

HOVERFLY HOP

L 45 A path-based trail suitable for minutes buggies and wheelchair users.

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Hop through our pollinator and lakeside habitats in one of London's best-loved parks.

POINTS OF INTEREST



1. Herbaceous border

The beautiful flowers in our ornamental planting beds were selected to provide nectar and pollen for pollinators. In spring and summer you can see many bee species, hoverflies, butterflies and day-flying moths feeding here.



2. Green roof at St. James's Café

Designed in 2005, the café's green roof reduces heat loss and creates a habitat for wildlife. The rough grassland is a hiding and hunting place for beetles, bugs and spiders, and provides an overwintering habitat for caterpillars.



3. Pollinator pockets

We manage the parks for people and wildlife to enjoy together. Here we've created 'pollinator pockets' in the short grass to reduce the distance that pollinators like bees, hoverflies and butterflies need to travel between nectar sources.



4. Waterside willows

Willows are thirsty trees, which is why they grow beside water. The long branches trail in the lake to provide perches for insects like dragonflies, and refuges for aquatic invertebrates and small fish, while grebes build nests among the branches.



5. Wildflower grassland

This wildflower turf area provides nectar in spring and summer for pollinating insects. We've a relaxed mowing maintenance plan that lets wildflowers flourish. Spot ox-eye daisies, common bird's foot trefoil and common knapweed in the summer.



6. West Island

West Island is a small managed woodland and quiet wildlife refuge. Native shrubs such as elder and dog rose provide food and nest sites for birds. The scrub habitat is great for spiders, ants, molluscs and beetles, which are food for birds.



7. Wildflower meadow

By the lake we have sown the soil with a mix of native wildflowers. These cater to a diverse range of pollinating insects. Tussocks and seed-heads provide shelter for invertebrates like ladybirds and beetles through the winter.



8. Black mulberry tree

In the 1600s, King James I wanted to plant 100,000 black mulberry trees to try to start up a British silk industry. Unfortunately, the silk moth caterpillar feeds on white mulberry trees, so the project was abandoned but some beautiful trees have remained.



9. Kingfisher bank

Kingfishers can occasionally be seen diving for small fish and aquatic invertebrates. On the island we've created a kingfisher nest bank on a steep bank behind Pelican Rock. Here they can excavate nesting tunnels to set up home.



10. Duck Island cottage

The garden is laid out in an arts and crafts style potager garden, with many pollinator plants and an organic allotment. There is a bug hotel where bees, bugs, spiders and beetles live.



11. Bats foraging

A 2019 survey recorded 5 different bat species in St. James's Park, including common and soprano pipistrelles and noctules. On warm evenings, bats flit above the lake catching insects. During the day, it's dragonflies who hunt these insects.



12. Reedbeds

Our reedbeds provide food and shelter for invertebrates and birds. Spot a shy water rail or listen for reed warblers in the spring. The reedbeds keep the water clean too, absorbing excess nutrients and filtering out silt.

We would love to see photographs of your walks
Tag us on Instagram – @TheRoyalParks / #MoreThanBugs