

Bushy Park – October 2021 Diary

Fungi

Once the summer weather breaks the soil and air becomes damp with autumn rain allowing fungi to emerge without drying out. Some species can be seen all year round but the abundance and variety are displaying now and last only until the first hard frost. Fungi are neither plants nor animals – they are decomposers of organic matter, surviving underground or within plants all year but emerging as mushrooms or toadstools in order to reproduce. Some of these fruiting bodies are palatable to humans, whilst most are not and a few are poisonous. Collecting mushrooms is forbidden in the Park as doing so will diminish the population and deprives other wildlife of its habitat and food.

Bird News

By the end of September most of our summer visitors, park breeders such as Common Whitethroat, Reed Warbler and Swallow or migrating birds from further north in the United Kingdom and Europe will now have departed on their long journeys to Sub-Saharan Africa. There is still a chance that a few stragglers may be found feeding up on the last of the blackberries or the few insects that haven't yet died as the temperatures begin to drop.

The Woodland Gardens -

The Pheasantry car park is going to be replanted with a selection of plants inspired by Derek Jarman's garden at Dungeness. Why... The Head Gardener at Bushy Park was inspired by the display of plants growing in an incredibly tough environment. Why the carpark? The Carpark is exposed and gets very hot in the summer and windswept in the winter, if the plants survive at Dungeness, then they should survive in the carpark. We will reuse the plants in the main garden wherever possible. The Friends of Bushy and Home Parks are funding this project, the planting will commence at the end of October. The trees in this area were planted closely at the start to allow for failures, they now need thinning to allow the remaining trees to reach maturity without competition. Why have some trees been pruned? A few of the trees have been identified as suitable for pollarding. This is an ancient method of pruning trees that produces a shorter tree that has a long life. The Rhododendron Ponticum will be removed from Keepers Wood. It is an invasive species that is unattractive to wildlife. When cleared we are going to establish a native woodland with species that can be coppiced and managed as a wildlife conservation area. We want to provide habitats for hedgehogs, grass snakes, invertebrates, we will also put-up bat boxes and Bird boxes. We will be planting Alder, Willow, Hazel, Chestnut trees in this area. The stream sides will be planted with a more ornamental woodland plant mix to be seen from the gardens with views through into the conservation area. We are going to look at the ground when it is cleared and purchase tree whips that will like the soil conditions that we find. Why are some trees cut down? We have felled some trees to allow more light to the ground, these trees will regrow as coppices which will be cut back every few years. We will also be removing the Laurel Hedge on the garden side of the stream to allow more light into the stream area

Deer rut advice for walkers

The deer rut really gets under way in October and the advice on Park posters and our website continues to be important. The Royal Parks often receive reports where dogs sustain injuries from deer, as well as deer being chased by dogs sometimes with fatal consequences. We recommend walking your dog outside the Park during October. 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. Even if you don't have a dog, keep at least 50m from the deer and stay alert.

Further information on the Deer Rut please scan QR code below: -

