



Friends of Yeading Walk Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2026



Yeading Walk Celebrates Wildlife

There was some highly unusual wildlife in the park last Saturday afternoon:



A lion stretched and roared, an elephant thundered down from Suffolk Road, a butterfly danced in the air, a dolphin leapt out the water and a snake slithered off into the long grass.....

All colourfully and imaginatively drawn on the pathway by young artists in celebration of Sir David Attenborough's 100th birthday.



The FoYW volunteers and our park families enjoyed a Saturday afternoon informal picnic in the Orchard to honour a life dedicated to presenting and protecting the natural world in all its vivid colour, intensity and magnificence. We enjoyed meeting our park neighbours, ate up all the shared snacks, played games, painted faces and ended with 'Happy Birthday, David' belted out as loud as we could, hoping he would hear us in his south London home. David Attenborough has captivated generations with exquisite photography of wildlife, and with stories of survival, courtship and poignant dramas but also reminded us of the planet and its wild inhabitants' increasing fragility. As we celebrate his life, perhaps we can also ask ourselves what each of us can do to help preserve our world for future generations?



Thank you to everyone who attended and for your generous donations to the Worldwide Fund for Nature. We raised £56 *and the Friends Committee will match that donation*. If you would like to add your own donation to this cause, please send it to the Friends Bank Account, marked **WW Fund** (see details at the end of this newsletter), with an email to foywgroup@gmail.com with **WW Fund for Nature** in the subject line, plus your full name and amount donated, so we can acknowledge your gift.

There have also been some real spring wildlife in the park: the duck family have raised a brood of ducklings for the second year running, blue tits have nested in one of the park bird boxes, the badger has been spotted out at dusk and a couple of deer from the allotment near the Streamside Hut have been visiting the park, which is a bit concerning, given the busy roads. The egret continues to fish in the stream, and this lovely photo was taken in the park recently.



The egret continues to fish in the stream, and this deer was spotted in the park recently



New Planting: the 'Hot and Jazzy' and the 'Cool and Contemplative'

The two new planted areas created by the FoYW volunteers last autumn are developing well. The new entrance bed at Suffolk Road is filled with tough plants which like it hot and sunny. Winter heather and hyacinths provided a profusion of deep pink blooms for early bees and cheered the winter walkers. April saw bright scarlet geums and red hot pokers in flower, responding to the dry, warm spring with very early blossom at least a month before usual flowering time – Climate Change in Action. Euphorbia, achillea and salvias are also all in bloom. At the back of the bed, an escallonia, a philadelphus (mock orange'), cotinus and a callistemon will provide height in a few years' time. While selected for their ability to withstand a hot summer, the planting will need watering during very dry times until established but should then be able to cope with the sunny site.



Autumn also saw a second planted area created in a shady spot left of the foot path en route to the Rayners Lane entrance. Volunteers cleared away remaining brambles and stubborn weeds, and a similar metal border now provides permanent edging for the bed. Lots of soil shoveling followed to provide a planting media of 'soil conditioner' (a mix of composted bark chips, grit and manure). FoYW volunteers planted a range of shade-tolerant plants including mahonia, Japanese anemones, geranium 'Rozanne' and grasses, plus specimen plants escallonia, fatsia japonica 'Spider's Web' and Cotinus 'Royal Purple' – also known as 'smoke-bush' renowned for its dark purple foliage and haze of profuse pink blooms. This shady Mahonia bed faces a different challenge as the sloping site from the Suffolk Road boundary to the path is waterlogged during winter and some plants have struggled with first the wet soil, followed by a very dry March. Spring tulips and daffodils emerged in a burst of yellow, but remaining plants will take longer to establish in the shade. Several silver birch trees in this area are sadly dying and will need replacement.



Beautiful Spring tulips in the new flower bed near the Rayners Lane entrance.

The FoYW acknowledge and thank Harrow Council for a further Green Grid Award as well as further funding from the Crane Valley Partnership, providing the infrastructure and plants for these beds.



Calling All Gardeners

The park now has eight planted areas, some of which are now well established but all of which need a little regular care. The volunteers have dug up the grass, installed the raised beds, planted, weeded and watered but we need a little help keeping the plants looking good. If you are a keen gardener – or would be interested in learning – consider becoming a Yeading Walk Gardener. We should like to form a team of interested gardeners who could provide the occasional hour to help maintain, improve and sustain our planting. We provide the tools, and – if needed – the guidance and will garden alongside you, at a time that works for you. Yeading Walk is a peaceful, beautiful place and an hour keeping the park in pristine shape is deeply satisfying – followed by a cuppa and a chat with people who share your interest. Please email Mary, foywgroup@gmail.com to find out a bit more.

Progress on Yeading Brook Unbound

Specialist contractors have made two visits to Yeading Walk to eradicate Japanese knotweed, a key priority for the park. Clumps of this invasive plant, which has a deep and very robust root system are situated around the edges of the island near the main bridge and also at a couple of sites further down the river. Spray treatment will continue twice per year for the next 2 years at least.

Further activity on the project is expected in late summer/ autumn when some grading of the riverbank is under consideration near the 'Bat & Bee Patch' along the Shady Walk, together with aquatic planting to improve habitat for stream life both in, and along the stream banks. Deflectors to vary the flow of the river and provide shelter for plants and the addition of gravel into the stream to improve the flow of the river is also likely. FoYW volunteers will work with the project team to continue cutting back the cherry laurel along the left bank of the river to allow more natural light to reach the stream and improve water quality. There has been significant progress on the project at both Headstone Manor and Roxbourne Park and we encourage park visitors to visit our neighbouring parks to see the improvements along the river.

Upcoming Events

St Alban's Church Summer Fair will be held on Saturday 27th June and is always an enjoyable community event. The FoYW will be at their usual plant stand, raising funds for the park. If you have plants to spare – vegetables or ornamentals – we should welcome some contributions nearer the date – and we can collect or bring them on the day. We shall also have a 'pre-loved' bookshelf for children's books (in good condition), so this is a great opportunity to clear out those books your children no longer read – and pick a few replacements.

Project Saturdays in Full Swing

Volunteers meet most Saturday mornings to tackle the Tough Stuff in the park. We need to blitz the 'sticky weed' along the Nature Walk, attack the jungle taking over the river bank opposite the Bat & Bee patch, free up some of the shrubs which have become overgrown along the Suffolk Road Boundary, plant new trees – plus we manage a fair bit of chatting, putting the world to rights and biscuit-eating each session. We provide the tools; you bring the muscle. We are a friendly, easy-going group and we hope you will join us, whenever you can spare an hour or two. 9.30/10 am to 12 pm Saturday mornings.



Other ways to support your park

Be a Winner with 'Harrow Wins'

This is a local Harrow lottery to benefit good causes in Harrow. Tickets cost only £1, of which 60p goes to your nominated beneficiary, which we hope will be Yeading Walk. Local lottery odds are so much more favourable than the National Lottery, and we have had some Yeading Walk winners, so support your park, PLAY TODAY and GOOD LUCK! See details at <https://www.harrowwins.co.uk>

Looking After the Park

We welcome families and volunteers to help us with projects and ongoing activities at Yeading Walk. We continue to raise funds to support and improve the park, and for specific projects. Just an occasional hour of your time makes a huge difference. Why not join our friendly group of volunteers for Project Saturday a.m., or other advertised times in the park?

Your contributions, suggestions and comments are welcome and greatly appreciated. Visit our website at <https://friendsofyeadingwalk.co.uk> or join our active volunteer WhatsApp group by sending us a request with your mobile number via email. Email: foywgroup@gmail.com

We encourage everyone who loves Yeading Walk to support the park. As a Friend of Yeading Walk, **your annual donation of £5 /year works out to 1.4p/day - a bargain in anyone's books.** Please enable the Friends to care for your park by making your annual voluntary donation today.

BANK: National Westminster

ACCOUNT NAME: Friends of Yeading Walk

ACCOUNT NUMBER: 21131511

SORT CODE: 52-10-33

If donating by electronic transfer of funds, please give your name or that of your organisation as reference. Do send us an email when you donate, using email address foywgroup@gmail.com with 'TREASURER – Payment' in the subject line, so that we can thank you for becoming a Friend and keep you updated with all the latest news.

Sincerely,

Committee, Friends of Yeading Walk