

Present: Peter Roseveare (Chair), Jeff Doodson, Harry Rutherford, Sigrid Collins, Angela Wilkes, Sue Cope, Glynis Williams, Emily Montague

Apologies: Dave Clark, Steven Robinson, Sam Taylor, Charles Newman

Minutes of Meeting 12.7.22 Agreed as accurate record

Matters Arising

Gallery Road Hedge:

Jeremy Prescott has reported to PR that Southwark have done some clearing. The possibility of extending the hedgerow into the playing field alongside is considered. This land is owned by the College Estate. It is hoped that this option might be facilitated now that Oliver Stutter is tree expert working for the College Estate. As a result of the drought no actual work can commence until springtime. Sigrid pointed out that previously there had been a significant litter problem in that hedgerow. PR collected documents from Sigrid relating to procedures needed for the work done some years ago.

As an aside regarding hedges, JD observed that the Dulwich Library hedge is developing well and congratulated GW on being instrumental in the planting of that hedge.

Greendale:

PR has spoken to Chris Rowse, Chair of Friends of Greendale. Final decision as to whether astroturf facility will be taken over for development by DHFC still awaited. St Olave's are currently negotiating with another school (believed to be Alleyn's) about transfer of use of playing field. Sally Rendell, a JAGS teacher, is aiming to have further wildlife friendly features developed on the JAGS playing field side of the Greendale path. DC has more information about these plans.

Belair

Friends Wildlife Group has formed. They have enlisted volunteers from Dulwich College to be involved with practical work. There is a plan for enhanced planting as outlined in past minutes. Simon Saville gave a talk about butterflies as part of strategy to increase engagement in wildlife issues among Friends of Belair.

SR's hand reared Swift successfully fledged a week after being introduced to a nest with a Swift family.

Fake Grass in gardens

PR reported that this was discussed at the Society Executive where Jeremy Prescott is involved as the Society member involved with the Dulwich Estate revision of guidelines for permitted garden structures. Use of artificial grass in gardens (as opposed to astroturf in sports facilities) will be included in the guidelines. The Executive members representing wildlife, gardens and environment all expressed concern about use of artificial grass for a whole gamut of reasons. One proposal is that the Estate should ban its use. The likely final proposal is that permission will need to be sought from the Estate Governors to install artificial grass.

There was discussion at this meeting of the harmful effects of artificial grass on wildlife and on the environment and that people who install it are unaware of its pitfalls and in need of education about the consequences for the environment. GW suggested that a meeting with the Estate governors might be useful to promote awareness.

Promoting wider engagement with nature — Wildlife Diaries

No further details of specific monitoring for ongoing BTO projects but Sharon O'Connor encouraged PR to ask for reports of garden wildlife sightings via a request in the e-newsletter. It was very encouraging to receive thirteen responses. Several people sent pictures of the exotic looking day flying Jersey Tiger moth which has moved north as a

result of climate change and is now commonly seen in London. Requests for reports of wildlife observations will appear again in the next newsletter.

Reports and Sightings

Dulwich Park (EM)

Appreciation was expressed to EM for the organisation of the Moth and Butterfly Event led by Steve Bolton of City Butterflies in the Park on July 30. EM reported that Steve is advising and providing plants for some of the wildlife areas in the Park aiming to optimise Butterfly and Moth habitat, initially seeding of annuals while allowing perennial species to establish.

The summer drought has had a worrying deleterious effect particularly on the Rhododendrons. The longterm impact of this summer will not be clear until next year and hopefully some plants will recover. Having sufficient workforce of staff and volunteers for the work that needs to be done in due course to maintain the iconic Rhododendron beds is a concern.

Moth Trapping (HR)

HR continues moth trapping and has been pheromone trapping as well as using his conventional light source. Of note have been Clearwing moths and Dark Crimson Underwing moth and Silver Washed Fritillary butterfly. He has observed Hummingbird Hawkmoth caterpillars and notes that their food plant, Lady's Bedstraw, is growing in the wildflower bed by the Francis Peek Centre. Overall fewer butterfly observations although Small Copper seen in the Park as well as more commonly seen species.

EM has had the very good luck of seeing a frog phenomenon of a large group of frogs crossing a Herne Hill road to seek new territories. Her swift boxes have not had swifts take up residence but have been used by great tits.

Sigrid is pleased to have a nuthatch spending a lot of time in her garden, which is home to a sizeable House sparrow colony.

The Python that went missing in Calton Avenue has been found and returned home.

General Discussion

The theme of the meeting discussion about wildlife during this summer was DEARTH OF MANY SPECIES, few greenfly, few ladybirds, several years of no hedgehogs, almost no bat sightings over past regular places for sightings, fewer beetles, fewer blackbirds. PR highlighted the lack of invertebrates as having a profound effect on all fauna and wondered what could be done. SC said that the books by Dave Goulson and Oliver Milman about insect decline both highlight insecticide use in horticultural industry and agriculture and by gardeners above other factors such as climate change and habitat loss.

AOB

Odonata expert Czech Conroy is preparing an article for the magazine on Damselflies and Dragonflies. He reports that it has been a bad year for them despite members of this group seeing more species in gardens and in the Park than previous years.

Sharon O'Connor is preparing an article about bees. PR was asked to ensure that the focus of the bee article does not encourage honey bee keeping as it is now established that the honey bee population of London is beyond sustainable levels and is therefore competing with bumble and solitary bees for nectar to the detriment of the native bees.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday November 29