

It's Autumn

Hampstead Heath:

Discover, enjoy, and protect its remarkable biodiversity

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This year Hampstead Heath celebrates its 150th anniversary as a protected space. It remains a piece of British countryside in the centre of a metropolis. With over ten million visitors a year, its wildlife and habitats are under pressure from increasing use, climate change and urban pollution. Help us to protect the Heath and keep it a sanctuary for nature and people.

Caring for the Heath: what we all can do!

The City of London and English Heritage manage these habitats to promote biodiversity. As winter approaches dead wood provides homes and food for many species. Please help by not moving around fallen branches and decaying logs.

Why not try increasing biodiversity in your own neighbourhood? Encouraging wildlife and wildflowers in your own garden, window box or local park will help to create green corridors, linking wildlife habitats across to the Heath and other green spaces in London.

Death by a million footfalls

As more people walk on the Heath, footpaths become so compacted that water cannot penetrate and key soil organisms disappear. With roots starved of water, oxygen and food, pathside trees slowly die. To protect trees, dead hedges are put around them. Please keep to the paths and don't make new ones.

Autumn fungi

Where Heath soils are not compacted they develop a network of subterranean fungi that connect and nourish tree roots. Most send up fruiting bodies in Autumn. The Heath has over 650 species of fungi including some nationally rare species.

Tawny Owls

Around October, you will hear Tawny Owls beginning to call across the Heath around sunset, which they will do until Spring. The Heath supports between five and ten pairs of this nationally declining bird. These nocturnal hunters feed on mice, voles and rats.

Original heathland habitats

In the 1800s, acid grassland, gorse and heather covered much of the Heath. Only fragments of these habitats survive, and their careful management supports rare species, including mining bees and spiders that burrow in their sandy soils. The Ivy Mining Bee is active in Autumn, and feeds on flowering ivy.



The Heath & Hampstead Society

Est. 1897

Registered Charity

For over a century, the Heath & Hampstead Society has fought to protect the Heath for visitors and for nature. With our partners, we celebrate the Heath's 150th year with this seasonally changing display.

For more information, visit www.heathandhampstead.org.uk/heath/biodiversity



ENGLISH HERITAGE



Hampstead Heath

Registered Charity



#Heath150