



Tower Habitats Newsflash

Latest news on nature conservation and wildlife in Tower Hamlets

November 2016

Biodiversity grants available – grants of up to £2000 are available from the Tower Hill Trust for schools and community groups in Tower Hamlets for projects which help deliver the Local Biodiversity Action Plan. For full details [e-mail Elaine Crush](#).

Long-tailed Blue at Cemetery Park – a female Long-tailed Blue butterfly, a very rare visitor to Britain, was found in Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park in August. It was the second seen in Tower Hamlets in the last five years, following one at East India Dock Basin in 2012. Remarkably, this is the 32nd species of butterfly recorded at Cemetery Park, a phenomenal number for an inner London site. Read more [here](#).

Volunteers rescue amphibians at Victoria Park – volunteers worked with the Council's Green Team to move over 800 frogs, toads and newts to safety as the summer bedding plants were stripped from the Sunken Garden in Victoria Park. The amphibians, which would have been exposed to crows and other predators, were released in the safety of nearby shrubberies. Read more [here](#).

Planning guidance for tidal Thames fish conservation launched – The Zoological Society of London has published guidance for the conservation of fish in the tidal Thames in the development planning process. Read more [here](#).

Awards galore for Tower Hamlets' parks – The borough's parks have won recognition in a series of awards schemes this year. A record ten parks won Green Flags, including Meath Gardens for the first time, while Mudchute and Cemetery Park retained their Green Flag Community Awards. Victoria Park was then voted one of ten People's Choice winners, out of 1700 Green Flag parks, for the third year running. Success at the London in Bloom awards led to an invitation to compete in Britain in Bloom, where the borough won Silver Gilt awards for Environmental Sustainability and Horticultural Standards. See more details of our Green Flag success [here](#), and In Bloom and People's Choice successes [here](#).

Huge web excites spider experts – an enormous spider web, several metres across, was found in Cemetery Park in September. It was covered with hundreds of tiny *Ostearius melanopygius* spiders, and caused a lot of interest as this behaviour has never previously been recorded in the species. Read more [here](#).

10,000 snowdrops planted on St George's Estate – EastendHomes and around a hundred corporate volunteers enhanced amenity lawns with 10,000 snowdrops and around 2,000 of daffodil bulbs in September. Also trialled for the first time was layering Drooping Star-of-Bethlehem (*Ornithogalum nutans*) above daffodils to prolong the flowering period of the bulbs, and hence the period in which grass is not cut. This suggestion came from Terry Lyle from Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park, as a way to provide better biodiversity opportunities in grassed estate areas.

Lots of conservation work at Mudchute – practical conservation charity TCV has led several corporate volunteer days in October, clearing the pond, thinning woodland and clearing bramble and scrub. Meanwhile, London Bee Keepers Association planted nectar-rich wild flowers. Read more on the [Mudchute Blog](#).

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