



During lockdown I regularly walked in Scrubs on Old Oak Common and Little Scrubs in West London with my daughter and her working Golden retriever.

Both spaces are unusual for an inner city in so far as they each have wild areas of woodland, meadow grassland and scrub that can feel like you're in the countryside. Ground cover for nesting birds a rest in transit. We see foxes throughout the year and in the summer a fair number of butterflies flitting among the wild flowers and tall grasses. There are playing fields, model aeroplanes, footpaths, joggers and walkers. Last year HS2 construction took over a chunk of the common, destroying a large area of brambles and I know there are lots of other pressures facing the these natural habitats.

This summer I bought two new lenses for my camera which allow me to get closer to a subject, one close up the other from a distance. I have already photographed Marbled Whites, Meadow Browns, Small, Large and Essex Skippers, Small Heaths, Ringlets and a much rarer Black Hairstreak. Next year I am hoping to add Small Blues and Brown Hairstreaks to this London record. I have Amalia and Digby to thank for getting me out and about in the first place.



Out at the crack of dawn as my light source appears above the rising skyline of skyscrapers to the East of Wormwood Scrubs. Winter has dragged on, the arrival of spring slow, an unsettled summer and autumn brings it's golden leaves, fungi and falling temperatures. During the course of the year I have reconnected with nature in the heart of London photographing butterflies on the common, two species of which I've not seen before.



Black Hairstreak (*Satyrium pruni*) July '21.

Apparently the first recording in history of a
Black Hairstreak in Middlesex and Hertfordshire



Essex Skipper (*Thymelicus lineola*) male /June '21