

## **BOTANICAL SURVEYING in Waterlow Park in 2025 – an APPEAL for volunteers**

Back in 2021, the Friends of Waterlow Park set up a Biodiversity group with the aim of trying to promote biodiversity in the park. But what was the state of the park? Just how biodiverse was it? To answer that question, in 2022 the FoWP began detailed botanical surveying of Waterlow Park, section by section, using volunteers as 'citizen scientists' and entering their data afterwards into the GIGL database (Greenspace Information for Greater London). As Greg Hitchcock, Camden's Nature Conservation Officer, put it: 'botanical surveying can help with monitoring, particularly of more natural areas where long term diversity is reliant on habitat management... [and] in more formally managed areas it can help influence planting decisions'.

Small groups of Biodiversity volunteers have therefore been doing botanical surveying in the park every fortnight during March-October, on Saturday afternoons, throughout 2022-4. One person commented 'it's a great way to spend time in the park, you'll learn a lot about plants, and it's fun to carry out surveys jointly between families and friends'. This year, 2024, we stopped the surveying halfway through the year, so that all the collected data could be entered into the GIGL database – which was done (and is still being done) by another small group of FoWP Biodiversity volunteers. This means that our data should now start be accessible, via GiGL, for future use by the Park and anyone else.

**WE COULD REALLY DO WITH SOME *EXTRA VOLUNTEERS*, BOTH IN SURVEYING AND DATA ENTERING. ABSOLUTELY ANYBODY IS WELCOME!**

Surveying will restart in 2025, but with a slightly reduced schedule: once a month from March to mid-May, then fortnightly between mid-May and October. We also hope to lead a Spring Bulb Survey Walk in mid-February, to survey them while they are still flowering.

**As well as Biodiversity surveyors and data enterers, we would also very much welcome volunteers who could lead some of these survey groups during the season (there will be a new rota).**

We meet on Saturdays outside Lauderdale House café at 3pm and survey for roughly an hour (unless it is raining.) We work in pairs, identifying and recording everything we can see within our section. We use the app 'PictureThis' on our phones to identify specimens (but other reliable apps could be used). Please also bring a pen and something firm to write on. NB. All dates are weather-dependent, and any cancellations will be confirmed at the time.

If you would like to join the Biodiversity volunteer mailing list, please email [ginnie@cummingj.uk](mailto:ginnie@cummingj.uk).

**Current volunteers on the list, please let us know if you still want to continue!**

We will post the 2025 future survey dates to Biodiversity volunteers and FoWP members via email in January (or before). The dates will also be on this website.

Best wishes

FoWP Biodiversity Group

December 2024