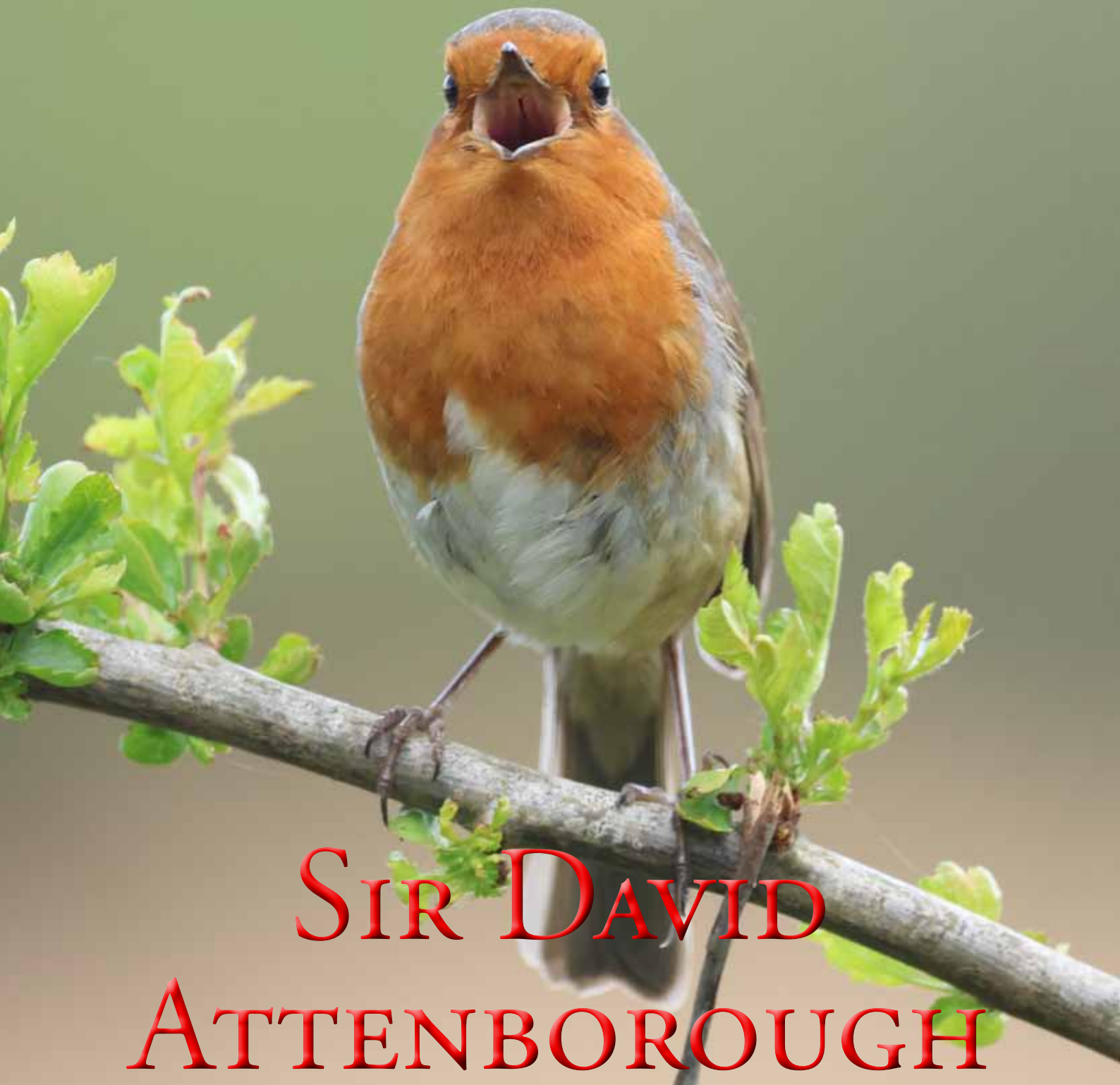


LONDON
NATURAL
HISTORY
SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

Web: lnhs.org.uk; Facebook: [LNHSocGroup](https://www.facebook.com/LNHSocGroup); Twitter: [@LNHSoc](https://twitter.com/LNHSoc), [@LondonBirdClub](https://twitter.com/LondonBirdClub)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH

Contents

Contact details	2	St John's Garden, Farringdon, EC1	14
Notes for Contributors	2	Brent Reservoir	17
Library update	3	Beddington Farmlands, Hackbridge	18
Meet the author: Leslie Williams	4	Crossness	20
Greater London New Year Plant Hunt 2026	7	London Wetland Centre	21
Kew Gardens: Conifers	10	Wanstead Flats	23
New Landscaping in the Elephant & Castle Area: Urban Planting	11	Ruislip Lido and Woods	24
Evolution Garden, Natural History Museum: Ferns and conifers	12		

Cover: Robin (Gehan de Silva Wijeyeratne)

Contact details

Newsletter editor:
Mark Burgess, edlnhsnews@yahoo.co.uk

Publicity enquiries: press@lnhs.org.uk

Website enquiries: web@lnhs.org.uk

Membership enquiries:
Robin Blades, 07507 446688
details@lnhs.org.uk

Printed by Henry Ling Limited, The Dorset Press,
Dorchester DT1 1HD

For additional copies (or limited copies of back issues) send an A4 SAE to Catherine Schmitt, 4 Falkland Avenue, London N3 1QR

© London Natural History Society. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Society.

Please send your photos, letters, news and field reports to the editor by 20th July 2026 for inclusion in the August 2026 issue.

Notes for Contributors

The editor of the newsletter is always happy to receive announcements, news stories and reports. As a general guide, announcements should be 50–100 words and news stories 100–300 words. Reports of meetings should have a minimum length of 350 words and a maximum of 1,000.

Please provide pictures wherever possible (even if only of the site or the group); a report is duller without them. They should be at 300 dpi (**NOT 72 dpi from a phone**) and at least 1,800 pixels wide; cover pictures need to be at least 2,800 x 2,800 pixels.

Mark Burgess, Editor

Library update

Leslie Bolsover

Have you visited the LNHS library lately? Here's a recap of what has been happening. The Book Club, which meets every other month from 10:30 to 12:00 in the Angela Marmont Centre, Natural History Museum, has now read nine books together including Dave Goulson's brilliant book on the insect apocalypse, *Silent Earth* and, most recently, *An Immense World* by Ed Yong, which describes the extraordinary sensory world of animals. At our next book club meetings, we will be discussing George Monbiot's recent book *Regeneration*, which discusses sustainable ways to feed the world's growing population without damaging the environment and then *Lost Wonders* by Tom Lathan which details the sad tales surrounding recent extinctions. Contact Library@lnhs.org.uk for more details. If you like the idea of a book club but can't attend during working hours, contact library@lnhs.org.uk and, if there is enough interest, we will schedule an online Book Club as well.

The library committee meets twice a year to approve new book purchases suggested by LNHS committee members. We would especially appreciate suggestions from the LNHS Bird Group as we have some funding for purchases in this subject due to a bequest from the family of Andrew Moon, former London Bird Recorder. As a result of the last Library Committee meeting, we purchased 12 new books. Here are a few described briefly.

Habitats of Europe: a field guide for birders, naturalists and ecologists by Forbes, Campbell, and Morris is a lavishly illustrated and comprehensive guide to Europe's biomes and what wildlife to look out for in that habitat.

Die Wanzen Deutschlands II: Bestimmungsschlüssel für alle Arten. Although written in German, it is still the most useful, comprehensive, and wonderfully illustrated tome for identifying true bugs. This volume includes illustrations of characteristics relevant to identification for all 850 species of Heteroptera known from Germany with many species also found in Britain.

The Butterflies of London by our own Leslie Williams. This is a London Natural History Society Publication. This book, based on London-wide surveys, illustrates the range of habitats within the UK's capital city and the butterflies that it supports.

And, finally, a Lichen identification book that is easy to use! *Lichens of Britain and Ireland: an introductory guide* by Rebecca Yahr and Frances Stoakley is lavishly illustrated and very informative. If you have ever thought of identifying all the colourful and fascinating lichens you see around you then this book is essential reading.

As well as single monographs, the library automatically purchases all the books in these three series: New Naturalist published by HarperCollins, Field Study Council Handbooks, and British Wildlife Collection published by Bloomsbury.

LNHS members who are new to the library will be welcomed any Wednesday from 10 am to 3:00 pm for a library induction. Once you are shown our self-issuing system then come anytime the Angela Marmont Centre is open Mon – Fri 10 – 5:00. Email library.lnhs@gmail.com for information about Saturday opening.

The Newsletter goes digital!

Did you know that a digital version of this Newsletter is available? We strongly encourage you to 'go digital' and help the Society to reduce its environmental impact and make better use of its funds to further the study of London's natural history. If you would like to switch to the digital version please e-mail Robin Blades, Assistant Treasurer & Membership Secretary <details@lnhs.org.uk>.

Meet the author: Leslie Williams

Gehan de Silva Wijeyeratne

Gehan de Silva Wijeyeratne interviews Leslie Williams, lead author of 'London Butterfly Atlas' published by Pisces Publications in association with the London Natural History Society (LNHS).

Leslie Williams is the Recorder for butterflies for the LNHS. Other interests include habitat conservation of woodlands, hedgerows, grasslands, orchards and ponds. He graduated from Leicester Polytechnic, researched the ectoparasites (Mallophaga) of Reed Buntings and surveyed breeding Red-throated Divers in Shetland. Leslie returned to De Montfort University for a M.Phil. in grassland management. He initiated the Barn Hill Conservation Group, now a registered charity. Leslie is a member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, and a Chartered Environmentalist. During the 'working week', he is employed in the parks service of Brent Council.



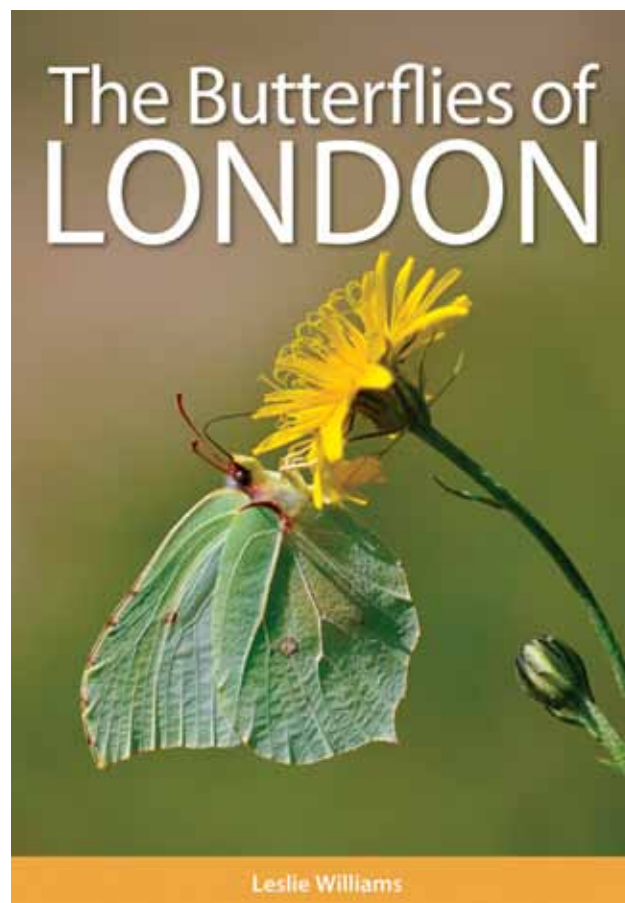
How did this book come about?

Years had passed since the first LNHS Butterfly Atlas by Colin Plant following a survey from 1980-1986, which was the first time that the distribution of butterflies had been mapped in London. There was a need to establish how butterflies were now distributed in London and whether there had been changes. More personally, I received a nudge from the LNHS Council asking me if I had thought about or could manage the project.

How many years was this book in the making?

Nearly 10 years – though 'part-time'. After the go-ahead from the LNHS, trials of surveying and recording commenced in 2015 and it took five years to achieve a reasonable level of coverage. Greater London is a large and intricate city.

Collation of the records enabled the distribution maps to be produced based on the records of 2015-2019. Recording continued after 2019, particularly for abundance data. The collation of records, mapping, analysis, graphing, writing, checking of text and photographs, the publication details, layout and other



checks took a further four years plus until completion in 2024.

What do you want to achieve with this book?

The survey set out two main aims, to map the distribution of each butterfly species in London and to compare those with the distributions of the early 1980s. But into the survey the aims expanded to involving people in butterfly surveying and answering the key question of how can we conserve butterfly species in London?

Readers of the completed book, can use the maps to view the distribution of any species of butterfly in a local area, or as an aid to their own recording. Analysis for the book indicated that there are over twenty species, which with appropriate landscaping or habitat can be encouraged to any area of London including small parks and gardens.

Is there a fun fact or something amazing you learnt during the writing of the book?

There are amazing gems of wildlife areas to be found in parks and greenspaces around London, many managed by local authorities, charities, community groups and volunteers. Grasslands are important to a high proportion of London's butterfly species, providing larval foodplants and nectar for adults. That is, grasslands that are not frequently mown but are allowed to grow taller and flower during the growing season. All the better if the plant species include a range of grasses and wildflowers.

Just how much has London's butterfly fauna changed over the years?

The book illustrates dramatic changes in London's butterflies since the early 1980s. By the late 1990s, the Wall was practically lost from London, though may now be making a tentative return. There have been losses in the abundance of the previously almost ubiquitous Small Tortoiseshell since the turn of the century. Abundance declines of the widespread Skippers remains a concern. But the book also shows that large areas of London gained, for example, the Speckled Wood, Gatekeeper, Marbled White and Ringlet. A success story is how conservation work by Londoners has encouraged the Brimstone north of the Thames.

Were there any memorable moments during the course of writing this book?

There were many memorable moments. Let me set the scene. As recording was already in place at some of the best wildlife sites, I set out to survey the 'gap' areas: the 'typical' areas of London with urban, terraced and suburban residential housing, high streets, industrial estates, local footpaths, roadsides, railway stations and local green spaces. London is a large and diverse city; not only in terms of communities and cultures, but also structurally and of the habitats that it can provide.

I would receive some 'strange looks' at rail stations, when everyone else alighting from the train were heading for the exit, while I took a detour in the opposite direction towards the end of the platform, where both the warning notices – and the lineside vegetation could be observed from the safe side of the barriers.

The survey years happened to coincide with part of the expansion of the range of the Ringlet and Marbled White into parts of London. It was thrilling to see species that had previously been absent in those parts for many decades or longer, not only to become established at nature reserves but even to arrive in gardens.

A special memory was waking one morning in summer, to find that Ringlets had roosted overnight on a wall inside the house.

I also remember with gratitude the generous help of people around London, of the LNHS teams, GiGL (Greenspace Information for Greater London), yourself and the publisher's layout designer. It was wonderful to meet dedicated local naturalists and conservation volunteers at local sites scattered through the communities around London.

For anyone who wishes to pursue this topic more, are there any online resources you would recommend?

The websites of the county branches of Butterfly Conservation can provide information and contacts for local events. For Greater London the four main branches cover approximately the areas of the historic counties all the way to central London. For broader information, see the national Butterfly Conservation website: <https://butterfly-conservation.org>

There are several more specialist sites including [UK Butterflies](https://ukbutterflies.co.uk) (<https://ukbutterflies.co.uk>), while transect walkers will be familiar with using the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme site.

What are the top five sites for butterflies in Greater London?

With many of the sites in Greater London being uniquely different, it is difficult to choose the ‘best five’. Many sites should ideally be listed on a butterfly watching site list for London. In terms of species diversity there are good sites on chalk substrates towards the southern edge of London, particularly at Hutchinson’s Bank Nature Reserve. Elsewhere, I suggest Mitcham Common, the London Wetland Centre at Barn Elms and Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park. And amongst others, Norwood Green Meadows to Long Wood with Warrens Farm Nature Reserve and the string of other green spaces alongside the River Brent and canal-sides in Ealing.



Orange-tip, male, at Petersham Lodge Wood, Richmond. Mick Massie

Orange-tip *Anthocharis cardamines*

In flight, the male Orange-tip, as the name suggests, is one of the most easily recognisable of British butterflies in the spring due to the orange on the tips of the white upper forewings. Orange is a warning to predators, for the butterfly contains oils similar to mustard that the caterpillar accumulated while feeding from its foodplants. The female is more sedentary and less conspicuous with grey colouration to the upper forewings, which at a distance can confuse identification with other white butterflies. At rest, both sexes draw their forewings under their hindwings, which have a pattern of white with mottled patches of yellow, green, grey and black, providing camouflage when roosting on the flower-heads of plants.

In London the Orange-tip is widespread, though occurs in low numbers at any location. It uses hedges, watercourses and other linear features to travel far in search of larval and adult foodplants.

HABITAT

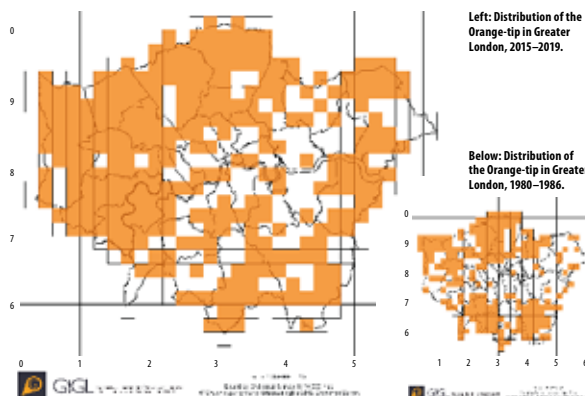
The Orange-tip is wide ranging, seeking damp grassland in meadows, gardens, at the margins



Orange-tip male at Greenwich. Joe Beale

of streams, rivers and canals, on woodland edges, glades and rides, and on roadside verges where its larval foodplants grow.

The larval foodplants are Cuckooflower, which occurs in damp grasslands particularly



Left: Distribution of the Orange-tip in Greater London, 2015–2019.

Below: Distribution of the Orange-tip in Greater London, 1980–1986.

on clay soils, or Garlic Mustard in the edges of hedgerows. Hedge Mustard, Charlock and other plants of the Brassicaceae family may also be used. Those plants are also amongst sources of nectar for feeding; while plants used for roosting include Garlic Mustard and Cow Parsley.

LIFE CYCLE

The Orange-tip has one or, exceptionally, two generations a year. The adult butterflies usually emerge from the pupa from late April, with the main flight period from May to early June. Occasionally, butterflies may be seen as early as late March or as late as July.

For egg-laying, plants that are relatively unshaded are preferred. As each plant can support one larva; only one egg is laid per plant.

Apparently, the egg-laying female can sense a chemical released by eggs laid previously to avoid laying a second egg on an individual plant. Similarly, single, isolated plants are preferred, rather than a clump of plants. Eggs are laid on the underside of the flower buds, and the larva feeds upon the developing seed-pods of the plant. Upon hatching, the larva eats the developing seed-pods. The larva leaves the foodplant to find shrubs in a hedge or other

structure to pupate and overwinter. This is probably crucial, as meadows could be prone to cutting, harvesting, grazing or, in winter, to seasonal flooding. The butterfly emerges from the pupa in the following spring.

DISTRIBUTION

The Orange-tip was found to be widespread in London, though with a patchy distribution. Fewer records from central and urban areas of London are as expected for a species associated with damp grassland and hedgerow edges. The apparent sparser distribution in the eastern parts of Greater London could be in part due to under-recording, though the recorded distribution for 1980–1986 also indicated a reduced presence in that area.

The Orange-tip appears more widely distributed in London at the local level than during the early 1980s. However, the flight season is short, and in interpreting change for this species there is the possibility of relative under-recording in one of the surveys and of differences in local recording.

The Orange-tip can be observed in England, Wales and parts of Scotland, Ireland, Europe and Asia.

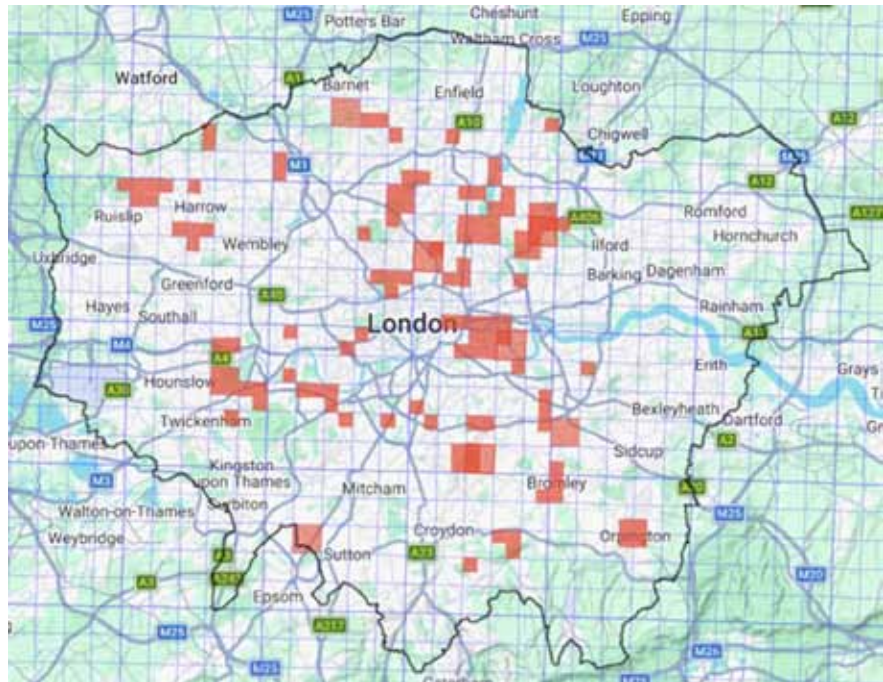
1st – 4th January, 2026

Greater London New Year Plant Hunt 2026

Mark Spencer

Despite the cold, across Greater London, 1171 (of which 456 were from Middlesex) botanical records were made during this year's New Year Plant Hunt (NYPH) by individuals, family parties, local groups and the BSBI. This year, there were two BSBI organised New Year Plant Hunts in Greater London that were also heavily attended or organised by LNHS members. The first, was organised by Jon Agar was held at Rotherhithe and Surrey Quays (vc 17) on 1st January 2026. The second, was led by Mark Spencer on the 4th January in the City of London (vc 21).

A dozen people met outside Rotherhithe station for the NYPH on 1st January. An overgrown bed outside local shops quickly produced eleven species, including Shaggy Soldier (*Galinsoga quadriradiata*) and Bristly Oxtongue (*Helminthotheca echioides*). We took the Thames path eastwards, until we reached Surrey Basin Lock, the start of network of canal-type waterways. The area was once the heart of London's docklands. Many basins have now been filled, with woodland established on top. The result is an assemblage of varied habitats – woodland, grass, canal and basin walls, gardens and roads – that support a rich selection of plants, many in flower. We took our bearings from the artificial mound of Stave Hill, with its views across the Thames to Canary Wharf, and set out to explore. Altogether we found 70 species in flower, with highlights including Henbit Dead-nettle (*Lamium amplexicaule*), Four-leaved Allseed (*Polycarpon tetraphyllum*, in the pavement cracks), Dwarf Mallow



Map of Greater London showing the distribution of NYPH 2026 records (map retrieved from the BSBI DDb on the 29th January, 2026).



Seedling Loquat (*Eriobotrya japonica*) establishing itself in a flowerbed by St Paul's Cathedral (Conchita Navarro Sáez)

(*Malva neglecta*, on the steps of a bridge over a canal) and Bilbao's Fleabane (*Erigeron floribundus*). Outside our final destination, across the road from Surrey Quays station where the buses drop the customers for a Tesco megastore, a rich patch, presumably the result of scattered 'wild flower' seed, produced Tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*), and last flurry of new species. The total number of plants in flower was high, comparable to the lists compiled on NYPHs in the warmest coastal counties, reflecting both the London microclimate and its history of movement of people and trades.

The NYPH on the 4th January started next to the remains of the Roman Wall at Tower Hill. A brief search for London Rocket (*Sisymbrium irio*) was made but there was no sign of it, but several other species were seen. Rather handily, Prof. Sandra Knapp, current BSBI chair and global authority on the Tomato family (Solanaceae) was on hand to assist beginners in appreciating the finer points of Nightshade taxonomy, evolution and ecology and admired the oft over-looked flowers of Black Nightshade (*Solanum nigrum*). Nearby, was the now Near Threatened (source: GB Vascular Plant Red List 2025: <https://bsbi.org/learn/publications/other-books/a-new-vascular-plant-red-list-for-great-britain>) Small Nettle (*Urtica urens*), while not rare in London, this species is certainly localised and may be becoming more uncommon. Mark was deeply disappointed not to find his favourite neo-Londoner, the Mediterranean Nettle (*Urtica membranacea*) as it is often at its best in the depths of winter and early spring.

The group proceeded to walk



Mediterranean Spurge (*Euphorbia characias*) regenerating and flowering in a flowerbed by the Thames Path (Conchita Navarro Sáez)



Tall Nightshade (*Solanum chenopodioides*) growing profusely on the Thames Path near Billingsgate (Conchita Navarro Sáez)

around St Katherine's dock and added a few more species to the list including Persian Cyclamen (*Cyclamen persicum*); this prompted some discussion about what to record based upon planted/regenerating status – as this was clearly self-seeding Mark claimed this as a legitimate record. But the record/don't record debate over planted and escaping material remains contentious and will probably remain so despite attempts to corral folks and their inclinations. We also observed a small quantity of Tall Nightshade (*Solanum chenopodioides*), a very cuddly nightshade (due to its soft, felty leaves), once again, Sandy was in her element.

After a brief lunch we then headed

onto the Thames Path where pickings were slim, apart for an abundance of Tall Nightshade – this plant appears to be spreading rapidly in the area (the other main stronghold for it in London is the Lower River Lea, and some had been seen by Greenland Dock on the 1st of January). Having dodged the tourists, the group headed eastwards before cutting inland towards St Paul's Cathedral where non-flowering, but regenerating Loquat (*Eriobotrya japonica*) was observed growing in a flowerbed several metres from the planted parent tree.

The group then headed towards the fascinating but always chilly Postman's Park and finally The Barbican Estate where

we succumbed to cold and headed towards the Holy Inn in Farringdon and had more botanical discussions (and whisky in Mark's case). The total catch for the day, a modest 36 species in flower. Overall, the most abundant flowerers were probably tall Nightshade, Pellitory-of-the-Wall (*Parietaria Judaica*), Guernsey Fleabane (*Erigeron sumatrensis*) and the now locally very abundant and ludicrously Schedule 8 protected Jersey Cudweed (*Laphangium luteoalbum*).

To find out more about the NYPH, follow this link: <https://bsbi.org/take-part/activities/new-year-plant-hunt>



24th January, 2026

Kew Gardens: Conifers

Ellen McGrath

A total of 35 of us assembled at Victoria Gate on a bright, sunny January morning to study the conifers in Kew Gardens. This report describes a subset of the 26 species within 13 different genera we viewed.

We commenced by comparing the outlines then needles of a *Pinus contorta* and an adjacent pair of *Cedrus deodara*. The *P. contorta* had an oval crown with a flat top, very twisted trunk and branches, and green needles about 5 to 7 centimetres, in bunches of 2. The *C. deodara* had horizontal main branches with downward sloping tips and short bluish green needles, 4-5 centimetres long, densely clustered in bunches of about 20 on a short spur which is a characteristic of the genus. We subsequently viewed two other *Cedrus*. The *C. libani* had horizontal branches, a flatter crown and dark green needles in bunches of 10 to 15. The *C. atlantica* had shorter bluish green needles, between 1.5 and 2 centimetres long with 20 to 40 needles per bunch. The female cones of the *Cedrus* are upright, barrel shaped, with long, thin scales and will disintegrate on the branch.

Later we found three more *Pinus*. The *P. nigra*, had two needles per bunch, about 12 centimetres long. It has one main trunk, bark with irregularly patterned plates divided by dark fissures. The *P. pinea* had an umbrella shaped canopy, which typically will broaden and spread as it matures, this is native to the Mediterranean. *P. halepensis*, the Aleppo pine had slender yellowish green needles, between 6 to 12 cm long.



Platycladus (Ellen McGrath)

There is a collection of *Araucaria* on Boat House Walk, while most are *A. araucana*, the Monkey puzzle tree we also noticed two other members of the genus. Araucarias have sharp triangular leaves packed around the twig. The *A. araucana* leaves were the broadest at the base and the most densely packed. The *A. angustifolia* needles were narrower, longer and more sparsely packed, these are both native to South America whilst the *A. bidwilli* had the longest, least densely packed needles and is a native of Queensland, Australia

We also viewed species within the *Picea* genus these have needles, with a peg at the base. The *P. abies* had light brown bark, short needles with a white underside and a blunt tip. The female cone was reddish brown with triangular-pointed scales (with both blunt and sharp tips). The *P. omorika* is a tall, narrow tree with reddish bark and long thin pendant cones with scales, the needles were dark green with whitish underside, the *P. orientalis* with short (less than 1 cm) glossy dark green needles. The *P. smithiana* had long needles,

about 5 cm, on pendant branches, angled forward and downwards.

Other species viewed included a *Cryptomeria japonica* which had reddish-brown bark, awl shaped leaves about 1 cm spiralling around the twig and the 1-2 cm long cones occur at the end of the twig. A *Sequoia sempervirens* has reddish fissured bark and green twigs, the needles being shorter at the base and the tip of the twig, broadening in the centre. We also noted leaves sprouting at the base of the trunk. We found a young *Prumnopitys andina*, its needle like leaf is reminiscent of a Yew but softer to the touch and a lighter green with a paler underside, this will have a plum shape fruit in the autumn. A *Pseudotsuga menziesii* has flat green single needles and whitish a stripe on the underside, with a long red-brown pointed bud. The female cones are pendulous, about 6 cm long with a distinctive three-point bract, the side points were shortest, 1 cm, whereas the centre point was 2 cm-

With thanks to Bettina Metcalfe's informative and enjoyable walk.

17th February, 2026

New Landscaping in the Elephant & Castle Area: Urban Planting

Bettina Metcalfe

On a sunny crisp day, 12 of us met at Elephant and Castle in zone 1 in Central London to look at the new development in the area to the east of the station. 3000 new homes were created in a number of different sized multi-story buildings. 50 new retail spaces were designed on the ground floors of the tower blocks, consisting of some new shops, restaurants and cafes. The project is being realised over more than 15 years and implemented in different phases, and is now nearing its completion. It is a very densely populated area.

The redeeming aspect is the soft landscaping, flowers, shrubs and trees. The new very interesting planting throughout the area reveals a coherent plan.

The developer, the multinational construction, property and infrastructure company Lendlease in partnership with Southwark Council have led this redevelopment incorporating a small new park, improving existing smaller green spaces and putting beds in between the buildings. They employed Gillespies, a team of landscape architects, landscape planners and urban designers to be the master planners of all green spaces throughout the project.

Gillespies' work has created a

cohesive network of green spaces, with the aim of tying together the various areas between the buildings and relating the new development to the existing surrounding older quarters. Their goal is to encourage community life and to restore a sense of place and belongingness. Pedestrian-friendly streets promoting walking and green throughways for cyclists are part of the design.

Hilliers Nursery was given the contract to supply the 1,100 semi-mature new trees to be delivered over a period of 10 years. Semi-mature trees have a 25-40 cm girth and can be up to 30 years old when planted in their final destination. They have been transplanted numerous times in the nursery to encourage strong root growth. The trees are pruned heavily when they are young to achieve a balanced crown and strong branching. These two measures are meant to give the trees a head start and enable them to be transplanted with a good success rate. A tree map of the Elephant & Castle area can be downloaded from the website: www.elephantpark.co.uk

The new 2-acre Elephant Park is the showpiece of the whole development. It includes The Tree House, a community space in its centre with café and public toilets.

It was built around one of the old plane trees.

We visited the complex site in the middle of winter but were struck as to how green and vibrant the park and the beds between the buildings looked. This was achieved by planting lots of evergreen shrubs (*Sarcococca*, *Viburnum davidii*, *Distylium*, *Berberis*) and trees (*Photinia*, *Magnolia grandiflora*, *Prunus laurocerasus* as a tree). The planting was obviously thought of in different layers. About 100 old mature trees (mostly *Platanus x hispanica*) have been retained in the area and provide very important structure to the overall design. Under the canopy of the older trees, low evergreen shrubs were interspersed with higher deciduous shrubs (*Hamamelis*, *Corylopsis*, *Cornus*). Evergreen native ferns (*Asplenium scolopendrium*, *Polystichum setiferum*) and spring plants (*Leucojum*) provided the understory.

The new trees planted include *Quercus*, *Liquidambar*, *Prunus* - Cherries, *Malus*, *Amelanchier*, *Alnus*, *Tilia*, and the ubiquitous *Pyrus calleryana* 'Chanticleer'. To our surprise we spotted a *Cydonia oblonga* - Quince. There are a lot more very interesting trees to be discovered in the area around Elephant and Castle tube station and a visit is well worth it.

31st March, 2026

Evolution Garden, Natural History Museum: Ferns and conifers

Bettina Metcalfe

The Evolution Garden at the Natural History Museum in Kensington opened in July 2024. The brief was to depict the story of life on earth in a timeline of geology, animals and plants as it evolved through the millennia.

More than 26 different rock types, all but two are sourced from the UK, represent the various geological periods and showcase the breadth of geology found in the UK. They are incorporated into the landscape; some delineating the various beds often also serving as seating for visitors. Each rock is associated with a specific time period in the UK's history.

Animals such as birds, small mammals, dinosaurs and other reptiles are represented in brass and bronze as inlays or 3-D reliefs that visitors can touch. The star of the show is a life-size bronze cast of a *Diplodocus* in the centre of the garden.

The challenge was how to depict plants which no longer exist. The designers of the garden cleverly worked with what is available today. Plants were chosen to bring about the feel of a landscape from a particular period by using examples from surviving plant lineages which still evoke an exotic feeling. At the beginning of the timeline, the first plants visitors encounter are tree ferns. Large *Dicksonia antarctica* are abundant, *Sphaeropteris cooperi* from Australia unfurls its wonderful sculptural fronds and a big *Sphaeropteris medullaris* from New Zealand is sheltered by the corner of the



Hypolepis dicksonioides (Maria Roberts)

building. Smaller plants include the fern *Nephrolepis cordifolia* and the clubmoss *Selaginella kraussiana*. The other beds are filled with a rich variety of ferns, displaying a diversity of foliage, all interspersed with the native *Dryopteris affinis*. *Todea barbara* is a beautiful bipinnate fern from Australia and can be seen in various locations. The spectacular

Lophosoria quadripinnata from Mexico has elegant pinnate leaves with a surprisingly bluish underside.

The most striking fern is tucked away in a bed very near the building to give it protection from frost. It is *Hypolepis dicksonioides* from Australia. Its fronds are soft and downy to the touch and

are 3-4 times pinnately lobed. Progressing in time, we find beds with an underplanting of the native *Polypodium vulgare*, *Asplenium scolopendrium* and a number of different *Blechnum* species, most of them have been given new names (we will stick here to the old well-known names). The largest is *Blechnum brasiliense* 'Vulcano' with reddish fronds, then the native *Blechnum spicant*, followed by *Blechnum media* and the slightly lower-growing *Blechnum penna-marina*.

The Jurassic garden, with 'Fern' the *Diplodocus* at its centre, surprises with an addition of miniature *Pinus mugo* cultivars, dwarf *Ginkgo biloba* and *Cycad revoluta*. We identified the following conifers: *Wollemia nobilis*, *Cunninghamia lanceolata* and a low hedge of *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*. In the neighbouring bed, we added *Podocarpus lawrencii* and *Cryptomeria japonica*. *Araucaria araucana* never fails to add an exotic touch to any garden.

Towards the end of the timeline, grasses and flowers of the daisy family illustrate the spread of grasslands. *Trachycarpus fortunei* show up repeatedly and huge *Solanum laciniatum* impressed us. We identified a few broad-leaved trees: *Broussonetia papyrifera*, *Aesculus californica*, *Cercis siliquastrum*, *Feijoa sellowiana*, *Luma apiculata*, *Persea americana*, *Parrotia persica* and *Trochodendron aralioides*; all adding to the magical experience of far-flung places.

In the 2 hours that the group of about 15 participants spent in the garden, we identified 14 different ferns and 8 conifer species. It was very rewarding to try and identify



Sphaeropteris cooperi (image Bettina Metcalfe)



Wollemia nobilis female cone (image Maria Roberts)

every fern and conifer that we spotted. We vowed to come back later in the year to add to our list the deciduous ferns which were

still more or less dormant during our visit at the end of March.

19th January, 2026

St John's Garden, Farringdon, EC1

Susanna Thornton



Robin on the old drinking fountain in St John's Garden (Hilary Barton)

St John's Garden is a tiny woodland park behind Farringdon station, at the edge of the Square Mile. In medieval times, the site was part of the Clerkenwell priory of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem, or St John's Hospitallers, and was probably a kitchen garden. It became a burial ground, then a Victorian park. Today it is a green half-acre hemmed in by tall buildings, with the trains, underground and the Elizabeth line only metres away. The park has several mature plane trees and a lower canopy of cherry, whitebeam and birch, two dense old yew trees, a large Portuguese laurel, and a large sycamore shading the top park gate.

During a recent birding visit, on a cold quiet day just after New Year, I saw a Magpie fly with a stick to an old nest in one of the cherry trees where it tried to weave the stick in, a female Blackbird foraging amongst dead leaves near the fence, and then – suddenly and excitingly – two Robins fighting, chasing each other like fighter pilots, and clashing with a kerfuffle of brown wings.

The Friends of St John's Garden have been monitoring bird life on this patch for several years. The Friends is a community organisation made up of local residents and workers. In 2023, we requested an eBird 'hotspot'

at the park, allowing us to record bird life there more systematically. Initially the hotspot was used just by us locals, submitting complete checklists roughly every week, but now other birders whom we've never actually met are also recording regular complete lists and incidental sightings, helping create a picture of bird life in this inner London location.

On almost every visit, we see Robins, Magpies and Blackbirds, as I did the other day, as well as Blue Tits, Great Tits, Carrion Crow, Woodpigeons and Parakeets. Feral pigeons were very numerous and almost a nuisance, but have declined in number in the park



Magpies have raised young successfully in the park (Hilary Barton)

over the past year, possibly because there seem to be fewer people feeding them. Intermittently we also get Goldfinches, Wrens and Dunnocks. In the last year or so, Pied Wagtails have cropped up in the vicinity of the park, usually seeking dropped crumbs on the pavements, and remarkably fearless. We have had glimpses of a Woodcock and a Coal Tit, as well as a gorgeous lemony Grey Wagtail that one day appeared by the new wildlife pond, and just before Christmas a fantastic Great Spotted Woodpecker in the sycamore tree, given away by its 'kik kik' call. There have also been sightings of a Kestrel, as well

as Herring Gull and Lesser Black-backed Gull overhead.

Black Redstarts are the rarest bird to have been seen around St John's Garden. Central London is famously an extremely important location for this species, where the bombed-out buildings left behind after the Blitz replicated the bare stony cliffs of their natural habitat. We see Black Redstarts using rooftop aerials as singing posts at the north end of Britton Street at the junction with Clerkenwell Road, and perching on the roofs of buildings on office blocks along Turnmill Street, as well as on the balconies of flats along Benjamin

Street immediately south of the park. June and July 2024 was a particularly good period, with frequent sightings every day – and almost no work getting done by me! dashing to the window every time I heard their distinctive silvery call. We are plotting each Black Redstart sighting on eBird in its exact specific location, hoping to identify where there might perhaps be a nesting pair.

We have seen five species successfully raise young in and around the park: Robin, Great Tit, Blackbird, Magpie and Wren. Blue Tits used one nest box in the park in 2024, and in 2025



Robins have nested on a balcony overlooking the park (Susanna Thornton)

they used the box on the tree at the Goldsmiths' Centre cafe opposite. Both years, Blue Tit adults were seen carrying food to nestlings, very busily zooming across the park and across the road to the cafe, but for some reason we never saw any fledglings. In 2024 a Wren was observed carrying nesting material into a secluded nest box in the bottom corner of the park, but did not attract a mate. In 2025, however, a Wren pair successfully raised a large and noisy brood, observed in the thick ivy on an old brick wall near the park bench seating area. Blackbirds bred successfully in both 2024 and 2025, and we saw the fledglings learning to fly, crashing into the first-floor windows of Kurt Geiger head office. Crows nested high up

in the tree canopy in 2024 and 2025, but it is too high up for us to see nestlings and we don't know if they bred successfully. We have seen Magpie nest-building activity each year – including the very early season stick-carrying I just saw – and last year saw Magpie adults feeding noisy, very demanding young, although none of the nests half-built by Magpies in the park seem to have actually been finished or used.

The full bird list for St John's Garden since 2023 is now 21 species.

The Friends of St John's Garden help care for the park alongside the team at Islington council and other bodies. We use the birding

data, and other observations, e.g., of pollinators, to help inform planting decisions and other interventions to improve the biodiversity value of the park.

Being such a small space, it is easy to survey the whole of St John's Garden within half an hour. It is of course an unlikely place to see anything rare and 'exciting' – apart from of course the Black Redstarts! But it is enjoyable – and indeed exciting – to observe the birds which use this tiny space as each year goes round, and it is a moving thing to observe the struggle of wild birds to survive and thrive, right in the heart of the city.

8th March, 2026

Brent Reservoir

Andrew Peel

A total of 14 people met (a mixture of LBC and NW London RSPB) on a mild and misty day. From the bridge there were Tufted duck, Mallard, Gadwall, Pochard, distant Teal, Coots, a pair of Egyptian geese and a singing Cetti's warbler.

Walking towards the football pitches we heard Wrens, several Chiffchaffs, Blackcap, Long-tailed tits, Great-spotted and

Green woodpeckers, Song thrush, Dunnock; and saw Stock dove and Redwing. On the water the Gulls were predominantly Black-headed and Common, and there were Great-crested and whinnying Little grebes.

Past the football pitches, about 12 Greenfinches in the treetops with a Siskin, Redwing, Jays, and a Great spot. After the heronry, which contained at least four occupied

nests, we heard Chaffinch and Goldcrest.

Back at the bridge we enjoyed showing a perched Peregrine to several youngsters. Two Blackcaps sang from a garden, and we saw two House sparrows and heard another Cetti's. At the hide we added four Snipe, a Lesser-black back gull, Cormorants, and Maria found a Green sandpiper. The group saw a total of 48 species.



Brent Reservoir (Stock Image from Gehan de Silva Wijeyeratne)

14th March 2026

Beddington Farmlands, Hackbridge

Amanda Tuke

A group of 20 birdwatchers from beginner to experienced assembled at the south-west entrance gate to Beddington Farmlands nature reserve on a sunny spring-like morning. Charlie, the reserve warden, gave a brief introduction to the history of the site, which was formerly a sewage farm and now has an incineration plant next to a landfill site. It is currently permit-only with permits issued to members of the Beddington Farmlands Bird Group who monitor birds, plants and some invertebrates on site and assist with habitat management. Graeme, Tomos and I (from the Bird Group) led the walk.

Just inside the gate we found Long-tailed Tits, a Coal Tit, Siskins and a Firecrest in the trees between the reserve and Beddington Park. Greenfinches and Chiffchaffs were heard singing. A Kestrel flew over and a Great Spotted Woodpecker was heard calling.

We stopped at a hide overlooking the South Lake to see the nest-building progress at the active Heronry. On the water we noted a good selection of waterbirds, including Shovelers, Little Grebes, Teal and Gadwall, and a Cetti's Warbler was heard singing in the reedbed.

On route to a hide overlooking a lagoon in the south-east corner of the reserve, we inadvertently disturbed a Common Snipe which jinked away from us. A Skylark sang over the mound in the centre of the site, and a pair of Buzzards circled above us in the warming air.



Little Ringed Plover (all images Amanda Tuke)



Stock Dove



Grey Heron

A flock of Stock Doves – they're thriving here in good numbers – took to the air from the rough grass in the distance.

We spotted several Red Admiral butterflies en route and Coltsfoot flowering in profusion on paths and the islands. We added Shelduck and a Green Sandpiper to our list from the lagoon, but there was no sign of the Water Pipits which have been around all winter and had been recorded there the previous day. A couple of Meadow Pipits and Linnets flew over us calling while we were

retracing our steps from a brief diversion to the abandoned and now overgrown sewage beds.

Around the hide we found Musk Stork's-bill and Green Field-Speedwell in flower and then walked over the grass-covered landfill mound in the centre of the reserve to have lunch in the Vismig hide which looks out over North Lake. From there, keen-eyed Lucía spotted a Little Ringed Plover on one of the distant islands.

On the north side of the mound, we passed the incinerator building

and found a one Grey Wagtail in a waste water channel, while a Kestrel hovered obligingly close to us. From there we made our way back round to the North Lake hide for closer views of the Little Ringed Plover before the end of the walk.

It was a fun expedition with a delightfully sociable group. A total of 60 bird species were recorded in total, and the bird of the day was undoubtedly the Little Ringed Plover, with the Firecrest a close second.

29th March, 2026

Crossness

George Kalli

A total of nine people attended the walk, including the leader.

A surprisingly loud calling Cetti's Warbler at Belvedere Station was a good start.

A few of people on walk had a Peregrine at Abbey Wood station as well.

The walk to the reserve added a couple of Lesser Black-backed Gulls roosting on a roof, calling, and Collared Dove, Robin, Magpie, Carrion Crow, Wood Pigeon and Starling.

A scrubby area before the reserve gave us good views of calling Goldfinch, Blue Tit and House Sparrow.

Entering the Norman Road field immediately a Red Kite with its forked tail flew overhead.

More Cetti's Warblers were heard.

The ever-present screeching Ringed-necked Parakeets were heard

Other calling birds included Wren, Great Tit and Dunnock.

Quite a few Dunnock were also seen throughout the walk.

Spring migrants heard calling in the trees included both a couple of Chiffchaff and Blackcap; only the former were seen calling

constantly flicking their tails.

A couple of Long-tailed Tits were also heard and seen flying.

A Kestrel was seen hovering, and a Great Spotted Woodpecker was seen perched in a tree.

A distance Sand Martin flew from the sewerage works towards the Thames and a few Mallards flew overhead.

A Little Grebe was heard with two to three-seen later in a couple of the ditches.

A Grey Heron flew over the fields and later a Little Egret was in flight.

Canada and Greylag Geese were both feeding on the fields.

A couple of Blackbird were seen and in song today.

A single Stock Dove was among a couple of Wood Pigeons on the ground.

Peregrines were quite showy today with two birds seen; they were either perched or in flight. Always good to see.

At least two Kestrels were seen both of them perched on the Thames Water building.

Lastly, a Buzzard were also seen in flight.

A good day for birds of prey, with four species seen today.

A couple of Pied Wagtails were on the fields.

Moving towards Thames saw a Black-headed Gull overhead.

It was high tide with good numbers of Teal calling on the water. Perched on a barge was an Egyptian Goose.

There were lesser numbers of Gadwall, Shelduck and a couple of Wigeon also seen from the Thames outflow.

A Cormorant was perched on a railing.

Roosting on the rocks were a couple of Black-tailed Godwit in summer plumage and a Snipe.

On the far bank of the Thames there were Oystercatcher

Lunch in the hide added no further species to the day list.

Overall, 47 birds were identified with the birds of prey in the forefront; Peregrine, Red Kite, Kestrel and Buzzard.

The supporting cast of Chiffchaff, Blackcap and Sand Martin were taster birds for the forthcoming spring cascade of spring migrants. Waders were limited to Snipe and Black-tailed Godwit.

12th April, 2026

London Wetland Centre

Gehan de Silva Wijeyeratne

The weather forecast had turned from rain to sunshine as the week progressed which may have contributed to as many as 16 people who arrived to join me. This included a few people who were on their first walk with the London Bird Club. The birds and the weather did not disappoint them.

At the first hide, the Dulverton Hide, Sand Martins skimmed over the water. At close range and in good light the sandy brown upper parts were clear and in contrast to the black upper parts of a few House Martins that were also in the mix of hirundines. The conditions were good enough to even occasionally make out the sandy brown collar which is surprisingly hard to make out as they dash about.

At the site, the wintering waterfowl had departed although a pair of Shoveler and two pairs of Gadwall were present at the site. A few Common Pochard were present, perhaps they may breed. But very few pairs, around 750 pairs in total, breed in Britain. A pair of Tufted Duck mated and some of the Mallard had paired up. Great Crested Grebes were in breeding plumage.

A pair of Mute Swans glided past with wing held slightly aloft in what must be a courtship posture. We also saw Mute Swans take flight after a laboured and prolonged take off across the sweep of the water. A Grey Heron alighted close to a hide its orange beak yellowish at the apical end. But it disappeared into the grasses and sedges avoiding being photographed.



Mute Swan in flight (all images Gehan de Silva Wijeyeratne)



Robin

The passerines were marking their return from warmer climes. The descending notes alerted us to a Willow Warbler. Another member of the leaf warbler family was heard later. A Chiffchaff sang a half song as if it was yet to find its stride.

A confident Robin sang lustily from a perch beside the path and was unfazed by the large

group that passed it at close range. Greenfinches wheezed and briefly the liquid notes of a singing Blackbird rose over the contact calls of Blue and Great Tits. Long-tailed Tits foraged and it won't be long before they engage in cooperative breeding. It is the only British species to do so. The young from previous broods will benefit from some parental practice. I explained to the group

that cooperative breeding is not confined to birds. Mammals such as the Golden Jackal do the same.

Reed Warblers sang at length. Sometimes very close but concealed in a straw-coloured tangle of reeds. Periodically the explosive call of a Cetti's Warbler would ring out. I remarked to the group that the the different warblers we were seeing and hearing are placed in different families, despite the generalised vernacular name.

Good numbers of Herring Gulls mixed with Lesser Black-backed Gulls. They were feeding close to the WWF Hide which allowed the more experienced birders to point out to the beginners the pink legs in the Herring and the yellow legs of the Lesser Black-backed.

The Herring Gulls are four year gulls in that they take four years to reach adult plumage. Rather conveniently we had first year juveniles, second year and third year birds and adults in close view to study how the brown and barred feathers of the juveniles are progressively replaced by clean white flight feathers and a clean grey mantle on the adults. It's hard to believe that the Herring Gulls are red listed.

Three other red listed birds present were the Lapwing, Greenfinch and Common Starling. The latter had their beak turned yellow in breeding plumage. One fine bird had hair-like feathers falling down from its chin and throat whilst its body glowed green with iridescence.

Raptors were surprisingly absent. But the naturalised Ring-necked Parakeets, close cousins of the falcons were much in evidence.



Female Mallard



Tufted Ducks mating

Odonata were also absent but of the Lepidoptera, a Holly Blue and a Brimstone put in an appearance. Blackthorn was in flower with delicate white flowers and Marsh Marigolds were out in bold yellow. A Goldcrest, Britain's smallest bird called near a clump of conifers where it is regularly seen.

Looking down at the grazing marsh from the Peacock Tower Hide a Northern Wheatear was seen. It was a male turning into breeding plumage with its mantle turning grey and its throat infused with a pinkish flush.

A Common Snipe probed the mud and at least two Little Egrets

were hunting in the sedges. At the Wildside Hide, the Phragmites reedbeds glowed silver as the sun backlit them. By 2 pm, a quietness had descended over the wetland. Harry Haslstead, who had maintained the bird list, announced we had seen or heard 48 species of birds in 3.5 hours. After a wonderful bird watching session, we dispersed to the visitor centre for a cup of coffee and, for the more indulgent, a slice of cake. There really is no urban wildlife reserve in the world which surpasses the London Wildlife Centre for its combination of biodiversity, visitor facilities and ease of access using public transport.

26th April, 2026

Wanstead Flats

Bob Vaughan

A total of 15 people gathered at Manor Park at 10am and we walked onto Wanstead Flats in sunny weather. The first bird we heard was a distant Lesser Whitethroat, which gave brief views to some of us when we drew near. There were plenty of Greater Whitethroat singing too, with some doing their display flight. Alexandra Lake held a few Moorhen, Coot, Little Grebe and Canada Geese, but then Maria Kallionaki spotted a Hobby flying over, and it was joined by another, as they drifted north-west. This was the first sighting this year for the Wanstead patch.

The western side of Alexandra Lake had the usual selection of Herring and Lesser Black-backed Gulls of various ages. Scanning through didn't turn up any rarities, but it was good practice for gull enthusiasts. A couple of Graylag Geese have remained into late spring, in the winter flocks of over 100 are regular. The walk across the football pitches was enlivened by a calling Yellow Wagtail, which showed itself quite well flying over. We listened to the call on

my phone, as it is useful to get to know it for migration times. We entered the enclosure next to Long Wood to be serenaded by Lesser Whitethroat, Blackcaps and many Common Whitethroats. Robin and Dunnock have quietened down by now, but were still audible.

We then discovered a bramble covered with Green Hairstreak butterflies. At least ten on one bush is an indication of how well these scarce butterflies are doing this year. Moving out onto the open areas, we heard a few Skylarks singing on high. Wanstead Flats is the southern tip of Epping Forest, the land is owned and tended "for the people" by the City of London Corporation. The Wren Conservation Group persuaded and helped the City of London to erect fencing to preserve a large area for nesting Skylarks. These ground-nesting birds prefer low vegetation away from trees, and their population has plummeted recently. Long may their song continue to be heard so close to London's city centre. Another singing Lesser Whitethroat kept

hidden, and there was no sign of yesterday's Whinchat and Wheatear. A few Small Copper butterflies were seen flying as we proceeded to Jubilee Pond, where three Gadwall dozed on the bank of a small island, with a couple of Little Grebe nesting nearby. We stopped for lunch at a rather charred table with benches. Here we were treated to a rather surprising avian display, distantly over the trees to the south were at least three House Martin, flying together with a few Barn Swallows. A test for the eyes, as their silhouettes twisted to and fro. Quite why these hirundines were gathered over the houses here is unclear, but with a few newly arrived Common Swift up there too, perhaps there was an insect swarm. To round things off, a single Sand Martin flew low, northwards, over our feeding station. We then headed towards Wanstead Park Station and I said goodbye and thank you to a very keen group of birdwatchers.

A total of 51 species of bird were seen. Details on [Phttps://ebird.org/checklist/S327959869](https://ebird.org/checklist/S327959869).

2nd May, 2026

Ruislip Lido and Woods

Neil Anderson

After a grey start, the sun had begun to shine as the meeting commenced and remained fine for the duration of the three-hour walk.

The Lido was relatively quiet for birds with Coots the most numerous species. A pair of Egyptian Geese had a single gosling while the adult pair of Mute Swans showed no sign of breeding this year. The only duck were Mallard and two pairs of Tufted Duck while the only Heron was an immature preening in the reedbed. The two Great Crested Grebes were well separated and didn't appear to be a pair.

On my way to meeting the group I had spotted a Common Sandpiper flying low over the water towards the southern end. Later Dick also spotted it but none of the rest of the group of 12 were fortunate enough to see it, despite some sharp eyes in the group. It was also good to greet three new members to the society who seemed to enjoy their visit.

In the corner close to Reservoir Road several House Martins were observed feeding and occasionally flying over the water. In the same area were our only House Sparrows (some collecting insects for their young) and Starlings. A Red Kite also circled over us.

Walking up the western side of the Lido there was plenty of Blackcap song which proved to be the most numerous songster as we walked around. As we approached one

of the small platforms, we heard the first of two Cetti's Warblers singing as well as a Garden Warbler. Another two of the latter species were also singing in Poor's Field. A Buzzard and a pair of Kestrels were seen as we scanned the skies, while Neil Shepherd spotted a Sparrowhawk.

As the temperature rose we started to see a few butterflies, initially Orange Tips and Green-veined Whites. As we headed to the northern end, we looked at some of the bees visiting Russian Comfrey, where we identified Common Carder, White-tailed and Early Bumblebees. It was about this point we started hearing a very vocal Cuckoo. Mark had seen it earlier in the day behind the car park but for the group it was an invisible presence throughout our time in Poor's Field.

We saw and heard a couple of Whitethroats in Poor's Field and later we watched six Jackdaws trying to mob another Buzzard, though the latter wasn't too bothered by the attention. A couple of Great Spotted Woodpeckers gave brief flight views as they disappeared into the wood. A Long-tailed Tit family flew across the path and a couple of Goldcrests were noted.

More butterflies were now appearing and we saw a couple of fresh Small Coppers, a male Brimstone on Bluebell flowers, a few Peacocks, a Comma and a couple of Holly Blues. The big discovery was a Green Hairstreak I

spotted flying around low in front of me. Fortunately, it settled on a small bramble shoot, showing its brilliant green underside. This was the first I'd seen here. It was also the first for Dick here, who has monitored the site for many years and indeed for everyone else present. They do seem to be spreading in parts of outer west London.

At a couple of bare areas, we saw several *Nomada* sp cuckoo bees and Dark-edged Beeflies, both parasitoids of mining bees.

Petty Whin was putting on a good display while in Copse Wood, Bluebells were still looking fabulous. We also saw a colony of Ramsons with several plants of Honey Garlic, *Allium siculum*. Also in this area was another garden escape in the form of Fringe Cups, *Tellima grandiflora*. We found another colony of the former species at the other end of the wood by Post Pond. Given the number of plants present I'm not sure how I'd previously overlooked the species. We didn't find any new bird species in the wood.

On our return through Poor's Field one of the group spotted a Little Egret flying over.

The final sighting of note was a smart male Grey Wagtail sitting on a rock close to the dam wall.

An enjoyable day with plenty to see in good company.