



Tower Habitats Newsflash

Latest news on nature conservation and wildlife in Tower Hamlets

February 2012

New spider for Britain found in Mile End Park – Edward Milner found the first-ever British specimen of the buzzing spider *Anyphaena sabina* in September 2011 during regular survey work near Kirk's Place. This is the second spider added to the British list from the park, following the discovery of the jumping spider *Macaroeis nidicolens* there in 2002.

New meadows in Victoria Park – 5.8 hectares of new wildflower meadows have been sown in Victoria Park as part of the Lottery-funded restoration project. That's almost 6 times the target for meadow creation in our Biodiversity Action Plan!

Review of wildlife sites completed – Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) in Tower Hamlets were reviewed during 2011. King Edward Memorial Park, Saffron Avenue Pond, Wapping Wood and the Wapping Canals were designated as new SINCs.

Rare warbler at East India Dock Basin (again!) – a Barred Warbler attracted birdwatchers from all over London to East India Dock Basin on 26th September, only the ninth ever seen in London. Remarkably, the last Barred Warbler in London was also at the Basin, exactly five years earlier.

Biodiversity Officer now full-time – from November 2011, Tower Hamlets Biodiversity Officer, John Archer, is working full-time for the Council. He had previously been employed for 3 days a week.

Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery win another award – the Friends won the Community Award, for the most successful project inspired, driven and delivered by a local community, at the Mayor of London's 2011 RE:LEAF Awards. It's the second year running the Friends have won one of these prestigious awards – they won the Biodiversity Award at the 2010 London Tree & Woodland Awards, the forerunner of RE:LEAF.

Urban nature trail opened on Manchester Estate – Trees for Cities, with Eastend Homes and local residents, have transformed the grounds around the Manchester Estate on the Isle of Dogs, and there is now a nature trail around the estate to help residents discover the wildlife on their doorstep.

Rare butterfly and moth in Cemetery Park – 2011 saw the first records of Small Blue butterfly and Jersey Tiger moth for Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park. The Small Blue was the first ever seen in inner London.

Over 300 volunteers help to clean the Thames – Thames21 held nine River Clean workdays, where over 300 people picked litter from the foreshore.

For more information on these and other stories, see www.towerhabitats.org

If you have news on wildlife or biodiversity conservation, please e-mail the Biodiversity Officer john.archer@towerhamlets.gov.uk or phone 020 7364 7478