



Newsletter

July 2026



Summer is always a beautiful time of year when you're out and about in nature and having it right on our doorstep is an added bonus. The warm weather produces a sea of colour in the form of wildflowers across our nature reserve. Butterflies, bees and dragonflies can be seen in abundance and birdsong fills the air. The blue skies and sunshine lift our spirits and make us keen to get outdoors. Yes, it's summer and we do expect and hope for warm weather but periods of unusually hot weather are a threat to nature and we have now experienced our third heatwave this year in our corner of the

country. The effects of climate change are a worry for us all but now for some cheerful news

Every Living Thing – Jonathan Tolhurst

I'm delighted to share that the 'Every Living Thing – South Norwood Country Park' project has reached a major milestone with 1,000 species now recorded within the park's boundaries.

The project aims to create a comprehensive catalogue of the park's biodiversity, bringing together wildlife records from many different sources into a single, freely accessible online resource. It combines observations from park wardens (past and present), local birdwatchers, fungi forays, botanical surveys, biological recorders and many other wildlife enthusiasts, alongside my own observations. Some of these records date back almost a century, providing a fascinating historical perspective on the park's wildlife.

The 1,000th species to be added was the beautiful Silver Y Moth (*Autographa gamma*), a fitting milestone for a project that celebrates the incredible diversity of life found in one urban green space.

The website allows visitors to explore every recorded species and see how they fit into the taxonomic "Tree of Life", making it easy to discover everything from birds and mammals to insects, fungi, mosses and wildflowers.



This milestone demonstrates just how important SNCP is for wildlife and highlights the value of the many people who have contributed records over the years. If you have wildlife sightings or photographs from the park that you would be happy to share, I would be delighted to hear from you.

You can explore the project at:

<https://jonathantolhurst.com/apps/every-living-thing-sncp.php>

Our Feathered Friends – Howard Dingley

Spring brought in the migrant species, notably Blackcaps and then Whitethroats in good numbers followed by the scarcer and much more elusive, Lesser Whitethroat, with Willow Warblers heard as they passed through. The winter visitors gradually headed off to their breeding grounds so we lost the Black-headed Gulls, Shovellers and most of the Tufted Ducks. An unusual occurrence was the lengthy stay of not one but two male Pochards who eventually departed, perhaps too late to breed. By the time of the Friends' Dawn Chorus walk in early May, Wrens, Chiffchaffs, Blackbirds and Song Thrushes were in very good voice along with many others. There was a good turn-out for our 5.00 am



start. Around the lake and in the wetlands both Reed and Cetti's Warblers were spotted. The latter seem to be increasing in the park, being heard in locations away from water where you would not expect them. On the lake, Coots, Moorhens and Mallards have bred successfully but sadly most goslings did not survive long and, from a brood of 9 Mute Swans, just the one is still around. The rapid loss of the cygnets was sad and surprising given the successes of recent years. Word has it that a fox was spotted on the island but we hope that a water loving one hasn't evolved in Croydon. On the plus side, Green and Great Spotted Woodpeckers fledged and Kestrels too, providing great opportunities at one of the nestboxes for many keen amateur photographers. Right at the end of June a pair of Little Grebes appeared with 5 young and our fingers are crossed for their survival, with herons and gulls the primary danger. If the lake dries up again, we can look forward to some returning migrant waders in the autumn.



www.friendsofsncp.org.uk



facebook.com/groups/friendsofsncp



Instagram.com/friendsofsncp



friendsofsncp@gmail.com

Words from the Warden, Ian Glover

Update on the SNCP beaver proposal

The South Norwood Country Park beaver proposal is progressing steadily. Croydon Council has submitted an Expression of Interest to the Heritage Lottery Fund. This is the first stage of the funding application and, if successful, we will be granted permission to make a full application which we hope to submit by the end of this year. This application will aim to secure the bulk of the funding required to deliver this project and covers everything from infrastructure, such as the beaver enclosure, changes and improvements to the footpath network and rebuilding of the Visitor Centre, to staffing and habitat improvements. We should hear the outcome of the EOI over the next few weeks.

Alongside our partners, Citizen Zoo, we have commissioned an independent, expert ecological assessment of SNCP to ensure that the site and its habitats are suitable for beavers. This will take place over August and is vital to ensure that the beavers will be able to flourish should we succeed in introducing them. This assessment will also form a key part of any licence application to Natural England.

Spring and summer volunteering in SNCP: trees, footpaths and streams



Over the last few months, the Friends of SNCP have focused their efforts on caring for the trees planted last winter. This involves clearing competing vegetation, putting down mulch and watering the trees when rain is lacking to give them the best chance of survival. The serial heatwaves that began in May have made this an urgent and challenging task.

Over the growing season, keeping the footpaths accessible is another regular workday occupation. While most of the main footpaths in SNCP are kept open by a tractor, there are several sections of the footpath network that are too narrow to accommodate it; to a large degree, these are kept open through the efforts of teams of volunteers.

Stream clearance along the Chaffinch Brook is another annual maintenance task. The Friends, alongside other teams of volunteers, cut back the vegetation from the banks and remove twigs, branches and leaves from the stream to prevent large amounts of plant matter from building up in the water and rotting down which depletes oxygen levels and adds excessive nutrients to the stream, especially in stagnant or slow-moving areas of water. In addition, this clearance work prevents blockages building up over time, which would eventually result in the footpaths flooding.



www.friendsofsnmp.org.uk



facebook.com/groups/friendsofsnmp



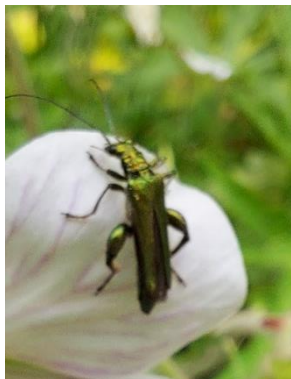
Instagram.com/friendsofsnmp



friendsofsnmp@gmail.com

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my volunteers for their efforts and commitment in the face of frequently challenging temperatures.

Wildlife and nature walks



We added three new walks to our programme for 2026. SNCP volunteer and entomologist, Stephanie Williamson, led our first bug hunt for the public on a warm Sunday morning on 31st May. We examined the contents of pitfall traps, looked at critters shaken gently out of trees onto white sheets and took a slow walk around the meadows to see what was out and about on flowering plants, notably Hogweed, Bramble and Common Mallow. Stars of the show were the Thick-legged Flower beetles *Oedemera nobilis*, [photo left] in their iridescent green beauty and very numerous this season. Seven-spot ladybirds

and soldier beetles were also out in force, plus lots of flies - unsung pollinators.

Overall, we spotted 19 different insects, from 6 orders. Breaking into groups, we carried out 10 min Flower Insect counts on flowering plants, for the citizen science Pollinator Monitoring Scheme (PoMS <https://ukpoms.org.uk>) recording hoverflies, beetles, flies, bumblebees and a solitary bee. In earlier recces, Stephanie found 2 new species for Jonathan to add to his Every Living Thing database including Double Orange-spotted moth *Pammene aurana* and the gorgeous Golden-bloomed Grey Longhorn *Agapanthia villosoviridescens*, [photo right] and some Robberflies, fearsome predators in the



grasses.

Then Ian led a couple of Nighttime Safaris in May and June starting at dusk. These involved walking from the visitor centre towards platform 4 at the lake using our detectors to spot bats. The second part of the walk took us to young blackthorn



bushes in Ryelands Field to search for the caterpillar of the Brown Hairstreak butterfly. The Friends have purchased a number of UV torches and protective glasses for this purpose. As you can see from the photo, the caterpillars glow under the UV light making it very exciting and easier to spot. The caterpillars were in their final stage of development before pupation and fully grown at approximately 17mm in length so there won't be any more Nighttime Safaris this year but Ian will be leading more Bat Walks during the summer months.



www.friendsofsncp.org.uk



facebook.com/groups/friendsofsncp



friendsofsncp@gmail.com



[Instagram.com/friendsofsncp](https://www.instagram.com/friendsofsncp)

Our third new walk, also led by Ian, was our Butterfly and Wildflower Walk this month. A fantastic 12 species were spotted during the walk, the highlight being two Clouded Yellow butterflies near the mound. We believe that this species hasn't been officially recorded on the site for some 20 or so years. Sadly, they didn't hang around long enough for a photo opportunity so this photo shows a pair of mating Green-veined Whites taken during one of our butterfly transects. So far this year, a total of 24 species of butterfly have now been recorded in our nature reserve which is two more than were recorded during the whole of last year!



Calendar 2027

A reminder that you have until 1st August to submit any photos via our Gmail. We will then decide the final selection for inclusion in next year's calendar.



Our conservation workdays take place on the second and fourth Saturday mornings of the month and weekly morning/afternoon on Tuesdays. As Warden, Ian determines what work he would like us to help him with following his management plan. He begins each workday by explaining the tasks in detail and giving training to new volunteers. If you would like to join in with one of our workdays and learn more about the importance of conservation, please email us on friendsofsncp@gmail.com

For more information about SNCP and detailed workday reports, please visit our website www.friendsofsncp.org.uk. Our warden, Ian Glover, can be contacted on Ian.Glover@croydon.gov.uk.



www.friendsofsncp.org.uk



facebook.com/groups/friendsofsncp



Instagram.com/friendsofsncp



friendsofsncp@gmail.com