

# Beddington Park NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the latest edition of the Beddington Park Newsletter



 @BEDDINGTON\_PARK  
[www.sutton.gov.uk](http://www.sutton.gov.uk)  
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## 2020 Update



During this difficult year, parks have been a lifesaver for local communities. They have provided space to breathe, a place to escape our four walls, helping us to maintain both our mental and physical health. Many people have a new found love for their local greenspaces, others appreciate their local parks more than ever.



Sadly we had to cancel many of our annual events, one off activities, sporting sessions and volunteering. However by following social distancing and safety guidance there has been some activity

in the park. This newsletter is a roundup of 2020.

### The last leg

There was some good news this year. Following discussions with the Heritage Fund they have allowed us to extend our events and activities programme until December 2021 and to continue producing further park resources to help you better discover this amazing park.

### Prestigious Green Flag Award



Beddington Park has once again been recognised as one of the best parks in Britain after being awarded a Green Flag Award. It was one of more than 2,000 sites across the country to collect the award for 2020.

2020 Update

### Lockdown Litter

Beddington Park saw a huge increase in visitors this year, especially when the weather was sunny. It was lovely to see so many families enjoying themselves. However as seen all over the country, with the increase in usage came an unprecedented amount of litter. For the month of **July alone there was a 61% increase in the amount of waste collected from Sutton parks**, when compared with July 2019.



Regular users of Beddington Park wanted to help with the clean-up and some people pick up litter every week as they walk around the park, which is much appreciated. Additionally as part of the **Great British September Clean**, we ran five socially distanced community clean up sessions. The support from our volunteers has

been phenomenal and we collected a huge amount of rubbish. **We found the usual bottles and cans but also old bikes, climbing frames, chairs, used nappies, a broken safe, odd shoes, you name it!**

Get involved



## Best Foot Forwards

**Walking is amazing for you.** Just 30 minutes every day can increase cardiovascular fitness, strengthen bones, reduce excess body fat, and boost muscle power and endurance. It can also reduce your risk of developing conditions such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes. Walking in groups is a sociable activity which encourages you to get outside!

## Current Active Walking Groups (outside of strictest lockdown):

### Befrienders

This is a free low level walking group that meets on Monday mornings in Beddington Park with more sessions at The Grove in Carshalton and Nonsuch Park in Cheam. If you want to meet new people, get some fresh air and have a little fun, why not join them? Don't worry if you walk slowly. Each walk has at least two leaders so that the group can split into two groups with slightly different paces. The main aim of these groups is for people to meet others, get a little fresh air and hopefully enjoy themselves. Booking is essential, email: [befriending@vcsutton.org.uk](mailto:befriending@vcsutton.org.uk) or call 0208 6615917.

## Nordic Walking

Nordic walking is fitness walking with specially designed poles. Nordic walkers use more of their entire body and have been estimated as producing up to a 46% increase in energy consumption, compared to walking without poles.



They meet on Fridays in Beddington Park and on Wednesdays in Manor Park. There is a £3 fee. Booking is essential, email:

[activities@ageuksutton.org.uk](mailto:activities@ageuksutton.org.uk)

### Companion Walks

**Do you know of someone who would like to walk but can only get so far without needing a rest?** We have volunteers happy to meet them in Beddington Park, for a shorter walk with plenty of stops and time for a chat. For further information call:

**0208 7705052** or email: [dawn.fielding@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.fielding@sutton.gov.uk)

## Get involved



### Orienteering Launch

In September Madam Mayor - Councillor Trish Fivey, officially launched the Orienteering Course at Beddington Park. This new Orienteering Course was part of the lottery improvements to the park.

### What is Orienteering?

It's a fun outdoor sport that exercises the mind and the body! This is an activity for every age group and can be done on your own or in a group, at any time of your own choosing. Using a map you try to find fixed points located in an area, in this case Beddington Park. Each point is marked by a wooden post. The routes can be walked at your leisure or can be run to see how fast your completion time

compares to other orienteers timings or to your own personal best.

### Mole Valley Orienteering Club

designed the course and attended the launch. There are other permanent orienteering courses in Nonsuch Park, Oaks Park and Morden Hall Park and more. You can obtain free local orienteering maps here:

[www.mvoc.org/POCs/permanent\\_Orienteering\\_Courses.htm](http://www.mvoc.org/POCs/permanent_Orienteering_Courses.htm)

There is a free **MapRunF smartphone app** which will automatically record each visit, and at the end will upload your result so you can compare your performance against everyone else.



Get involved

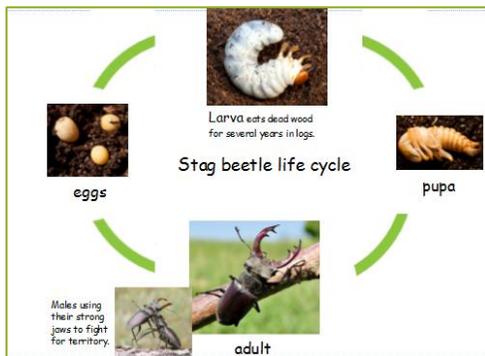


**Teachers Pack**

You don't need to be sat at a desk to learn. Outdoor learning can improve **problem solving skills**, **communication** and **resilience**. It provides endless opportunities for **exploration** and **experimentation** and helps give children a love and appreciation of nature.



**We have produced a teacher's pack for primary/junior schools containing 10 lesson plans and many resources, on everything from river dipping to mini-beasts to maps.** A free copy will be sent to local schools and we hope to see lots of school children having fun and getting to explore and discover Beddington Park!



## What else has been happening in the park?



### Canadian Pondweed

The Stock Pond contains large amounts of the invasive Canadian Pondweed. It could have been brought here on the feet of birds from other ponds, or from nets



that have been used elsewhere. It is still widely sold as an oxygenating plant for garden ponds. The problem is that it grows faster, out-competing our native plants and providing little habitat for wildlife.

In September a group of volunteers helped remove some of this invasive plant from the Stock pond.



### Park Photographers

There are many amazing local amateur photographers who regularly visit the park. These park birds were captured by **Bett Atherton** who regularly posts photos on the **Beddington Park Facebook** page.



What else has been happening in the park?



**Hogwatch**

This summer for three weeks we took part in London Hogwatch, working with the Zoological Society to survey for hedgehogs. We had **30 wildlife camera traps set up in the park and 13 cameras sited in nearby private gardens and allotments.** It is fantastic to



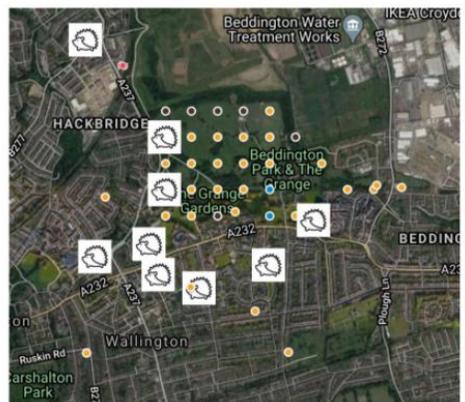
confirm that we do have hedgehogs in the park. They were spotted at 3 different locations, one to the south and two to the east. But as we only had 4 actual hedgehog sightings during this time, it is thought that the hedgehogs were just passing through the park and live elsewhere. Hedgehog activity was greater in the nearby gardens/allotments but again the results suggest that the population in the area is quite small and widely spread out. Hedgehogs can travel up to 2 miles every night, so they can visit many gardens along the way.

Hedgehogs are vulnerable to extinction in the UK, they are disappearing faster than

tigers! Numbers have fallen by nearly a third since 2002. If we want hedgehogs to remain in the area and to increase their numbers, we need to help. If you want to **encourage hedgehogs into your garden:** Make sure that there is a hole they can enter through the fence or wall (13x13cm wide). Provide food (pet food) and water. Don't be too tidy, leave a pile of leaves/long grass/log piles to attract them. Cut out the poisonous slug pellets, which kill many hedgehogs each year and do not feed them bread/milk as they are extremely harmful to them. If you spot a hedgehog in Sutton you can record it at:

<https://bighedgehogmap.org/>

**Hedgehog camera location**

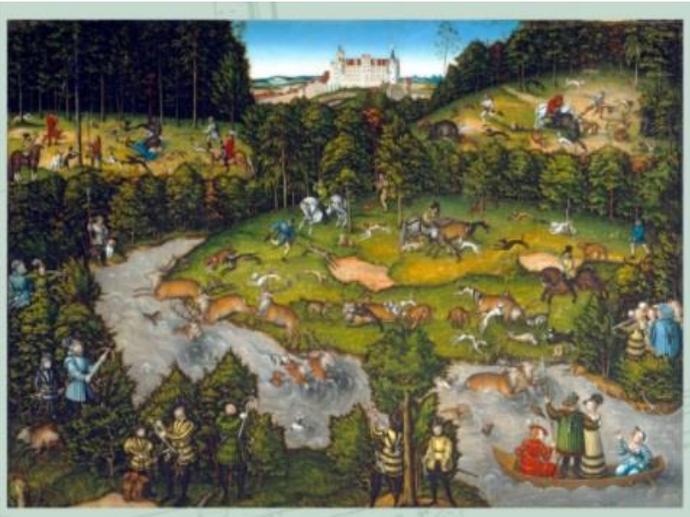


(hedgehog icon = present, yellow = absent)

What else has been happening in the park?



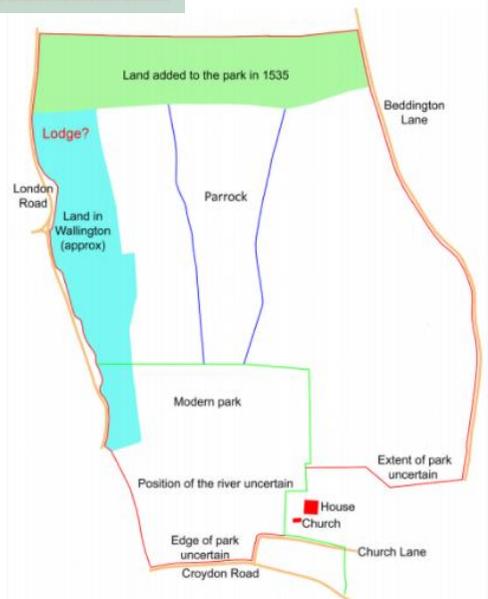
A Park with so much History!



driven to him along a large funnel-shaped enclosure called a Parrock. There was one of these at Beddington as shown on the map. The hunt may well have ended with the massacre of a large number of deer as in this painting on the left from a hunt in Saxony.

There are clues to the history of Beddington park scattered across the site, but there is so much more to discover. **John Phillips of Carshalton and District History and Archaeology Society**, has kindly filled in some gaps. We have produced 5 new information panels which will be displayed on Open Days in the Dovecote and copies will be displayed in the parks information boards and shared on social media.

**This text is taken from the Tudor panel:** As Henry VIII grew older he became hugely overweight and unwell and could no longer chase deer on horseback. The deer were therefore



## What else has been happening in the park?



### Friends of Beddington Park

**Help make a difference in your park and become a member of the Friends of group.**

This independent group works in partnership with Sutton Council to help improve the amenities and facilities, promote the parks historical connections, wildlife importance and as a space for leisure. They also present the views of park users to the council. This year they were restricted in what they could get involved in, but arranged for the Stock Pond lectern wildlife sign.



Annual membership is £5 per household. Email:

[membership@friendsofbeddingtonpark.co.uk](mailto:membership@friendsofbeddingtonpark.co.uk)

### Beddington Farmlands

For over a century, this site has been used for sewage treatment and landfill. But now it is being transformed into a major wildlife site, especially important for birds. Together with Beddington Park and Mitcham Common, it forms one of

the largest green spaces in south London. There are lakes, areas of tree planting and wet grassland. There is a footpath into the site from Beddington Park, near to the Hackbridge entrance. The path leads along the western edge of the farmlands, where you can visit bird hides and see internationally important wildfowl. There has been a Stork on the site for the last few weeks! There is a programme of improvements planned for



the next 3 years (Beddington Farmlands Restoration Roadmap 2019-2023). A new Reserve Warden started work in August 2020 and his contact email is: [charlie.owens@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:charlie.owens@sutton.gov.uk) He will be looking to start volunteering work in the near future, contact him if you are interested in helping.

## Wildlife Corner

### Is Smee responsible for Smut? by Derek Coleman

In 2007, I had a tiny moth with a wing span of about 1cm in my garden that I did not recognise, it turned out to be a Fern Smut from the Tineidae family. The caterpillars of most tineids feed on



fungi and decaying wood while others have adapted to eating clothes made of animal products (the 'clothes moths').

**Only two species feed on living plants: the Fern Smut and Hart's Tongue Smut** deriving their name from



Brown piles are feeding signs of the moth

the fact that they feed on ferns. They are common near the coasts of south-west

England and Wales where the wetter climate favours the growth of ferns

Walking past the rockery in the Grange, which has plenty of Hart's Tongue fern



Hart's Tongue fern growing on the rocks beside the stream, I wondered whether they might be present here. Unlike many moths, they fly in sunshine either early morning or late evening making them easier to look for. I found one of the two species, the Fern Smut, on my first visit in July this year, six individuals in August and one in September. The other species, the Hart's Tongue Smut, flies in June so it too may be present but I will have to wait until next year to have another look.

The first Fern Smut to be seen in Surrey was in 1978 but it was not until 2005 that

## Wildlife Corner

another one was seen. Since then they seem to be becoming commoner, albeit still rare. Both species have spread throughout Britain in recent years, which may be related to climate change. Another possibility, which I would like to think is true, is that they were originally imported during the Victorian fern craze and have been missed because they are so small.

Alfred Smee laid out a formal garden at the Grange in Victorian times, which included a fine collection of ferns. It is possible that he accidentally introduced them and they have been there all the time but no one has looked for them. Interestingly, the first Surrey record was at Kew Gardens which has a collection of many species of ferns.



Royal Fern, a legacy of Smee's collection

**If you require any further information  
on any of the articles here, contact  
[dawn.fielding@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.fielding@sutton.gov.uk) or  
telephone 0208 7705052**

Competition: [www.sutton.gov.uk/poetry-competition](http://www.sutton.gov.uk/poetry-competition)

PRIZE X3  
£50 BOOK TOKENS

# SUTTON PARKS LOCKDOWN POETRY PRIZE

During lockdown **PARKS** have provided a space to **BREATHE**, an escape from our 4 walls, helping to **RESTORE** our mental and physical health. Many people have a new found **LOVE** for their local greenspace, others **APPRECIATE** parks more than ever.

**WE ARE LOOKING FOR THE BEST POEM ON THE  
THEME OF PARKS AND LOCKDOWN**

- Free to enter
- Open to residents of the London Borough of Sutton only
- A prize for the winner in each category - Under 12/12-17 /Adults 18+
- Closing Date: 31st December 2020
- One entry per person
- **Email entries to:** [dawn.fielding@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.fielding@sutton.gov.uk)
- All the rules can be found here: [www.sutton.gov.uk/poetry-competition](http://www.sutton.gov.uk/poetry-competition)



