

## FRIENDS OF SHREWSBURY PARK

Not a member? Want to become one?

The benefits of membership include:

- entitlement to vote at Annual General Meetings to elect Board Members and influence the development of the Park
- Keeping up-to-date with what is going on by receiving the newsletters and annual report
- Getting involved in Friends events

The cost of membership is £2 per person per year, £20 for businesses (donations gratefully received). If you would like to join, please contact Carol Farr for a membership form.



### USEFUL NUMBERS:

Anti-social behaviour:  
0208 856 0100  
Park security: 0208 856 2232

Police: 0208 855 1212  
0208 853 1212

Shrewsbury Park Residents Assoc:  
Len Newland, Chair, 0208 854 4423

## BIO DIVERSITY

Biodiversity, short for biological diversity, is the term given to all the different varieties of life forms (mammals, birds, fish, insects, plants fungi and micro-organisms). It also includes habitats, places in which species live.

The report "Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan" was published in 1994 in response to the Earth summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. This report, whilst providing the national framework for biodiversity, emphasised the importance of local Biodiversity Plans and local action.

Greenwich Council does not yet have its own Biodiversity Plan, and at the time of going to press, had not finalised its Management Plans for the Parks.

We want to ensure Shrewsbury Park continues to be a safe environment for flora, fauna and people. We need to work with others in doing this, and we need to see the Biodiversity Plan for Greenwich before we can make plans ourselves.

We will keep you informed with developments.



We are looking forward to the Council spending money on the bunding to stop cars getting in, it would save the cost of removing them, the damage to the goal posts, the glass left for children and wildlife to hurt themselves.....

# FRIENDS OF SHREWSBURY PARK NEWSLETTER



Newsletter No. 2

November 2006

### CONTACT DETAILS:

Shrewsbury House  
Bushmoor Crescent  
Shooters Hill  
London SE18 3EG

Chair: Kathy Smith:  
ksmithbox@hotmail.com

Co-secretaries:

Carol Farr:  
CarolFarr@aol.com

Kris Inglis:  
Kris.inglis4@ntlworld.com

## Chair's Report

Welcome to our second newsletter. We had a wonderful summer in the Park and were pleased with the reduced amounts of motor-bikes, thanks to the Police, and the increased amount of butterflies. John Denton has written a fascinating article about the butterflies, see inside.

Each member of the Management Committee was given the task of

recruiting five members to the Friends. We had stalls at the Woodlands Farm, and Severndroog Castle to publicise the group and our membership is now **over 80**.

We want to hear from you, so please continue to come to the public meetings. Please send us your suggestions and ideas via email or post.

### Inside this issue:

Butterflies	2
Plants	3
Biodiversity	4
Membership	4
Useful numbers	4
Thank you	4

## Public meeting

We met in Shrewsbury House on 24th July and over 40 people attended.

Kathy Smith went through the Action Plan, and what the Committee had achieved. People attending had the opportunity of saying what they wanted in the Park.

Alan Pett from the Council spoke to the group and

people voiced their concern at the lack of progress by the Council on the issues of safety (keeping cars out), keeping the Park clean (providing bins) and accessibility (providing seats). We agreed we would hold three public meetings a year to keep people informed. Let us know if you want an item put on the Agenda.

## Butterflies— John Denton

It's been a terrific year in Shrewsbury Park this year, if you like butterflies. From the lazy undulating flight of the Meadow Brown amongst the tall grasses to the short but vigorous flitting amongst the brambles of the Speckled Wood, to the aerial antics of the Purple Hairstreak high in the oaks, the park seems to have been alive with these fascinating insects.



We have been treated to a magnificent display of at least 19 different species, with several hundred individuals flying in the early summer heat wave. Of the 58 species of breeding butterfly in the British Isles, many exist only in specialised ecosystems such as sandy heathland or broadleaf woodlands and they are therefore localised, and their breeding colonies few. Both geology and climate are important factors in determining whether the food plant of the caterpillars can grow in a particular location. For this reason we will never see such species as the Mountain Ringlet or Chalkhill Blue in South East London. If you discount the species that will not breed in our area, you are left with the surprisingly low number of 22 or 23 that might. So, 19 species represents an astonishing success, and most were seen in numbers that would strongly suggest that they are breeding here. A consequence has been that several species that are normally associated

with grassland, like the Meadow Brown and Gatekeeper, are now spilling over into local gardens and taking up residence there. To my mind this is a strong indicator of the rude health of the park and how it is playing its part in maintaining the bio-diversity of London as a whole.

Admittedly, some species like the Peacock and Comma are strong fliers and may well have originated from outside the immediate area. Indeed the Large White, Red Admiral and Painted Lady arrive from as far a field as North Africa, boosting our resident populations. They may stay for a few days laying eggs on plants in the park or in your gardens, but most have only stopped to refuel, before pressing onwards. The rest are smaller, less adventurous creatures. Never the less they can make use of the corridors like Shrewsbury Park, that link the green areas of South East London, and so colonise new habitats. This natural process has seen the numbers of species of butterflies appearing in Shrewsbury Park steadily increase over the last few years, and through the enlightened stewardship of the Council, the opportunities for these creatures to breed have increased dramatically.

The variety of niches offered by the park produce their own distinct communities. The three species of Skipper prefer the open meadow, roosting in the evening on the seed heads of grasses. The Comma and Speckled Wood prefer the fringes of the wood and pathways patrolling their territories, on the look out for passing females. If you are lucky, you may spot, on a warm July evening, male Purple Hairstreaks jousting in the tops of the tallest oak trees in the hedgerow adjacent to the golf course. A pair of binoculars is useful as these butterflies are no larger than a ten pence piece. They rarely come down to ground level, seemingly feasting on the honeydew produced by aphids in the oak canopy.

## Plants for butterflies

At the last Public meeting, we were asked to list plants that attract butterflies to the garden.

The top 7 are: *Verbena bonariensis*, *Buddleia*, *Hyssopus officinalis*, *Tagetes patula*, *Sedum spectabile*, *Knautia Arvensis* and *Choisya ternata*.

You can find an a—z of butterfly-attracting plants at [www.butterflygarden.co.uk](http://www.butterflygarden.co.uk).

## THANK YOU

*A BIG THANK YOU* to Stuart for clearing the debris after the burnt out cars in September. He had asked the Council to clear up the mess after the cars were removed but they said they did not have the resources. He then did it himself.

*A BIG THANK YOU* to Helen who daily picks up a carrier bag of rubbish from the Park. Without her and the other people who pick up the rubbish, we would be knee-deep in it.



We need more bins.

So at this time of year little seems to be happening, but eggs are dormant inside grass stems, chrysalis lie hidden amongst the fallen leaves, and some species like the Peacock are hibernating in hollow tree trunks, sheds and garages. Warm winter days may draw these beautiful insects briefly from their slumber to bask in the watery sunshine, but we will have to wait until April before we see the first glimpses of the Holly Blue or the determined flight of the male Orange Tip.

Populations of butterflies fluctuate naturally from year to year, but it is to be hoped that the habitats offered by the park and disused allotments will continue to provide a haven for our wildlife.



Butterflies seen in 2006. If you have seen others, please get in touch.

*Meadows and Allotments:* Meadow Brown, Small Skipper, Large Skipper, Essex Skipper, Common Blue Small Copper, Ringlet,  
*Hedgerows, Paths and Woodland fringes:* Speckled Wood, Gatekeeper, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Orange Tip, Comma, Peacock, Red Admiral, Painted Lady

*Trees:* Purple Hairstreak, Holly Blue.

*THANKS TO JOHN FOR HIS ARTICLE and photographs for our display at Severndroog Castle.*