



# Tower Habitats Newsflash

*Latest news on nature conservation and wildlife in Tower Hamlets*

June 2017

**Reed bed poll success** – the site at Navigation Road in Bow was one of the winners in [Thames21's reed bed vote](#), reported in the last *Newsflash*. Thanks to everyone who voted for a reed bed in Bow! The reed bed will be installed soon.

**New meadows created by Ben Johnson Lock** – The Lower Regents Coalition has created 300m<sup>2</sup> of new meadows beside the Regent's Canal at Ben Johnson Lock, with help from Grounded Ecotherapy and funding from the Tower Hill Trust. [Read more about the new canal-side meadows.](#)

**Great Crested Newts confirmed at Spitalfields City Farm** – crested newts have been known to inhabit the ponds in Spitalfields City Farm for several years, as the result of an introduction to a nearby garden pond. However, as several non-native amphibians, including Alpine Newt and European Tree Frog, are also present from the same source, it was never certain whether these were the protected Great Crested Newt, or the very similar, non-native, Italian Crested Newt. A survey of environmental DNA in the pond has confirmed that they are Great Crested Newts. [Read more about Spitalfields' newts.](#)

**Plants and People Trail opens** – the new Plants and People Trail at Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park was launched in April. The trail is all about the links between plants and people – cultural, economic and gastronomic. It is supported by a spoken word commentary accessible on smartphones, a leaflet, and information panels which are changed with the seasons. [Read more about the trail launch.](#)

**Poplar HARCA plant bulbs for bees** – Poplar HARCA has planted around 50,000 bulbs, and sown wild flower plugs and seeds, to provide nectar for bees and other pollinators on its estates over the last two years. [Read more about Poplar HARCA's work for pollinators.](#)

**Rare hoverfly at Cemetery Park** – the nationally-rare Glass-winged Dronefly was seen and photographed at Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park in May, by local entomologist Rosemary Stephens. This is the first London record. [Read more about this exciting record.](#)

**70 trees planted in Meath Gardens** – the Friends of Meath Gardens, with help from the Council's Green Team, organised a community event to plant 70 native trees in Meath Gardens. [Read more about this community tree-planting day.](#)

**Stepney Greencoat School gets greener** – with help from a Tower Habitats grant from the Tower Hill Trust, children at Stepney Greencoat School have planted nectar-rich flowers, installed bird and bat boxes, and improved habitat around their pond. [Read more about Stepney Greencoat's project.](#)

**More wildlife murals on Ackroyd Drive** – seven top street artists have painted six new wildlife-themed murals on the railway arches beside Ackroyd Drive Greenlink. This follows on from the 13 murals of endangered wildlife painted last year. [Read more and see the murals.](#)

**Plant Pots for Pollinators** – Butterfly Conservation is asking people to plant a pot with nectar-rich flowers this month, then record it on an online map. This is a simple thing that anyone can do to help our declining butterflies, bees and other pollinating insects. You don't need a garden – a balcony or window box is sufficient. [See more on how to take part.](#)

For more information on these and other stories, see [www.towerhabitats.org](http://www.towerhabitats.org)

If you have news on wildlife or biodiversity conservation in Tower Hamlets, please e-mail the Biodiversity Officer [john.archer@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:john.archer@towerhamlets.gov.uk) or phone 020 7364 7478