

## **Bushy Park – February 2017 Diary**

### **Tree Work**

Throughout the year The Royal Parks specialist arboricultural team monitor the trees in the Park on a programme of inspection. This considers the condition of the trees from a safety point of view and the effects of any pest and disease. Tree work may then be prescribed which includes a variety of techniques from shortening individual branches to felling or monolithing of trees that have died. Arisings and deadwood from this work is kept in the Park as far as possible as it is very important habitat for the special creatures that live in it. You will see various tree surgery works taking place.

### **Bird News**

Due to the relatively mild winter we have had so few winter visiting birds to the UK, as they have so far not felt the need to move from the continent or the farmlands of East Anglia. This has meant that the Redwing's and Fieldfare's are largely absent from the Park. We normally have to wait until Siskin and Lesser Redpolls arrive here but Siskin's have been present in small numbers since November. If numbers of the latter increase it would be worth checking through them for the slightly larger paler member of that family, the Common/Mealy Redpoll. If we happen to have some days with clear blue skies then birds like the Skylark will take to the sky to sing their beautiful song; actually locating the songster can be very difficult but is worth the challenge. Our two black and white members of the woodpecker family can also be heard drumming. The smaller and rarer member the Lesser Spotted Woodpecker is at real risk of becoming extinct as a park resident. In 2013 there was only one pair left, none of whom were recorded after April of that year. It is worth familiarising yourself to the sounds of these 2 species drumming, as it can be difficult to tell the difference. There is another songster that can be heard and isn't dependant on fine sunny days, that is the Storm Cock or to give it its common name the Mistle Thrush. Males can be heard singing on the most atrocious of days.

For more bird news check out [www.regentsparkbirds.blogspot.com](http://www.regentsparkbirds.blogspot.com) By Tony Duckett

### **Woodland Gardens**

February in the Woodland Gardens sees the start of the Camellia flowering season, slowly at first but as the day's move on more flowers can be seen. Camellia Walk in the Waterhouse Garden holds a fine collection of historic Camellias which we shall be attempting to identify and label. The volunteers have been working hard to remove the brambles from the streamside bed to show off the collection.

Volunteers have also been helping tidy the beds round Canada Glade and Fishers Pond pruning the *Cornus* so that the bright coloured stems regenerate and weeding beds to improve the tidiness of the Garden.

The Pheasantry Garden is also having some volunteer attention; the beds nearest Ash Walk are being cleared of brambles and weeds to show off the collection of plants; including *Ribes sanguinea* cv. Deciduous *Azaleas* and *Sarcococca humilis*. The Gardeners have been clearing the stream sides to show off the pneumatophores of the *Taxodium distichum* (Swamp Cypress) the oldest of which were planted in 1860.

Plants worth looking out for include *Hammamelis mollis*, *Viburnum* "Bodnantense Dawn" and the delicately scented *Mahonia* planted around the gardens.

### **News in Brief**

Top dressing to the perimeter track is taking place from Sandy Lane Gate, east to the playground.

Further information can be found on The Royal Parks website or email [bushy@royalparks.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:bushy@royalparks.gsi.gov.uk)