

Friends of Oxleas Woodlands

DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER



from the
FOW Steering Group

FOW Walks & Events

Winter Bird Walk

Saturday 23rd December, 9:30am

Whether you are a seasoned birdwatcher or just starting out, this walk is perfect for everyone. David will lead us, sharing fascinating insights about the local bird population and their behaviour during the winter season.

By now, the summer migrants have been replaced by winter visitors such as Redwing and Siskin, escaping much colder weather elsewhere. Although there are fewer birds, they must feed quickly during the short hours of daylight, often forming flocks of different bird species.

2024 Walks

Our first walk will be a Family Explorer on Sunday 28th January for families with 5-10 year olds.

We will soon be announcing more walks. We will be repeating many of our popular walks from this year and adding new ones like *Paths, Verges and Scallops*. If you've a special interest that you'd like to share, or that you'd like to learn more about please share these with oxleas.events@gmail.com. Booking is essential for all walks.

Please contact Mike oxleas.events@gmail.com or use the QR code to book directly. Walks are free, donations are welcome.



A big thank you to Members.

FOW's large membership, currently standing at 631, demonstrates the extent to which people love Oxleas Woodlands and want to protect it now and for the future. Membership continues to grow as our visibility grows - through the noticeboard, social media, the Pathways Project and, of course, the increased presence, and visibility of our Volunteers, in their FOW Hi-Vis Vests. It is great to see new people continuing to join us. The vast majority of our members live locally; we also have supporters from far afield who still want to stay in touch with the woodlands.

As a member-led organisation, FOW is highly dependent on the varied contributions that members make through volunteering; leading walks and talks; supporting campaigns and sharing information; and in making financial donations.

The Steering Group thanks Members for the time, energy and commitment that they give so generously.

If you've not done so already, why not make 2024 the year that you join a volunteering session; come to a talk; or help with our fundraising?

If you are interested in finding out more about the ways that you can support the woodlands and FOW, please visit our website:

www.oxleaswoodlands.uk/calendar-of-events

To become a member of the Friends of Oxleas Woodlands, please complete the membership application form www.oxleaswoodlands.uk/contact-us

www.oxleaswoodlands.uk

For More Information

@OxleasFriends

Friends of Oxleas Woodlands

Why do people like being members?

Restoring and protecting our woods and meadows is vital and it's good to see that FOW is taking a lead.

I get the Members' Newsletter directly, so I am the first to hear about the talks and walks available.

It helps me understand why restoration activities are being carried out.

I know how all the activities are funded.

I can forward-plan as I get a calendar of the activities for the year.

I can't get about now so it's lovely to see the photographs.

Seeing the photos of the Rose Gardens brings back so many memories.

I can't physically help protect the woods so I feel involved.

As a Member, I can vote at the AGM for things that are important to me, and for committee members.

Members' Meeting - 6th December 2023

Attendance at the meeting was smaller than usual with several people suffering or recovering from colds. Laurie gave Steering Group feedback on topics such as Health and Safety, the Pathways Project and exciting new walks planned for 2024. There was also a reminder about the election of the Chair and Secretary roles at the AGM on Tuesday 19th March 2024. The meeting approved the continuation of the voluntary donation scheme for 2024. This was followed by an informative and entertaining talk by David Jones on the birds in winter.

Will you invest in the health of Oxleas Woodlands?

Members have chosen to run the Friends of Oxleas on a donation basis, rather than asking for Membership Subscriptions, ensuring everyone who wants to be a Friend can be.

FOW exists to protect and enhance the woodlands, meadows and formal gardens known as Oxleas Woodlands, and to foster environmental education. Donations received are used entirely to fulfil that role, by for example:

- Conducting our Members Meetings, with a range of excellent speakers.
- Campaigning to protect The Woodlands, eg. against the Shepherdleas Development.
- Publicity Materials for events and activities.
- Match-funding for large projects.
- Basic operating costs, eg: Bank charges, website-hosting, office supplies.
- Support for our volunteering activities, eg. First Aid Kits, Safety Equipment.

Be proactive - help us step towards a more sustainable and resilient future for our woodlands by making a donation.

For details on how to donate email oxleas.friends@gmail.com

Not yet a member?

If you haven't had this newsletter emailed to you directly, you're not a member; but if you're reading this, you should be! Join now.

<https://www.oxleaswoodlands.uk/contact-us>

If you would like to join us as a member, please complete the form on our website
www.oxleaswoodlands.uk/contact-us

Friends of Oxleas Woodlands

Volunteering Dates

December

Friday 15th, 10am-1pm Woodland Conservation
Saturday 16th, 10am-noon Litter Picking
Sunday 17th, 10am-noon Rose Garden
Tuesday 19th, 10am-1pm Woodland Conservation

January

Friday 5th, 10am-1pm Woodland Conservation
Friday 12th, 2-4pm Rose Garden
Saturday 13th, 10am-1pm SHWWP*
Friday 19th, 10am-1pm Woodland Conservation
Sunday 21st, 10am-noon Rose Garden
Tuesday 23rd, 10am-1pm Woodland Conservation
Saturday 27th, 10am-noon Litter Picking

*Shooters Hill Woodlands Working Party

For more information about volunteering

contact oxleas.volunteers@gmail.com

Rose Gardens

Thanks to a donation from the Council's Parks department, we've been able to add a deep mulch of wood chippings to Castle Wood Rose Garden, topping last year's horse manure. We are now working on Jack Wood where we are weeding and then deterring regrowth with more chippings.



Woodland Conservation

We had a great turn-out for our second Tuesday session, and the moist ground was perfect for pulling up the brambles. A 'small' copse of holly, mid-slope took about 18 volunteer hours to clear!

Walkers now have an uninterrupted view across the slope between the two paths in this section. Look out for the amazing Parasol Mushroom, standing proudly above the autumn leaves.

Pathways Project

The new 40-metre section of path, funded by our Pathway Appeal, is now completed, and the renewal of two bridges and a flight of steps in the middle of Jack Wood, funded through a grant from Greenwich Neighbourhood Growth Fund, is nearing completion.

As required by the grant application to Greenwich, our Woodland Conservation Group volunteers have carried out habitat improvement in the vicinity of the works, completing over 200 volunteer hours removing holly, sycamore and cherry laurel. This has opened the woodland floor to more light and, in time, this should improve biodiversity.

Two further sections, linking the currently completed sections on the lower path in Jack Wood, have been commissioned. The first is a 140-metre section, jointly funded with Royal Borough of Greenwich. FOW will contribute £3,550 to the £14,000 cost. A further section of 50-metre will be funded by FOW at a cost of £5,000. These will be carried out in the New Year.

Altogether FOW will have funded 125m at a total cost of £12,550 - made up of £4,345 raised in the pathways appeal and £8,205 from reserves. Thanks again to all those who have donated. There are approximately a further 390-metres needed to reach Castlewood Meadow and complete the entire path, so please think of our wildlife and donate today.



If you would like to join us as a volunteer, please contact us on
oxleas.volunteers@gmail.com

Friends of Oxleas Woodlands

FOW CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES – 2024

January	July
Friday 5 th – WCG * Friday 12 th -Rose Gardening - 2pm Saturday 13 th – SHWWP ** Friday 19 th – WCG Sunday 21 st - Rose Gardening - 10am Tuesday 23 rd – WCG Saturday 27 th – Litter Picking	Friday 12 th - Rose Gardening - 2pm Saturday 13 th – SHWWP Friday 19 th – WCG Tuesday 23 rd – WCG Saturday 27 th – Litter Picking Saturday 29 th - Rose Gardening - 10am
February	August
Friday 2 nd – WCG Friday 9 th - Rose Gardening - 2pm Saturday 10 th - SHWWP Friday 16 th – WCG Sunday 18 th - Rose Gardening - 10am Tuesday 20 th – WCG Saturday 24 th - Litter Picking	Friday 2 nd – WCG Friday 9 th - Rose Gardening - 2pm Saturday 10 th – SHWWP Friday 16 th – WCG Saturday 17 th - Rose Gardening - 10am Tuesday 20 th – WCG Saturday 24 th – Litter Picking Friday 30 th – WCG
March	September
Friday 1 st – WCG Friday 8 th - Rose Gardening - 2pm Saturday 9 th – SHWWP Friday 15 th – WCG Saturday 16 th - Rose Gardening - 10am Tuesday 19 th – WCG Saturday 23 rd – Litter Picking	Friday 13 th - Rose Gardening - 2pm Saturday 14 th – SHWWP Friday 20 th - WCG Saturday 21 st - Rose Gardening - 10am Tuesday 24 th – WCG Saturday 28 th – Litter Picking
April	October
Friday 5 th – WCG Friday 12 th - Rose Gardening - 2pm Saturday 13 th – SHWWP Friday 19 th – WCG Saturday 20 th - Rose Gardening - 10am Tuesday 23 rd – WCG Saturday 27 th – Litter Picking	Friday 4 th – WCG Friday 11 th - Rose Gardening - 2pm Saturday 12 th – SHWWP Friday 18 th – WCG Sunday 20 th - Rose Gardening - 10am Tuesday 22 nd – WCG Saturday 26 th – Litter Picking.
May	November
Friday 3 rd – WCG Friday 10 th - Rose Gardening - 2pm Saturday 11 th – SHWWP Friday 17 th – WCG Saturday 18 th - Rose Gardening - 10am Tuesday 21 st – WCG Saturday 25 th – Litter Picking Friday 31 st – WCG	Friday 1 st – WCG Friday 8 th - Rose Gardening - 2pm Saturday 9 th – SHWWP Friday 15 th – WCG Sunday 17 th - Rose Gardening - 10am Tuesday 19 th – WCG Saturday 23 rd – Litter Picking Friday 29 th – WCG
June	December
Friday 7 th - Rose Gardening - 2pm Saturday 8 th – SHWWP Friday 14 th – WCG Tuesday 18 th – WCG Saturday 22 nd – Litter Picking Sunday 23 rd -Rose Gardening - 10am Friday 28 th – WCG	Tuesday 3 rd – WCG Friday 13 th - Rose Gardening - 2pm Saturday 14 th – SHWWP Saturday 14 th – Litter Picking Sunday 15 th - Rose Gardening - 10am Friday 20 th – WCG

*WCG – Woodland Conservation Group ** SHWWP – Shooters Hill Woodland Work Party.
 The Woodland conservation and Litter picking sessions start at 10am.

If you would like to contact us please email
oxleas.friends@gmail.com