



Tower Habitats Newsflash

Latest news on nature conservation and wildlife in Tower Hamlets

March 2019

Wildlife habitats enhanced in Meath Gardens – over the winter, the Friends of Meath Gardens organised a series of volunteer planting days to enhance wildlife habitats in the park. Between November 2018 and February 2019, an army of volunteers planted an astonishing total of 60 trees, nearly 800 shrubs and 8500 bulbs. The resulting habitat enhancements, all of which contribute to targets in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan, include a new orchard, mixed native hedges around much of the park's perimeter, and woodlands and grassland enhanced. [Read more about Meath Gardens wildlife enhancements.](#)

Mistletoe in Poplar – local author and naturalist Bob Gilbert found Mistletoe growing high up in a maple tree on the Brownfield Estate. This is the first ever record in Tower Hamlets of this fascinating plant, which is very rare in inner London. Appropriately, considering its connections in folklore, Bob found the plant in the run-up to Christmas! [Read more about this exciting discovery.](#)

A community orchard in Bob's Park – the Bromley by Bow Centre and The Orchard project have planted an orchard outside the health centre in Bob's Park (Bromley Recreation Ground). [Read more about the new orchard.](#)

More new beetles (and a spider) in Cemetery Park – as part of his regular monitoring, Edward Milner has added four beetles and one spider to the ever-growing lists of these groups in Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park. The beetles were among specimens collected in May and June 2018, while the spider, a winter-active money spider, was found in February of this year. They bring the lists to an astonishing 435 species of beetles and 154 spiders. [Find out more about these beetles](#) and [spider](#).

Bird and bat boxes in Green Flag parks – the Council's Parks Service has provided new homes for birds and bats in Poplar Park and Trinity Square Gardens, as part of the commitment to enhance biodiversity under the Green Flag Awards scheme. The boxes were installed free of charge by City Suburban Tree Surgeons, the Council's tree contractor. [Read more and see photos.](#)

City Nature Challenge 2019 – the Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park are collaborating with the Natural History Museum to bring the City Nature Challenge 2019 to Tower Hamlets. This big citizen science event will run over the weekend of 27-28 April, with sessions in Tower hamlets Cemetery Park, Shandy Park and Swedenborg Gardens. Full details will be available soon, but any local naturalists who would like to help out with identifying things and talking to visitors about the value of citizen science, please [e-mail Michelle Lindson](#).

A boost for Brimstones – in December 2018, the Council's Biodiversity Officer provided young plants of Common Buckthorn, the caterpillar food plant of the Brimstone butterfly, to community groups and housing associations. The striking yellow Brimstone is often one of the first butterflies to be seen in spring. It is not uncommon in London, and roams widely, but its caterpillar food plants, Common and Alder Buckthorns, are very scarce in Tower Hamlets. To ensure our Brimstones find places to lay their eggs, there is a target in the LBAP to plant buckthorns at 25 sites over the five year period. A total of 50 Buckthorns were planted at 16 sites, ensuring the target has been met. [Read more about this lovely butterfly.](#)

How to help Hedgehogs – the People's Trust for Endangered Species has published a guide to managing parks, gardens and other land to benefit hedgehogs. You can [download the guide here](#).

For more information on these and other stories, see 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 or phone 020 7364 7478