HIGHBURY PARK
Friends

Welcome to our April 2020 Bulletin

Things haven't quite worked out as we'd hoped this Spring. We've had to postpone our events programme in the wake of Covid 19. However, it's been lovely to see the park full everyday with local residents who are very appreciative of having somewhere so beautiful to walk that is right on the doorstep. Please remember to socially distance by keeping two metres apart from other park users when at Highbury and keep dogs on a lead.

The Council also agreed

- Play areas to be locked/taped shut and notices erected saying they are no longer in use.
- Outdoor gyms and MUGAs – signage to be applied to these too
- All cafes, takeaways and mobile vendors should cease trading
- Friends Groups to cease organised group workdays/activities to reduce all "organised" activity in parks

If you haven't been able to go out at all during the current pandemic we particularly hope you enjoy these photographs that capture the beauty of Highbury so well. They were taken by Harper Stephens.

Nature Notes

Spring is a great time to spot insects as they emerge from hibernation. They will need to feed – so the first places to look are flowers such as Dandelion, Crocus and Lesser Celandine. The really large bumblebees scouting around near the ground are queens looking for nest sites where they will start a new colony. Sometimes they nest in old mouseholes. Bare and dry banks and the roots of overturned trees are prime sites for solitary ground-nesting bees – for example Clarke's mining bee. The Pine Ladybird is small and black with bright red spots, the front two being comma-shaped. Like most other ladybirds, it is a carnivore with a predilection for aphids. EMP

Clarke's Mining Bee *Andrena clarkella*

Photography Event. 22nd February 2020

A new feature in the HPF events calendar in recent months has been our photowalks. They are led by local photographers Gary Tomlinson and Mike Farley and give our members and supporters the chance to hone their photography skills either with a mobile device or camera.

We welcomed 25 people of all ages from across the West Midlands to the February event. We had a fun morning in good weather conditions taking photos of the trees and flowers in the park. We managed great shots of fungi, tree blossom and some of the aftermath of the recent winter storms.

The events are proving popular and we'll set up another one as soon as we can. There are photos from the walk on our Facebook and Instagram pages, so follow us on social media.
Matthew Brown-Bolton.

Trees Lost

You've probably noticed that we lost several trees during the recent bad weather. Storm Ciara brought this oak tree down on the main path. There were a number of other casualties amongst the older trees, particularly those covered with ivy, the weight of which seems to have made them more vulnerable.

And Trees Gained.....

Work has continued planting new trees in the Nature Recovery Network area above the Old Bowling Green. Trees donated by the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust include 100 hazel, 10 oak, 10 spindle, 20 crab apple, 10 field maple, 20 guelder rose and 10 sweet chestnut. A big thank you to local residents Paul Anthony, who donated 12 fruit trees and Allister Lewis Marshall, who donated 2. Our wildlife is in for a treat in a few years time!

Picture by Harper Stephens

Picture by Harper Stephens

Events Programme

Unfortunately, in line with everyone else, we have had to cancel our events in the park. We are hoping to resume asap and hope to hold our AGM in October. So watch this space. We had planned two events in April for the City Nature Challenge but you can still take part from your own garden

2020 City Nature Challenge
We received the following message from Eco-record.

The annual challenge first began in 2016 and is organised by the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County and the California Academy of Sciences. The City Nature Challenge is a competition between cities all over the world to see how many wild species their citizens can spot over the space of four days in April.

We're very excited to announce that Birmingham and the Black Country (Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall & Wolverhampton) will be taking part in the 2020 City Nature Challenge. In 2020 there will be over 230 cities taking part worldwide including 10 other UK cities.

We thought that Birmingham & the Black Country should also be represented!

The B&BC entry is being organised by EcoRecord Birmingham Museum and The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country.

You can take part from your own garden!.

Records of ANY wild species of plants or animals spotted between Friday 24th to Monday 27th April 2020 will count towards our total

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