

FRIENDS OF POLLOK COUNTRY PARK

matters



Issue 7 • Winter 2022

Welcome to our Winter newsletter!

We hope you have had a great summer visiting the park, and hopefully you managed to join one of our nature walks or our music event on the riverbank, which were all a huge success.

There's certainly been a lot happening in the park this year, with the reopening of the Burrell Collection and Pollok House and, in this edition, we're delighted to provide an update from Glasgow City Council on the Stable Block & Sawmill transformation project, along with other improvements.

Our committee are in regular contact with GCC during this period of change, and we will continue to provide you with updates throughout the year.

Our volunteers have also had an exceptionally busy year and following a major amount of work, we have been able to open the Wildlife Garden at selected times, which has been appreciated by many visitors. A huge thanks to our work party for their efforts in all weathers!

If you would like to help the 'Friends of Pollok Country Park' and become a member, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please join us at membermojo.co.uk/friendsofpollok.

Wishing you all a very happy Christmas, and all the very best for the year ahead!



Nature walks

In recent months we have held a number of nature walks for members of the Friends Group, led by our countryside rangers and livestock supervisor. We have visited the Highland Cattle, walked over the glade to the prehistoric fort remains, saw a myriad of fungi (on world fungus day!) and heard about witches and tree folklore and tree identification.

In conjunction with the countryside rangers we are developing another set of nature walks for the coming year. We hope to hear/identify birdsong, learn more of the history of Pollok and identify wildflowers and their uses. We also hope to be able to hold a few walks and activities suitable for families with some mini beast hunts, quizzes, bushcraft and toasting marshmallows – watch this space!

Creature Feature

The **Great Spotted Woodpecker** is Scotland's most common species of woodpecker. It's reasonably widespread except for northern Scotland. They thrive in mature broad-leaved woodland areas but can also survive in areas with mature conifers.

Their diet consists of insects, nuts & seeds. Both genders have red flashes on their flanks, only males have a red patch on the back of their heads. Juveniles have a red crown. In flight they have polka dot wings which are very striking.

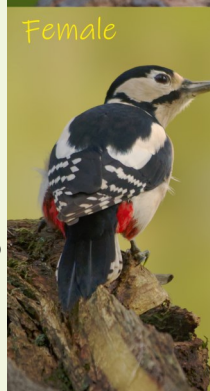
They lay four to six glossy white eggs. Both parents incubate the eggs & feed the chicks. When fledged they are fed by the adults for about ten days.

They do visit gardens; if you want to encourage them drill holes in a log, fill with suet & chopped nuts/sunflower hearts & hang from a sturdy rope or chain, they will also feed from peanut feeders.

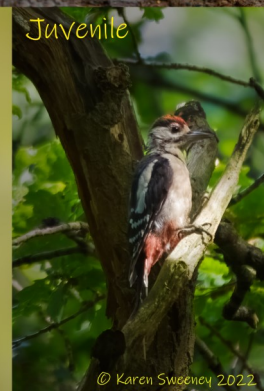
Male



Female



Juvenile



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Music in the Park!

We were delighted to welcome Kings Park Brass in August for our first music event, which was a huge success. We were blessed with beautiful weather, with the musicians performing at the riverbank opposite Pollok House. Thanks to everyone who helped make this event happen, and of course to the musicians for a most enjoyable afternoon!





Stables & Sawmill Refurbishment Project (update from GCC)

As you will see when you pass, Phase 1 (dismantling & enabling works) is now well underway. City Property & Reigart have taken down the majority of roof/building areas in poor condition, working with structural engineers Narro Associates, & other specialists with expertise in slate, timber, stone, along with a Conservation Architect. This programme of works is due to be completed by January 2023. Architects Page\Park have been appointed for phase 2 & 3 (rebuild & fitout for end use). An initial design brief is being developed with

various stakeholders & potential users. We also attended the World Clydesdale Show in Aberdeen which allowed us to promote awareness around the project & meet with other stakeholders. If you have any questions regarding the project, please contact us on PollokStablesRefurb@glasgow.gov.uk, & someone from the team will respond to you.

Active Travel Management Plan (update from GCC)

Works to deliver an Active Travel Management plan are ongoing.

A **free Electric shuttle bus** has been introduced which stops at Pollokshaws Road entrance, Pollok House, & the Burrell Collection. We are now running our winter timetable which operates daily from 10am until 6.15pm. You can find a full timetable on bus shelters or online at <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/pollokcountrypark>

- A new package of signage has been rolled out, along with path improvements & installation of benches
- EV chargers have been installed in the Burrell Collection car park, which are anticipated to go live at the end of the year. These will be supplied from a battery energy storage system, due to be installed in December 2022. Other EV chargers will be in place in the Riverside Car Park, & at Nether Pollok Pavilion car park (installation dates tbc).
- A NextBike station has been installed at the Burrell Collection, as part of NextBikes cycle hire scheme. Hire costs can be found on the docking stations & online.
- Two barriers are now in place within the park to restrict vehicle movement, which will prioritise pedestrian & cycle access on Pollok Avenue. Barriers are not currently in operation at present, due to some outstanding issues being addressed. When the barriers are operational the only entrance for the Burrell will be via Pollokshaws Road, exit by Haggs Road. If you are coming to the park to visit Pollok House the entrance would be via Dumbreck Road and exit via Dumbreck Road.



A Day in the Life of a ... Countryside Ranger

Hi, Friends of Pollok Country Park, my name is Denise Neely and I have been a Countryside Ranger with Glasgow City Council for over 21 years. When people hear what I do, they always say "Wow, that sounds amazing!" Basically, we get paid for doing what we love – working outdoors and encouraging others to appreciate the nature on their doorstep.

There isn't a typical day, but it usually starts with checking emails, taking daily temperatures and rainfall readings at the Met Office Recording Station and visiting the polytunnel to water seedlings.

Next, we might prepare for a school group visit where we have minibeast hunts, seasonal nature walks and forest schools. We usually work with forest school groups over a 6-week period to enhance confidence, problem solving and team working skills. We teach children den building, responsible tool use & fire skills, including cooking. It can make a great difference to children's confidence, particularly those who often struggle with more formal learning environments.

We regularly patrol the park. I try to do this in the morning as wildlife is more active and birds more vocal. This is one of my favourite parts of the job - this morning I was blessed with a Nuthatch, Bullfinch, Buzzard and a flock of Long Tailed Tits. On patrol we record wildlife, chat to the public and check and report any maintenance issues for footpaths/trees or vandalism. We also conduct specific seasonal wildlife surveys on butterflies, birds, water voles & bats.

Another part of our job is dealing with injured wildlife and reporting possible wildlife crimes. This includes reporting dogs attacking Roe Deer and taking injured animals to the local vet.

Throughout the year we run and attend a whole host of public events from bird & bat walks to pond dipping & family fun days.

I look forward to meeting you at one of our events - or as I'm doing my rounds in Pollok Country Park!



More Park News...

It was great to see the return of the **Great Scottish Run Half Marathon** through Pollok Country Park. Both the Women's and Men's races were very tight with Michelle Finn and Callum Hawkins being the eventual winners.

Work is going well on the **South West Cycleway** to Pollok Country Park.

While the Cycleway itself is still under construction, the pedestrian crossing into the Park at St Andrew's Drive is a great improvement from the previous crossing.



HM King Charles III
Re-Opening of
The Burrell Collection
13th October 2022

[Photo Credit - Janice Callaghan]

Work Parties

The work party has gained some new members this year. A warm welcome to them all! Some of this was due to the opening of the wildlife garden (WLG) to the public. While we have continued to work on Monday mornings, we officially opened the WLG to the public on Sunday mornings too. We started this on the weekend of the Burrell re-opening and it has proved to be very popular. While the garden is now closed for the winter, we will open the WLG again in Spring next year – you are very welcome to pop in – and we sometimes have plants as giveaways, so don't miss out!

As well as tending to the WLG, other work carried out by the work party members included planting bulbs at the Riverside Covid Memorial, tackling Himalayan Balsam, clearing debris and cutting back branches at the fish pond, litter picking, painting memorial benches, re-siting the WLG noticeboard, planting seedlings behind the Burrell, helping the Hobbits with some renovation in their village, dressing the scarecrow (who became an honorary Friends work party member!) and clearing grass clippings.



Upcoming Events (December)

3rd—Christmas Decorations (FoPCP)

Pollok House (NTS) - 3/4th—Afternoon tea with Mrs Claus

4th - Christmas Market (in front courtyard)

8th - Christmas Gifting Evening

9th-24th Dec—Mrs Claus at Pollok House

Hedgehog Houses

The Friends Group agreed to pay for 7 hedgehog houses to be made by Men's Shed Govan and, with the guidance of the countryside rangers, to have them sited throughout the Park. The prototype was inspected at South Western Allotments Association (SWAA) and it went down so well that SWAA purchased the first hog house which was sited within the allotments! Another 7 are now being made for the rest of the Park.

(Photo of Lynsey Torrance (Countryside Ranger) and Roni Plazalska (SWAA secretary) - plus Rannoch)



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Vice Chair: Catherine Todd

Secretary: Rachel Clark

Treasurer: Brian Willett

IT/Social Media: Gavin Winterbotham

Members: Bob Marshall, Charles Turner, Jane Black, Pat McCarthy, Phil Wray, Peter Gore

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