



Tower Habitats Newsflash

Latest news on nature conservation and wildlife in Tower Hamlets

May 2012

Free wildflower seeds – Tower Hamlets Council is offering a free pack of wildflower seeds to residents. The seeds, Landlife’s “Bumblebee & Butterfly Border”, are a mix of annuals and perennials that will provide nectar for insects and brighten up gardens, housing estates and window boxes all over the borough. The seeds are available from Idea Stores, libraries, city farms and the Soanes Centre.

Conference – the Biodiversity Partnership is organising a conference on 27 June to mark the half-way stage in the Biodiversity Action Plan. Presentations include transforming housing estates and school grounds, the Big Waterway Clean Up 2012, water-sensitive urban design and biodiversity, and the latest from Mile End and Victoria Parks. There will also be a keynote address from Professor David Goode, one of the founding fathers of urban nature conservation. Email towerhabitats@towerhamlets.gov.uk for more details.

Portuguese Ducks return to East India Dock Basin – the 2 Tufted Ducks, marked in Portugal with red nasal saddles, have returned to East India Dock Basin Nature Reserve for the second spring running. The female returned first, on 28 March, having been spotted at Hillfield Park Reservoir in Hertfordshire a couple of days earlier. She was last seen on 26 April. The male, which had returned to Portugal for the winter, was first seen at the basin on 10 April and was still around on 9 May.

New “Building for Biodiversity” page on Tower Habitats website – a new page has been added in the Planning Resources section of the website, providing information and links on green roofs and design for biodiversity <http://www.towerhabitats.org/resources/building-for-biodiversity.htm>.

Transforming the Glamis Estate – Trees for Cities and EastEnd Homes are transforming the open spaces of the Glamis Estate to make them more interesting for people and wildlife. The latest stage in the work was a community planting day at Glamis Estate West in March.

Rare plant appears around the Docks – Jersey Cudweed is very rare in Britain, with just 2 populations (in Norfolk and Kent) which are considered native. It is protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act. A local botanist was surprised to discover 3 small populations of Jersey Cudweed in the south of the borough, beside Poplar, Millwall and St Katherine’s Docks. It’s not clear how it arrived here, but it is occasionally grown in gardens so might have escaped, or seed could have been accidentally imported in soil.

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