

A proposed Biodiversity Survey in Waterlow Park

Dear Gardening People, Members and Friends

The Friends of Waterlow Park, in association with Camden Council and the Waterlow Park Trust Advisory Group (TAG), have recently been planning a new Biodiversity Strategy, in order to further improve the biodiversity of wildlife, tree and plant growth throughout the park.

As a result, the Friends are in the process of initiating a Biodiversity Survey (audit) of the park horticulture, which will tell us exactly what plants are actually IN the park; and what is missing; how much biodiversity there actually is; and how much monoculture. Maps of weeds, grasses, shrubs, and herbaceous plants would sit beside the existing tree surveys. We are aiming to log as much as we can, as long as we can, probably over a number of years.

The Survey divides the park up into geographical sections – small and large – so that we can create an accurate layout of the different wild and the cultivated areas of the park. It starts with a pencil, a paper form, and a few handbooks; it ends up on a database. We will also plot the findings on the London-wide digital ecological mapping provided by GiGL (Greenspace Information for Greater London), which will link its ecology with other areas.

It is a pretty big task; but botanical surveying is also a lot of fun. So we thought we might start by asking for **volunteer help** from the large gardening community in and around Highgate and the park. Starting early next year 2022, we will need:

1. **People to do the surveying itself**, as the plants emerge (and die back) during the year. They will need to look up plant names using various companion guidebooks (trees and shrubs, wild flowers, grasses - we can find some to lend if necessary); or better still, be able to look them up on a plantfinder app.
2. **Team Leaders** to help other less knowledgeable groups, and show them how to survey.
3. **A 'Clerk' (and clerks)** for the Survey – a team which would be in charge of entering the data.
4. **An Organising Committee** – to keep it on track.

Could you, personally, help in any, or several, of these ways? When could you start? Would you like to be on a mailing list? If so, please email at info@waterlowpark.org.uk or use the contact form on our website, and indicate a preference. And/or could you pass the word on to others?

Many thanks

The Friends of Waterlow Park (Committee)