



Royal Borough of Greenwich

Greenwich Park

London's Oldest Royal Park

Where else in the world can you sit in the 'back garden' of a King's palace. With a foot in each hemisphere, setting your watch to world time and watch a thousand years of history before you. Looking across the major sights of London and the River Thames.

Look down on the [Queens House](#), [National Maritime Museum](#) , [Royal Naval College](#) & across the [River Thames](#) to Canary Wharf & Docklands. The Queens House is said to be the model used for the White House in Washington DC, USA - Home of US Presidents.

Greenwich Park was the first Royal Park to be enclosed (1433). There have been deer in the park since the 15th century. On the site of the [Royal Naval College](#) (shortly to become part of Greenwich University) was Greenwich Palace, home to the Tudor monarchs.

There is a bandstand where brass bands play on summer Sunday afternoons. A whole programme of events runs throughout the summer. There is also a cafe close to the [Greenwich Royal Observatory](#) where you can eat inside or outside.

Looking down on the boating lake where children can hire boats and canoes for a twenty minute trip around this scenic corner of the park. Children's playground is close by. Maze Hill railway station is a short walk from this corner of the park. Wren's twin towers of the Royal Naval College are an impressive landmark & reference point.

Outside the Blackheath Gate, at the northern end of the park, there are donkey rides for the children. Or stroll across the vast expanse of Blackheath to watch every shape of kite being flown.

[Royal Parks Official Web-Site](#)



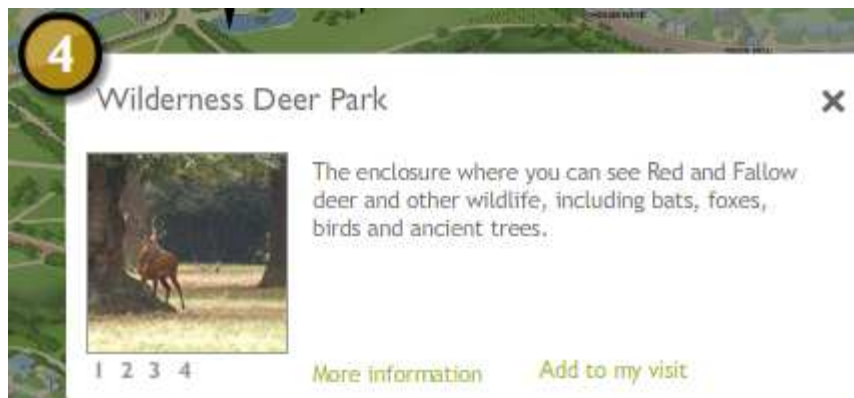
The lake at Greenwich Park has a fleet of rowing and pedal boats. There is a kiosk for drinks and snacks, a childrens' playground and also the nearby Greenwich observatory and Maritime museum.

Opening Times

School holidays, public holidays and all weekends between Easter and the end of September.

Prices

Prices are per person Half hour Adult £4.00 Child (under 15) £2.00 Family (2 adults + 2 children) £9.50



The Wilderness - Deer Park

Greenwich is the oldest of London's deer parks and has been home to Red and Fallow Deer since it was enclosed. Originally they wandered around the whole area but over time the deer were moved away from the more popular sections of the Park until they were confined to The Wilderness, by the Flower Garden in the south east of the Park. There are paths leading to special viewpoints from which you can enjoy watching the herd of 16 fallow deer and 14 red deer.

The secluded woodland and ancient trees in The Wilderness also provide a sanctuary for other wildlife. Standing and lying dead wood is left to decay naturally, providing important habitat for various invertebrates, especially beetles such as the stag beetle. Stag beetles develop as larvae in decaying stumps for up to 7 years before emerging as adults. Such undisturbed areas are therefore vitally important, not just for invertebrates but also provide a refuge for nesting birds, roosting bats, foxes, wood mice and many other animals. The ancient trees and dead wood habitat are also important for their fungi.



In 2002 the Secret Garden Wildlife Centre was created from a derelict building with the support of the Friends of Greenwich Park. The Centre includes educational equipment and information regarding flora and fauna, a small classroom, kitchenette and toilets. The classroom is also a hide with one-way glass in the windows that allows the viewing of the deer and wildlife without the animals being aware that they are being observed.

DEER
IN THE ROYAL
PARKS



www.royalparks.org.uk

SPECIES OF DEER

The Royal Parks are home to two species of deer – Red and Fallow.

Red deer are indigenous to Britain and are the country's largest land mammals. Fallow deer were introduced to Britain by the Normans after dying out during the ice age and have since become the most widespread species of deer in Britain.

RED DEER

Male = Stag Female = Hind Young Deer = Calf

FALLOW DEER

Male = Buck Female = Doe Young Deer = Fawn

COATS

Deer grow new coats twice a year. Red deer have a thin single coat of glossy red hair which replaces the thick winter coat in June. Fallow coats vary in colour from cream to dark brown, the dappled coat being the best known.

GRAZING

Grazing is essential to maintain the high wildlife value of the Park's grassland. Unlike cutting, deer grazing creates more variation in structure and plant diversity and does not damage the anthills which are of great ecological importance to the grassland. Deer grazing also prevents tree seedlings from growing, keeping the grassland open.

ANTLERS

All male deer have antlers which start growing in the spring and are shed each year, usually at the end of winter. Antlers are made of bone which can grow at a rate of 2.5 centimetres (1 inch) a day. A soft covering known as velvet helps to protect newly forming antlers which is lost in time for the rut in September. The length, thickness and colour of the antlers can determine the age of the stag. Fallow bucks over three years old usually have palmate (flattened) antlers.



THE RUT

September signals the beginning of the deer 'rut' (breeding season) which lasts until November. The Red stags and Fallow bucks compete for females. At this time, the large males roar, bark and clash antlers in a spectacular way in an attempt to fight off rivals and to attract as many females as possible. Sometimes the deer may be injured and some are even killed during the fights for supremacy.

THE CULLS

There are 2 culls in Richmond Park – the males in February and the females in November. In Bushy Park, however, the male cull takes place in September and the female cull in November. The cull is necessary in order to maintain the number of deer in the park and prevent overgrazing which would ultimately result in starvation. It is also the reason why Royal Parks' herds are in excellent condition.

CALVING AND FAWNING

The young are born mainly in June and are hidden by their mothers amongst the bracken and long grass. Females and their young are very vulnerable and sensitive to disturbance at this time and the females can be very protective and aggressive.

FEEDING

The natural plant life provides sufficient nutrients for the deer with a supplement of deer nuts, maize and hay during the winter months. Acorns, horse chestnuts (conkers) and sweet chestnuts form a vital part of the diet of deer and are important in building up fat reserves for the winter. That is why visitors are not allowed to collect conkers and chestnuts in the park.



DEER AWARENESS

Deer are wild animals. It is dangerous to approach them, especially in May, June and July, when nursing mothers are protecting their young, and between September and November, when the males are rutting.

If visitors find a calf or fawn alone in the Park, never touch it. It has not been abandoned – the mother is likely to be feeding nearby.

Dogs must be kept on leads when deer are nearby. It is an offence to allow a dog to chase the deer.

Feeding of the deer is an offence under the Royal Parks Regulations and can seriously harm the deer.

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- Greenwich Park is the oldest of London's deer parks and is now home to 13 Red deer and 12 Fallow deer.