

A photograph of a pond with a clump of green grasses in the foreground and reflections in the water. The text is overlaid on the image.

Surveys in Waterlow Park

**Biodiversity Group
of the Friends of Waterlow
Park**

Biodiversity Group

- Formed in 2020 as subcommittee of the Friends
- Includes representatives from Grounds Maintenance, Gardeners, Biodiversity Officer and the Camden Conservation Volunteers / Green Gym
- Supports Camden's Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and the park's endeavour to become 'zero-carbon'



BIODIVERSITY AIMS FOR WATERLOW PARK:

- **Bog and WATER GARDENING** in boggy areas and ponds
(= diversifying flora; managing drought; slowing water flow)
- **Changing MOWING REGIMES**
(= improving wildlife corridors; defence against drought and erosion; diversifying grass landscapes)
- **Changing PLANTING REGIMES**
(= especially double-hedging; nectar-rich plants and shrubs; increased natural seeding; underplanting and spring bulb planting.)
- **ENRICHING HABITAT FOR FAUNA**
(= log piles, insect hotels, bat and bird boxes; introducing plants for niche species).
- **ESTABLISHING BOTANICAL SURVEYING**
(= 'seeing what is on your land'; information for future biodiversity strategies; doing citizen science and increasing botanical education).

GENERAL AIMS OF SURVEY

- Surveys are crucial for monitoring biodiversity over time and to inform measures (flora and fauna)
- Surveys take time, so don't delay conservation measures which have been proven effective
- Share data on surveys – i.e. local and national data bases
- Make surveys educational and participatory. Friends of Waterlow Park undertake surveying by citizen science/amateurs



TYPES OF SURVEY

- **Ad hoc records** are observations that you can record whenever you see something notable
- **Participation in national annual surveys**
Park users have participated in the Big Butterfly Count and the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch
- **Biodiversity assessments** are usually carried out by experts and are required by law whenever developments could negatively impact on flora and fauna
- **Systematic botanical survey**
To survey the whole of Waterlow Park is an endeavour that the Friends of Waterlow Park started in 2021



SYSTEMATIC BOTANICAL SURVEY

- The park has been divided into smaller survey sections, which can be correlated to OS grid reference



Botanical Survey Data in the Park Area near Lauderdale House

Plant lists can be used locally and can also be reported to the Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL) database.

		Waterlow Park Biodiversity Survey					
Survey Owner							
GiGL Data Sharing Policy: Submitted records are entered into the GiGL database and shared with partners and those who have signed data use agreements send completed surveys to GiGL Records Officers. Contact details on website: http://www.gigl.org.uk/contact/							
YELLOW COLUMNS - MANDATORY							
Species name	Common Name	Observer's name	Date	Grid reference	Narrow Bed L'dle Toe D8 on W'low Map	Abundance data	Expert who validates and verifies the record
Dryopteris filix-mas	native Male fern	April Cameron	22/09/2021	TQ287872			
Berberis thunbergii f atropurpurea	Purple Japanese barberry	April Cameron	22/09/2021	TQ287872		1	
Centranthus ruber	Red valerian	April Cameron	22/09/2021	TQ287872		occasional	
Arabis alpina caucasica 'Variegata'	Variegated rock cress	April Cameron	22/09/2021	TQ287872		1	
Euphorbia wulfenii	Spurge	April Cameron	22/09/2021	TQ287872			
Aquilegia sp	Columbine	April Cameron	22/09/2021	TQ287872		occasional	
Rudbeckia fulgida	Orange cone flower	April Cameron	22/09/2021	TQ287872		3 small groups	
Kniphofia cvr (early)	Red hot poker	April Cameron	22/09/2021	TQ287872		4 plants	
Kniphofia cvr (late)	Torch lily	April Cameron	22/09/2021	TQ287872		1 plant	
Symphotrichum 'Violetta'	Purple aster	April Cameron	22/09/2021	TQ287872			
Symphotrichum dumosum 'Early Blue'	Aster early blue	April Cameron	22/09/2021	TQ287872			
Phlomis russeliana	Turkish sage	April Cameron	22/09/2021	TQ287872		3 small groups	
Verbena bonariensis	Purple Top	April Cameron	22/09/2021	TQ287872		scattered	
Oenothera biennis	Evening Primrose	April Cameron	22/09/2021	TQ287872		1 group	
Salvia elegans	Pineapple sage	April Cameron	22/09/2021	TQ287872		2 plants	
Vernonia arkansana	Ironweed	April Cameron	22/09/2021	TQ287872		2 groups	
Iris germanica	Bearded Iris	April Cameron	22/09/2021	TQ287872		6 plants	
Camassia leichtlinii caerulea	Quamash	April Cameron	22/09/2021	TQ287872		2 groups	

Botanical survey - findings so far

- **Volunteers are all different – some prefer to work in groups, others are competent to work alone. There are examples of both.**
- **It is sociable and the groups enjoyed learning about plants via the plant identification apps.**
- **The Friends still need to find a web master to built a Waterlow Park customised database for flora and fauna which will stand the test of time, and can be revisited regularly for comparison.**
- **The botanical data has not been analysed, yet, and conclusions about biodiversity in the park can not yet be drawn. But from individual sections already surveyed it is amazing how many plant species can be found in some small sections, for example the rockery alone has 38 species.**

Other surveys completed
in Waterlow Park:

Meadow Research by

London House Sparrow
Park Project researched
three different meadow
mixes in London Parks
2009 to 2012:

- Long Grass
- Native Wildflower Mix
- Wildlife Seed Plot



Compared to mown grass
all three types of meadow
increased biodiversity – in
different proportions.

- benefitting pollinators
- invertebrate richness
- winter seed availability
and bird visits

Waterlow Park had the 'Wildlife Seed Plot', still benefitting from
reduced mowing and higher biodiversity when surveyed in 2021.

The ZSL 'Hogwatch' 2020 set many camera traps in Waterlow Park: Interesting night footage of other mammals, but no hedgehogs!



Below hedgehog seen in Highgate Allotments, 2021. Reported to the Allotment Association and the National Hedgehog Preservation Society

www.bighedgehogmap.org





GiGL

Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC
the capital's environmental records centre

GiGL and iRecord allow for **ad hoc recording** of sightings via app or website, **or** submission of **whole surveys** as spreadsheets.



iRecord



Red Admiral on Red Valerian

Annual Survey for
baseline and monitoring,
reported to the Butterfly
Conservation Society
and to GiGL



Genepools Study 2021



- Was open to pond owners or people with permitted access to public ponds
- 20 water samples were filtered and analysed for environmental DNA of microbes and larger organisms
- Basic aquatic biochemistry was assessed
- Results will be published on the Friends' biodiversity web page

A photograph of a small grey mouse standing on a dirt path covered with dry leaves. The mouse is positioned in the lower center of the frame. In the background, there is a wooden fence with vertical slats. To the right of the fence, there are green plants and ivy. The overall scene is outdoors, likely in a park or garden.

Thank you !

Ginnie and Rita

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