

Bushy Park – September 2018 Diary

Deer rut – advice for walkers

The stags and bucks now sport fully-grown antlers. They may be seen thrashing them about in the vegetation to build up their neck muscles, as towards the end of the month they will start establishing territories for the rut. The deer also indulge in dust wallows to assist the shedding of their summer coats as their winter ones grow through. They are vulnerable to disturbance during the rut and the large number of spectators can affect them.

Recently the numbers of owners choosing to walk their dogs in Bushy Park has increased considerably. Deer can feel threatened by dogs even over long distances and when the dog is not behaving in a provocative manner. This is particularly so during the rutting (September – October) and the birthing (May – July) seasons. We recommend walking your dog outside the Park at these times.

If you choose, at your own risk, to walk your dog in the Park at these times, it is advisable to keep your dog on a lead and consider an alternative route, such as following the wall line of the Park, close to exit gates.

Dog Fouling

Dog waste left in the park is unpleasant for other park users, unhygienic and causes serious ecological damage to plant life and animal communities. It is an offence under The Royal Parks Regulations to fail to clean up after your dog including within the areas of long grass. Dog waste should be placed in a tightly sealed bag and taken home or deposited in the marked dog waste bins. Anyone failing to clean up after their dog may face prosecution.

Bird News

Migration is now in full flow with those summer visitors that have nested further north in the United Kingdom now being joined by others from Northern Europe. The chances of seeing Common Swift, one of our shortest staying summer visitors becomes very difficult. The early mornings or evenings are the best times as this is when birds may be at the end of the day head towards water bodies, this could be the nearby reservoirs or may be the Diana Fountain or nearby ponds as this is where they will be feeding on an abundance of flying insects. This autumn the migration has been taking place but the numbers of migrants involved is lower than most years. This is because there hasn't been a wind with an "E" in. We need the direction to come from the northeast down to southeast, that way birds will be pushed across the North Sea. The early part of the month also offers an opportunity to see Spotted Flycatcher; a once regular park breeder, this species has become much harder to see. If you are walking on the western side of the park near River Lodge or along Dukes Head Passage keep an eye out for our 3 Hobby chicks. They bred nearby and the parents are training them by passing food to them in mid air. This also shows the young the types of food to hunt for.

The Woodland Gardens

This month the streams will have a cut back and tidy up, The wildflower meadow areas will be mown and plans will be drawn up for the car park re-planting which is being funded by the Friends of Bushy and Home Parks.

The volunteers have been starting to clear the banks of self seeded saplings and brambles from the stream leading out of the Waterhouse pond towards Roaring Arch. This in preparation to plant up with a selection of flowering and autumn colour shrubs.

The Gardeners have got on top of the weeding in the Pheasantry and are now working in the Bog Garden area preparing areas for this winters planting.

Further information can be found on The Royal Parks web site or via email bushy@royalparks.gsi.gov.uk