

RICHMOND PARK DIARY

JULY

HEALTH ADVICE: OAK PROCESSIONARY MOTH

This exotic Moth first appeared in the UK in 2006 a few miles away. Recently, the caterpillar's distinctive white, silken nests have been found on a few Oak trees between Sheen Gate and Roehampton Gate. They shed toxic hairs which can cause unpleasant rashes and skin or eye irritations, and sometimes breathing difficulties if inhaled, in people and animals. Once shed, the toxic hairs may be present on the grass and therefore sitting down underneath the trees will increase chances of being affected. Advice signs have been put up and nest removal is scheduled in early July as soon as the caterpillars have retreated into their nests to pupate. The removal will be carried out by specially trained and equipped operators.

Should you suffer symptoms which you think may match those described, you are advised to seek medical advice.

Further information is available at: www.royalparks.org.uk/richmond or call the Park office on 020 8948 3209

TICKS: These tiny insect-like creatures may attach themselves to animals or people passing through long grass or Bracken during the summer months. The ticks feed by piercing the skin to suck blood, which can transmit an illness, called Lyme Disease. The risk is very small and should not deter people from enjoying the Park, but it is advisable to take the following precautions:

- Keep covered up when walking through long grass or bracken, or use insect repellent if bare-legged
- Check your skin and pets fur for the presence of ticks, which may be removed by gently twisting and pulling to ensure that the mouthparts are not left behind. Carefully wash the area after the bite.
- In case of difficulty, consult your doctor
- A leaflet containing further information and advice may be obtained from Holly Lodge or contact the Park office— 0208 948 3209.

DEER: About 200 young have been born this year. The calves and fawns accompany their mothers and will remain dependent for some time, still suckling until Christmas. The young frequently rest in deep grass or Bracken apart from their mothers and are still very vulnerable to disturbance or attack from visitor's dogs. Hinds remain very protective of their offspring and will react aggressively if their calves are approached too closely. It is best to keep to footpaths at this time of year and to keep dogs under close control.

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The Royal Parks are: Bushy Park, The Green Park, Greenwich Park, Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, The Regent's Park & Primrose Hill, Richmond Park and St James's Park.

