

Wild and Free in LBBB

Calendar 2023

**Barking &
Dagenham**

**COUNTRY
PARKS**

Graham Wallis
Silver & Gold

**White Hart Lakes,
Eastbrookend Country Park**

"I hadn't particularly intended doing any photography as the light was so poor, but had my camera with me anyway. I was just heading home when a gap opened in the clouds of an otherwise densely overcast sky, allowing the glorious colours of the trees to glow against the dark clouds."

In honour of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee which was commemorated with 'The Queen's Green Canopy' tree-planting initiative, Barking & Dagenham Park Rangers Service invited local residents to share their experiences of **'The Beauty of Trees through the Seasons'** within their local parks.

This calendar shows the shortlisted entries and highlights the diversity and beauty that we can find right here within the borough of Barking & Dagenham.

barkinganddagenhamparkrangers.com and
www.lbbd.gov.uk/parks-and-open-spaces



BDParkRangers

#WildFreeLBBB





Colin Page
Snowy Avenue

Valence Park

“This photo was taken in Valence Park which is just about 5-10 minutes from where I live. It is a great location to see and enjoy the changing seasons. This picture of the trees in snow was taken in 2019.”

In 2017 the new **‘Charter for Trees, Woods and People’** was launched to strengthen the relationship between people and trees in the UK. The new charter was launched on the 800th anniversary of the ‘Charter of the Forest’ sealed in 1217 by King Henry III.

Read the Charter Toolkit to find out how you can protect and celebrate trees or sign up to the Woodland Trust mailing list for regular updates.

Find out more and get involved:
<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/support-us/act/tree-charter/>



December

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January



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Ian Cridland

Rays of Hope

Eastbrookend Country Park

“Walking through the park I saw the fabulous glow and warmth of the sun bursting through the tree which got me thinking. We had just seen in the new year, it was a new day and, with the sun shining so brightly, it filled me with new hope. The sun brings life to the trees which in turn brings life to us - how wonderful nature is.”

Creating new woodlands - The LBBB Park Ranger Service is pioneering urban reforestation by planting ‘Miyawaki Forests’ in partnership with the rewilding company SUGI, including the ‘Forest of Thanks’ in Parsloes Park. By carefully enriching the soil with natural composts, bacteria and fungi, planting saplings close together and monitoring their growth, Miyawaki Forests can grow up to 10 times faster than traditional reforestation methods and are more resilient to the effects of global warming.

Find out more:
<https://www.sugiproject.com/partnerships/barking-and-dagenham>



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February



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Meenakshi Jain
Watery Scene

Barking Park Lake

“A fine chilly morning at Barking Park! The clear sky and tall trees make for a beautiful scene, and the presence of chirping birds and swans add to the serene atmosphere. With a good lens, I was able to capture the beauty of nature in all its glory. It’s always wonderful to spend time outdoors, surrounded by the natural beauty of a park.”



Water and trees - Trees are powerhouses when it comes to protecting life from the effects of floods and pollution. They act as natural sponges, collecting and filtering rainwater and releasing it slowly back into streams, rivers and lakes, which protects surface soils from erosion. Trees are the most effective land cover for good water quality. Roots and leaves also slow down water runoff and limit the amount of oils and heavy metals that reach the waterways. In addition, trees help to protect ground-nesting bird species from changing water levels caused by flash floods.



<https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/united-states/washington/stories-in-washington/trees-prevent-stormwater-pollution/>



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Graham Wallis
Pussy Willow

Eastbrookend Country Park

"Like cat's paws, the look and feel of these furry catkins is a real springtime treat for the nature-lover. They're the male flowers of the Goat Willow, a dioecious species, meaning male and female flowers grow on separate trees. Seeing them reminds me strongly of my childhood."

Value to wildlife - Goat willow (*Salix caprea*) foliage is eaten by the caterpillars of a number of moths, including the fallow kitten, fallow clearwing, dusky clearwing and lunar hornet clearwing. It is also the main food plant for caterpillars of the purple emperor butterfly. Catkins provide an important early source of pollen and nectar for bees and other insects, and birds use goat willow to forage for caterpillars and insects.

To learn more about British trees, download the Tree ID app and go for a walk in your local park. <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/tree-id-app/>

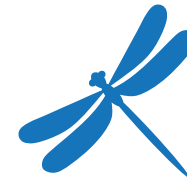


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Ian Cridland
Spring Blossom

Eastbrookend Country Park

“Whilst walking through the park, the simple beauty of the blossom caught my eye. The tree had rested through the cold months and was bursting back into life bringing in the joy of spring whilst demonstrating the resilience and wonder of nature. The tree will go on to bear fruit providing food that sustains life and then will rest again. The joy of that simple looking flower will continue year after year.”



Spring is a very important period for plant reproduction, especially for fruit trees – and it is also one of the most beautiful seasons. Blossoms attract pollinators which allow the trees to produce fruit later in the year. Different species and varieties of fruit trees come into flower at different times, producing a wide array of colours from February until May.

If you would like to help care for the fruit trees in LBB’s Community Orchards, please email rangers@lbb.gov.uk to find out more about volunteering opportunities.

A guide to blossom timing - The Orchard Project:
<https://www.theorchardproject.org.uk/blog/blossom-guide/>



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May



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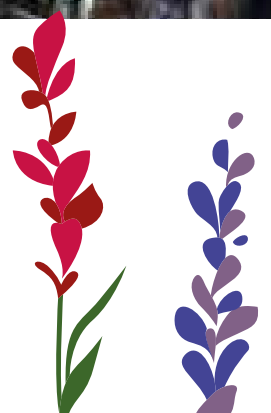
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Ian Cridland
Spirit of the trees

Eastbrookend Country Park

"I was in Eastbrookend Country Park, near the cemetery and took a picture of a tree with vine roots growing up the trunk and to me it looks like a person climbing the tree. The man climbing the tree shows that even trees are living and have a soul in them"



Mythology and folklore of trees – Trees have been a source of fairy tales and mythology for thousands of years. One such character from Greek mythology is the Dryad, also known as a tree-nymph or tree spirit.

Drys (δρῦς) signifies "oak" in Greek, and dryads were originally considered the nymphs of oak trees specifically, but now the term refers to tree nymphs in general. Unlike some of the other mischievous fairy-folk, dryads are considered to be rather shy creatures – so keep a close lookout while you are out walking in the woods!

More info on Dryads: <https://www.alittlesparkofjoy.com/dryads/>



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June



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Jeff Duggan

Avenue of Trees by Lake

Barking Park

"I regularly walk and take snaps all over LBBD. This photo was taken in Barking Park during lockdown.

The walks then, and even today, really do help my mental health, especially at that difficult time in 2020. The trees seemed somehow to thrive, which gave me hope."



Trees can communicate with each other through an underground network made of fungi nicknamed the **'Wood Wide Web'**. This network allows mother trees to help saplings grow faster, dying trees to share nutrients, and trees with insect infestations to warn other trees to raise their chemical defences! We can help maintain healthy wood wide webs in our forests by planting only native species of trees and plants in our gardens and local green spaces.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/science-environment-44643177>



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July



August

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Graham Cox Full Moon on a Glorious Morning

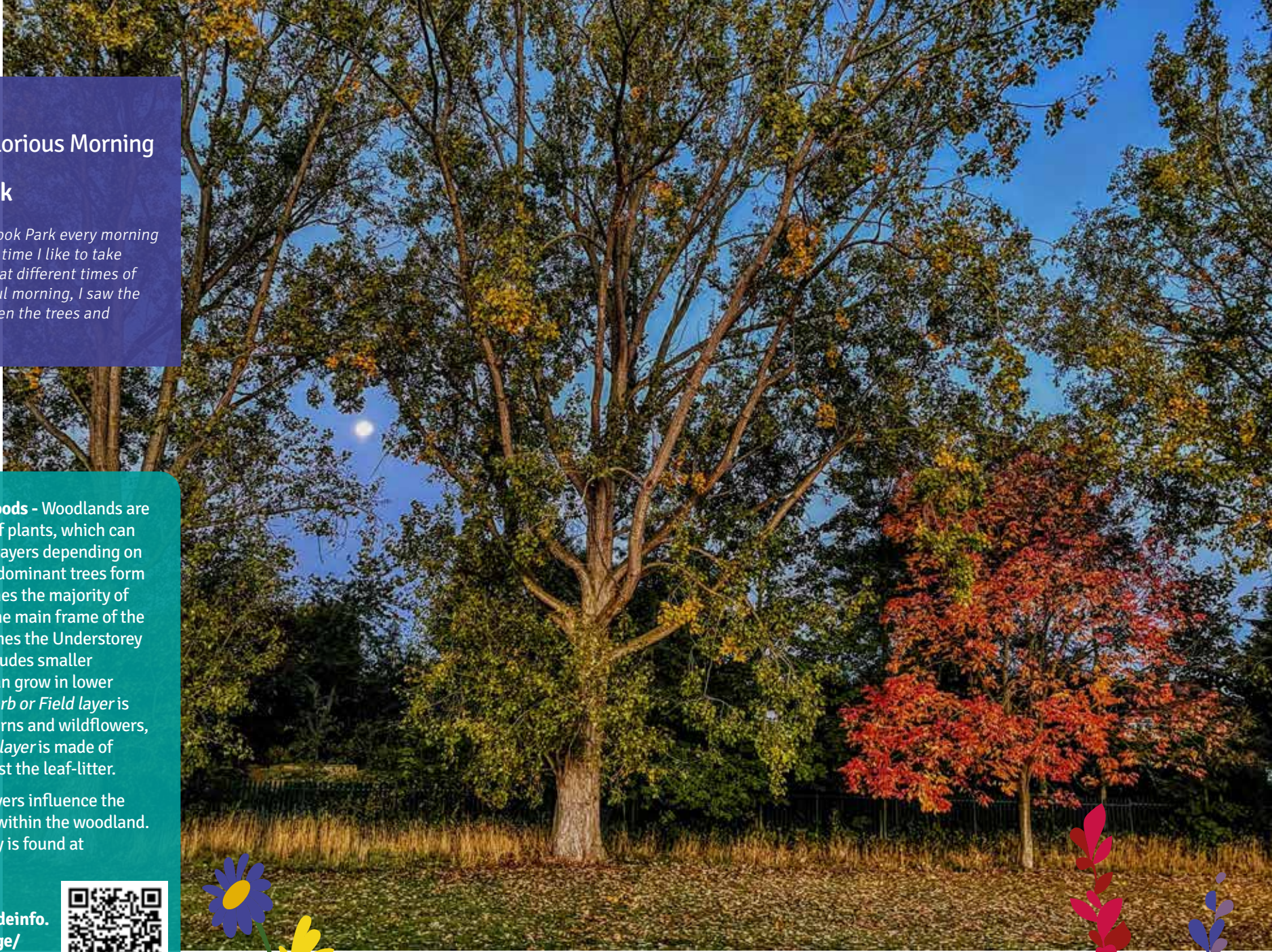
Mayesbrook Park

"I walk through Mayesbrook Park every morning going to work. It's at this time I like to take photographs of sunrises at different times of the year. On this beautiful morning, I saw the moon going down between the trees and wanted to capture it."

Vertical structure of woods - Woodlands are composed of a variety of plants, which can be divided into distinct layers depending on their height. The taller, dominant trees form the *Canopy* which reaches the majority of sunlight and provides the main frame of the wood. Beneath this comes the Understorey or Herb layer which includes smaller trees and shrubs that can grow in lower light levels. Next the *Herb or Field layer* is composed of grasses, ferns and wildflowers, then finally the *Ground layer* is made of mosses growing amongst the leaf-litter.

These different plant layers influence the distribution of animals within the woodland. Generally more diversity is found at woodland edges.

Find out more:
http://www.countrysideinfo.co.uk/woodland_manage/struct.htm



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August



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Shirupa Aktar
Autumn's Golden
Sprinkles



**Overall
Winner**



Mayesbrook Park

"It wasn't until my husband and daughter had sat down at the bench that I noticed the way the sun shone on this tree and created such a beautiful snapshot. A perfectly sunny but chilly autumnal day, and this majestic tree with its beautiful golden leaves sprinkled across the grass."



Trees for wellbeing

Spending time outdoors can be incredibly beneficial, for many reasons. Trees release phytoncides, volatile compounds with antibacterial properties, thought to reduce stress and boost immunity in humans. In recent years, a process of relaxation called 'Forest-bathing', known in Japan as *shinrin yoku*, has become enormously popular. Some research has even shown that having a view of green trees and plants from a hospital window reduces post-operative recovery time compared to those who can only see a wall!

Find out more about Forest-bathing:
<https://www.forestryengland.uk/blog/forest-bathing>



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September



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Molly Broad
Fungus on tree trunk

The Chase Local Nature Reserve

“Me and my partner spend a lot of time here walking the dog and taking in the beautiful scenery. Our favourite time to visit is during the autumn when the leaves are falling. This tree was down by the River Rom.”

Dead wood and Saproxylic fungi -
“Every tree provides a unique and dynamic support system for fungi, since almost the whole of every tree is associated with fungi.”

Fungi that decompose the wood of dead trees or fallen trunks and branches are incredibly important and are known as ‘saproxylic’. As the wood breaks down, vital elements such as carbon, nitrogen and potassium are released and the essential humus layer in the soil is maintained. This type of fungus plays a crucial role in ‘softening’ up the wood which then enables invertebrates to feed on it and break it down further. Most saproxylic invertebrates are more specific regarding the type of decay rather than on the species of tree. Other invertebrates depend directly on the fruiting bodies of fungi.

Find out more:

[https://www.](https://www.ancienttreeforum.org.uk/ancient-trees/ancient-tree-ecology-wildlife/fungi/)

[ancienttreeforum.org.uk/
ancient-trees/ancient-tree-
ecology-wildlife/fungi/](https://www.ancienttreeforum.org.uk/ancient-trees/ancient-tree-ecology-wildlife/fungi/)



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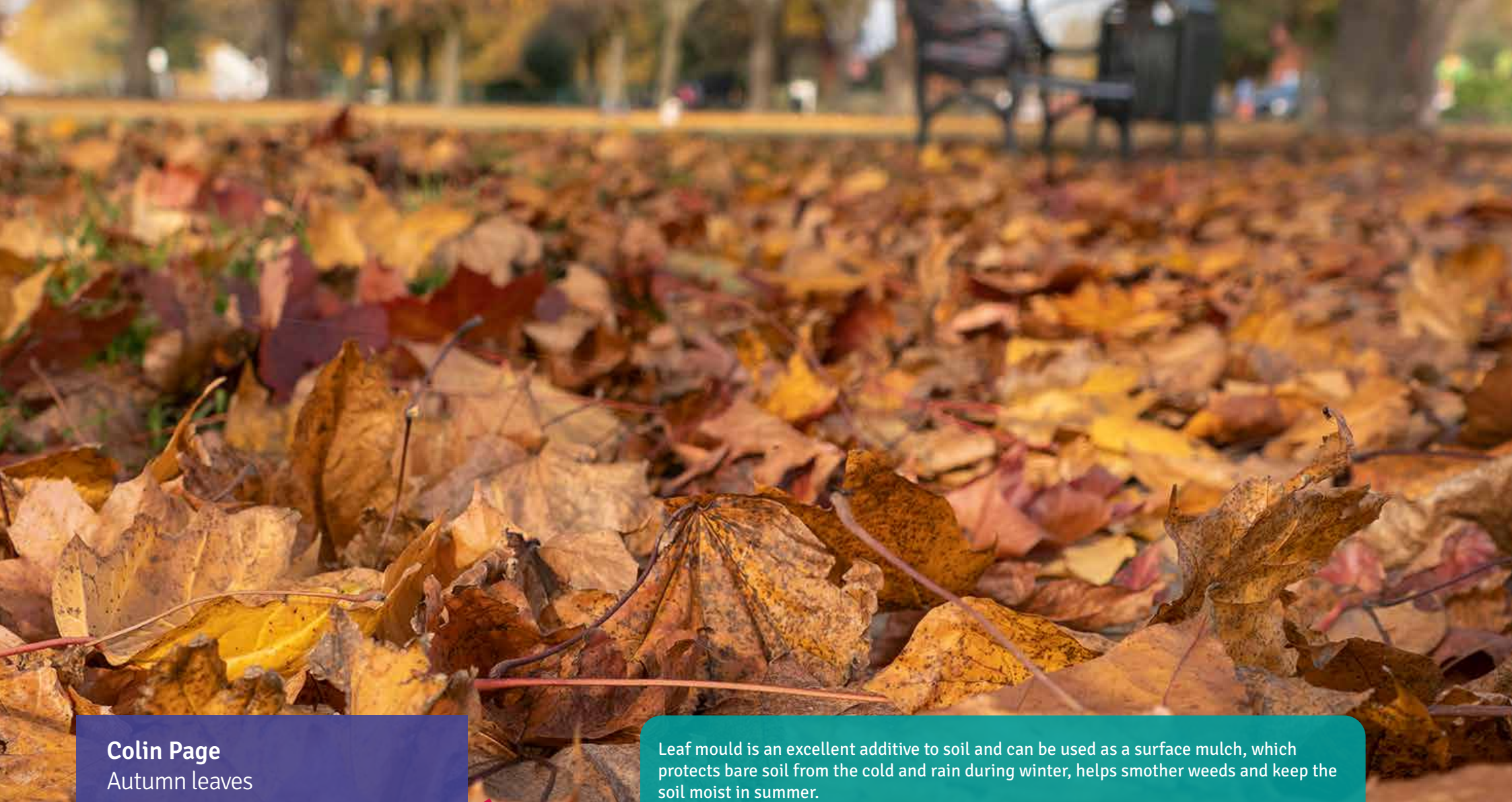
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Colin Page
Autumn leaves

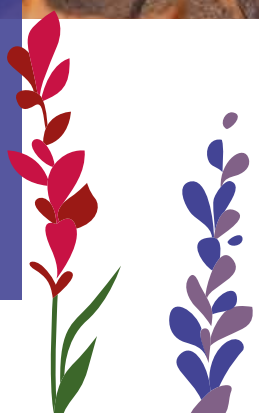
Valence Park

"I try and go to Valence Park as much as I can, it is about 10 minutes from where I live. The children's play park has recently been updated so my grandchildren are well catered for. This picture was taken in November 2021."

Leaf mould is an excellent additive to soil and can be used as a surface mulch, which protects bare soil from the cold and rain during winter, helps smother weeds and keep the soil moist in summer.

Leaves contain a high proportion of a substance called lignin, so they break down very slowly. Unlike traditional compost made from food waste, grass and other soft green materials which is bacterially-driven process that generates heat, leaf mould is formed through a cooler, slower fungal-driven process.

Watch Monty Don show how to make leaf mould at home:
<https://www.gardenersworld.com/how-to/maintain-the-garden/how-to-make-leaf-mould/>



October

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November



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Sean Mulqueen
Frosty-edged leaves

**The Chase Local
Nature Reserve**

“Walking over The Chase at the beginning of the year trying out my new camera I received for Christmas and it was a lovely frosty morning. There was not a lot of wildlife about to capture, so I started to look at the plants and the trees that were covered with the morning frost and I was lucky enough to get a nice photograph.”

Surviving frost - Trees and plants use many different strategies to cope with freezing temperatures. Tree-bark can provide an insulating layer to prevent water freezing inside the cells of tissues that conduct water. Some plants store particular sugars and amino acids to use as natural anti-freeze, while others dehydrate their cell contents so that any freezing that occurs doesn't damage the structure.

Find out more:
<https://www.rhs.org.uk/prevention-protection/frost-damage>



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Forward Planner for 2024:

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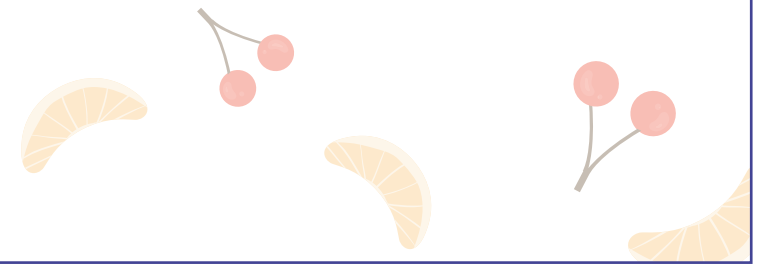
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Seasonal Notes:

Spring



Summer



Autumn



Winter





Sally Wemyss
Whippet Watching Squirrels in the Trees

Pondfield Park

“My whippet spends hours looking up at the branches of beautiful trees, hoping to catch a glimpse of a squirrel. I felt this picture really captured that from an interesting angle.”

**Barking &
Dagenham**

**COUNTRY
PARKS**

LBBB Parks are great places for dogs, and responsible dog ownership is encouraged. Our friendly companions encourage us to move more and are excellent at guiding us outdoors. Free dog-waste bags are provided at Eastbrookend Discovery Centre to help you clean up after your dog and keep the site clean and healthy for everyone to enjoy.

Please be aware that not all park users are comfortable with dogs, so we ask that dogs are kept under close control at all times. From time to time there may be a need for dogs to be on a lead in certain areas due to nesting birds, grazing horses or site works, so please follow any notices displayed.

Find out how to ensure your dog is a friend of the great outdoors: <https://www.pdsa.org.uk/pet-help-and-advice/looking-after-your-pet/puppies-dogs/dog-laws-for-owners>



#WildFreeLBBB



BDParkRangers

barkinganddagenhamcountryparks.com and
www.lbbd.gov.uk/parks-and-open-spaces