

RSPB NE London Local Group

Dear all,

We hope you, your family and friends are keeping safe and well. We've produced this newsletter as a way of keeping you up-to-date on how COVID 19 is affecting the RSPB and our group and to say hello – we haven't forgotten you!

As you are aware, in normal times, we'd now be close to our summer break. The RSPB advice to Local Groups is that all events should be cancelled until September, when they will re-consider the situation. The committee is looking at potential future options around talks and walks. For instance, if we are still unable to hold talks in St Mary's come September, would using Zoom be an option? If you do have a view on Zoom meetings, we would really like to hear from you, or any other suggestions on how we can keep in touch.

We hope that during these difficult times, you have been able to connect with the wildlife around you. We know people across the country are drawing great comfort in engaging with the natural world.

Warm regards,

Your Friends on the Committee

Website - www.rspb.org.uk/groups/northeastlondon

Contact us by email - nelondonRSPB@yahoo.co.uk

Keep in touch - on Twitter @RSPBNELondonGrp

- on Facebook (www.facebook.com/nelondon)

RSPB Reserves

The RSPB is working hard to make our nature reserves safe and ready for visitors. As I'm sure you can appreciate, when you next visit the experience won't be the same as before.

They are busy re-routing paths, marking one-way routes and building passing places where necessary, so that social distancing guidelines can be followed as easily as possible.

They've also taken the difficult decision to not open any hides, toilet facilities or visitor centres for the time being.

A few nature reserves have been opened and by early June it is hoped the majority will be ready to receive visitors. To avoid any disappointment, please check the RSPB website before visiting a reserve.

Spring News

It's amazing what can turn up in your garden!

In addition to having blue tits nesting in their nest box, Ray and Nadine had this wonderful visitor to their garden.



Spring Arrivals

For many people spring is the most exciting time of the year. Trees and plants are bursting into leaf and flower and it signals the return of migrant birds. Listed in the adjacent box are some of the highlights that have been sighted locally. One of the iconic sounds of spring is the screaming of swifts as they acrobatically fly above our rooftops. Sadly, the swift population is declining, and the RSPB would like to know where people have seen groups of screaming swifts or swift nest sites. If you have, please record your sightings on the Swift Mapper - [see this link](http://www.rspb.org.uk/our-work/conservation/conservation-and-sustainability/safeguarding-species/swiftmapper) (to www.rspb.org.uk/our-work/conservation/conservation-and-sustainability/safeguarding-species/swiftmapper)

Exotic visitors to Walthamstow Wetlands

A couple of spoonbills visited Walthamstow Wetlands last month. We're grateful to Chris Farthing for the photo.



Recent Local Sightings

Fairlop Water

Cuckoo

Nightingale

Epping Forest

Golden Oriole! (heard only)

Cuckoo

Wanstead Flats

Hobby

Spotted Flycatcher

Skylark – still hanging on!

Fishers Green, Lee Valley

Nightingale

Common Tern

Garden Warbler

Walthamstow Wetlands

Spoonbills