

Dulwich Society Wildlife Group 27.6.23

Present: Peter Roseveare, (Chair), Dave Clark, Harry Rutherford, Sigrid Collins, Glynis Williams, Stephen Robinson, Jeff Doodson, Charles Newman, Sue Cope
Apologies: Angela Wilkes, Emily Montague, Sam Taylor

Minutes of Meeting 26.4.23. Agreed as an accurate record.

Matters Arising:

Greendale: There are now three reports available on the ecology of Greendale and environs. They are a report prepared for DHFC, the 2014 LWT report and the up to date report prepared by Mandy Rudd of GiGL for the Dulwich Society following an enquiry by Dave Clark. This report is available for one year on the Society's website. The Friends of Greendale have a priority of ensuring that development of the site will preserve public recreational space. The approval of the lease on the St Olave's playing field will ensure some protection of recreational space. After discussion as to how to raise profile of protection of wildlife and ecological diversity around Greendale it was proposed that Peter Roseveare and Dave Clark meet with Chis Rowse of Friends of Greendale to encourage protection of wildlife as a high priority alongside the preservation of recreational space. Peter also to request clarification about the possibility that Dulwich Estate are seeking the lease on one of the Greendale area fields adjoining the proposed development.

Velodrome: Dulwich Estate require the Velodrome management to set in motion reparations for lost habitat resulting from the works done at the Velodrome a few months ago which did not have Dulwich Estate approval. Oliver Stutter of the Estate will be meeting with Velodrome management and as yet details of reparations are unknown. Burbage Road residents are likely to wish to be involved.

Reports

Dulwich Park: (DC in absence of EM) Milo, the head of Rainham Marshes RSPB reserve, has visited and advised on management of the seedbeds and lakeside habitat. Works will be undertaken by his recommended contractor TCB beginning in September. Details of works to be finalised but likely to include clearing of brambles and planting more reeds and water plants.

Chairman's Report:

Peter reminded members of the Risk Register requirements that the Dulwich Society has as charitable organisation. Any organised activities such as walks and talks need to be declared to the Society Secretary (Heather Stubbs) and risk assessment form completed. The Wildflower Walk with Roy Vickery demonstrated the wide variety of wildflowers around Greendale. Participants enjoyed Roy Vickery's information about both botany and folklore of wildflowers.

Walkabout the Village: Oliver Stutter of Dulwich Estate, John Best of Southwark Council, Lindsay Rosser of Dulwich Village Residents Association along with Dave Clark and the Chairs of the Dulwich Society Gardening, Trees and Wildlife Groups have walked around the village area to assess verges and vegetation. Dead trees were identified in some of the hedgerows. The Council have planted wildflower turf on the Village verges and on the 'Burbage Circus'. Oliver Stutter agreed to decrease the amount of mowing that is done. There was agreement that wildflowers are very much to be encouraged and a shared recognition of the ecological value of plants previously branded as weeds should be valued as being of environmental benefit.

Sightings and General Discussion

No-mow May: Peter very proudly reported that a Bee Orchid had grown in his grass. Everyone agreed this was an especially unusual and gratifying reward for not mowing. Charles reported that as a result of his no-mow June he is enjoying an abundance of flowering Clover.

Birds: There was a discussion about the sightings of Swifts locally. SR is hoping the three chicks in one of his swift boxes will successfully fledge. SR had a good response from the Wildlife Crime Unit regarding ensuring protection of a Swift breeding site where building works are being undertaken in Lewisham. His overview is that this has been a mixed year for the Swifts. Cold weather and winds delayed migration but numbers arriving have now increased. JAGS ordered some Swift boxes but they arrived too late for this year's birds. Hopefully they will be used next year.

Cuckoo calls were heard in early May in Sydenham Woods and in Dulwich.

Harry Rutherford reported that there is a Reed Warbler in Dulwich Park but that Burgess Park has more warbler species. There are breeding Sedge Warblers, Reed Warblers and Whitethroat there. Additionally a Cetti's Warbler was heard singing in Burgess Park in early June and hopefully they may also breed.

Great Spotted Woodpeckers are nesting in the Picture Gallery gardens and also in JAGS grounds.

Of the garden bird species it was noted that Goldfinches are especially abundant and also there are young Robins from later broods around. The dry weather will make it hard for the Robins to find worms which may be a reason an opportunist young Robin has been attempting to take moths from Harry's moth trap!

Harry has continued to be rewarded with finding more species of moths in his moth trap. He has identified over six hundred species visiting his trap since he began recording and this year so far has identified eleven species he has not previously found. He is now also using pheromone traps and has identified seven species of Clearwing as well as some species related to clothes moths which are attracted to the pheromone traps.

Harry has seen Banded Demoiselle Damselfly in Dulwich Park.

The cold wet spring has resulted in it being a poor year for caterpillars and therefore a poor year for Blue Tits and butterflies, and overall a poor year for insects.

Dave has however seen Silver Washed Fritillary Butterfly in his garden. Recent butterfly sightings have been Meadow Browns, Speckled Wood, Small and Large Skippers.

Sue and Jeff usually expect to see bats by this time of year but have seen none this year.

Items for eNewsletter:

The message for the next eNewsletter will be reminding people to make water available for birds in the hot weather. Peter requested suggestions for future newsletters.

AOB

Lambeth Council have commenced consultation on improvements to Ruskin Park

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 29.8.23