**05.07.21**

This is on Hackney Marshes…I often go running down there. I did actually went out on my bike to to sort of go and explore some of the places that perhaps didn't. I wasn't going to happen to be going past kind of thing, so so they're not entirely. I've been walking around, but some of them were completely coincidental, but so this is, yeah, just somewhere at the back of the the ice rink.

UM, for my birthday last year, I had a party and my daughter and I went and got some dried flowers from there. And put them in. Use them as table centers and it's really nice and it's just a lovely big space with, you know, just lots of wildflowers. These little dart things, which I'm sure as as a boy you will know. Like it, it's throwing at, people go again, sticking their hair and things a little bit paler than I thought and just yeah, just lovely flowers, and I'm not sure that is cow parsley. I don't know what that that. What that I'm the one on the left at the white one is, but there there's days he's all sorts of things there and it's just a lovely spot and I just love the space and so now I often go pass if I go for a run and I'm I go north, I kind of go along the back of the ice rink and then onto the track up to.

The wild bit at the bottom of Springfield Park and there's a crossover the the the bridge there at the other Rowing Club. And then yeah that either. Well then I sort of run along the bottom of the park and then either stay on that side of the river and run back towards the ice rink or I crossed back over and run down the rougher path that this all brings out. The at the bottom where this picture is taken again.

**Yeah yeah, I know it well I know very well indeed.**

If it's not too busy, yeah, it gets a bit busy there on a Sunday, UM, with with people walking and stuff. But yeah, and I just love the the the the space, the the movement of the flowers and and and the fact that it's completely well. I'm sure it's not completely unmanaged, but it's fairly loosely, you know, sparsely managed.

**Do you know who kind of owns that that area?**

What's the I think it's probably the, UM, the the Leave Valley nature. While they could leave the Lea Valley Country Park or done LNP, what are they something else? Something like that? It's something must be LV. Something like that. They own the ice rink and I aim all sorts of other other bits and I think they they. Yeah in the whitewater rafting place up at Broxbourne and things like that. I think it's yeah. And my son. I mean sometimes at the North End, or that you even cows grazing and and and things like that. And and it's yeah, it's just a a a nice space. It's just off the main road.

**Yeah, yeah, uhm. I mean, obviously you know this obviously have all about nature and and what's natural and what's not. You're saying it's kind of loosely managed, but does that sort of? How visible is that and how does that affect how?**

It looks completely wild, but I I guess they they. They probably mow it once you know in order to promote the wild flowers and stuff I can't save ever seeing them doing that so I know they sometimes graze it. It must be managed as a as a Meadow, otherwise I guess it would have trees on it, yeah? But you know, it looks to all intents and purposes to be to be natural. You know you can't. You wouldn't look at it and think it's a sort of certainly not designed landscape and and. And it looks to be pretty pretty wild,and there's not even any paths or anything, so as part of the bottom part of the edge, this or the the the gravel path on the Riverside. UM, and I think that's about it.

**Wonderful, I'll move on. I've I've bunched 3 pictures up together here which may or may not be right and where, where would these be located?**

So they're all on the UM, the the the river Lea side, but the the first two are on the track that runs along the back of the Marshes down towards the the road. The the sort of the far end of Homerton High Street. So if you go. Uhm? Yeah, so do you know the the the the path that goes down that follows the the the what they call the Hackney Riviera where it's coming out? So the one on the left? But it's quite far down it it's that's kind of past UM or near the changing rooms at the bottom end of Hackney Marshes there's another set of change rooms at the top end. Yeah again for going running often go a class. Clapton Pond and pass over Chatsworth Rd past where The waste place is, where all the dustbin lorries go up. It's got an interesting history which I was reading about the other day as a power station come and go over that big Green Bridge and yeah, so uhm. Bear, left, and around, and sometimes I will go north from there, but usually sort of curl curve rain and run along this track.

So that's that's heading South with the river on your left. The football pitches on the right, but after the trees and that river bit there, you can't really see it early on in the year you the the water was really, really clear and you could see the movement of the the the reeds underneath and it's all these sort of wavy fingers. If you like kind of just this you get this real sense of of movement.

These things have been taken this week so that none of them have got any sunshine in. That's the problem with, you know it. It could look quite nice, so I sort of again sort of sort out that spot 'cause it's somewhere that I often go past and again been been with with my daughter sort of foraging and then looking at plants and stuff. And we've seen a hair and there I was. Kind of hoping that we might be able to see a Heron in the tree or something, or just standing on the edge, but we didn't.

The middle one is a bit further up than that, but on on that same stretch and I I love running or cycling down there 'cause it looks like a country Rd. You know I grew up in Bedfordshire. That's kind of the place that you know. It's a bit more green than you best find in an agricultural sort of area where I used to ride my bike, but it's that kind of country country lane almost, you know, with no with with few people on it and then the the other one is. On the towpath, UM, so rather than the river Lea, it's on the Lee Navigation side, so if you kind of went down, this track got to the main mode at the bottom, turn right and then got to the river Lee so the Lee Navigation. I don't know where where the the bridge goes up and they used to be the Matchbox cars factory and then if you go up there that was actually taken going South, down the towpath there and they've improved the track there.

There are five maybe of this type of tree and they really distinctive, maples or whatever. They have really interesting coloured leaves, and at different points throughout the year. I often notice them. Uhm, yeah, they really stand out as being something quite. Just yeah, visually. I am really interested in trees and that in that little stretch there. So just to the right of there is is that oh, bend in the river and the boats.

**Yeah, and again, that's just you're going down there, yeah running but also you know just for fun…**

if it's if it's a good week, I'd probably see all three of these things once a week. Yeah, maybe once a fortnight, exceptionally. Twice a week got nothing, but yeah, this I I would probably see all of these three UM in in in one go. Or be it the the third one I normally going in the other direction kind of thing, but yeah, that that's that's a circuit that I often come often on.

**Brilliant, brilliant, that's great. Thank you, that's all. Yeah it, I'm pretty familiar with going down there. That's my sort of my lunch break.,**

and so all of these pictures of much of a match this kind of thing, although there there were similar and. I did go and seek them out a little bit, but. … we ran out of time and had to go so it's kind of but it's all there all places that I would. I would go on a on a weekly basis generally. Yeah yeah all those ones as well.

**And this this next picture I thought I thought was really interesting. What? What's the story with this one?**

So that's the leaf or the leaves of the the third picture on the previous slide, right? Right now, just amazing. They just look like a uh, a paint palette of kind of, UM? So if you stop and look at them, that's what they that's what they look at. But what they look like so that that picture kinda goes with the previous picture. But as they come into flower into leaf, they've got really bright. Colored colored buds and stuff so they're really distinctive. It sort of all stages, maybe not when they don't have any leaves on, but that's that's the leaves on it at the moment, so that's that's taken up just like the the the the, the third one on the on the previous slide.

Yeah yeah, I just love the the colors and the you know, the way that they're all different. There's not enough tea in there other than sort of you know, green and green cream, UM? Yeah, people just go past that. I mean, I guess it gives some people must see it and and they and they enjoy it. But you don't often see people sort of stopping and taking photos. You might get knocked over exactly because they’ve made that a quite quite fast track now so but yeah, so that that that it's just a little cluster of trees are, but I often look out for.

**It's it's quite a unusual that kind of variegation, isn't it? Do you feel that those are natural? Is that a cultivated tree?**

I don't think it's a native tree. But it. I don't know. It doesn't really look like it's planted though. You know there's there's four or five of them, sort of. You know, in in the same area, so whether one was planted in the hands of great, I don't know. I don't really know with that bit of, UM, ground, that's again between the the football pitches and the and the canal. And there's a that's quite a nice buffer there. 'cause I, I'm not, you know, I never go to the football pictures. I'm not really interested in sport. UM, probably the only person who didn't watch the football match last night

**Me neither.**

Yeah, it's like, yeah, whatever I can hear what's going on from the pub at the end of the road, yeah, and yeah, there's it's not very thick piece of woodland but it's it's a it's a big it's a buffer between the the the the river and the and the football pitches, yeah and there's little paths weave in between it but yeah again, I often go past there.

**I was just gonna say how kind of natural do you think this this tree is? You know whether it be planted there purposefully or not.**

I think it is. I think it's that to me is is nature. It's you know where it is and how it's planted looks completely natural to me.

**Yeah yeah yeah fantastic UM. This one is very very nice picture I I was gonna I was there. I was looking through these. I was thinking God you must have a really good some good phone camera…**

It’s just an iPhone. Oh yeah yeah I'm not particularly upmarket. So no. So this is on the river Lea quite near where that, maybe down stream a little bit from where that that that tree is.

And then there was a couple of Swans with eight or nine cygnets swimming beside and I've I've seen these quite a lot come in the last couple of weeks. I haven't seen them when they were tiny but. You know they are either up by the ice rink or sort of down by Hackney Wick and they sort of possess that stretch of water. And I somebody said to me the other day and I'm not sure whether we talked about this, but the Swans, apparently sort of babysit other Swans, children kind of thing, so they're not necessarily eight or nine cygnets that of those of that pair of Swans. But whether that's true or not, I don't know. I haven't looked it up, but, uh, yeah, I have no idea.

I quite like that idea that that that they're sort of babysitting. All of these these these things, and they go up and down in the river, but I'm always also slightly worried about the peril that they, you know that there's not that many Swans in the in the city, so not all of those. I imagine they're gonna make it to adulthood kind of thing, and so there's always a sort of a. Something beyond all that ‘look lovely, fluffy Swans’ kind of thing. In the back of my mind, when I see things like that, but I've seen these things before.

**It's that sort of, uh, I mean, it's a bit of a grim topic of conversation, but the, you know, is that fact that they may not live to adulthood is that because of human impact or just the way of the world?**

That's how I would probably think it. Yes, I. I would consider that the the primary risk kind of thing. Right, yeah, but I suppose there's predators and and foxes, and although I'm not sure what what animals you know, what else in the the natural world would take on a swan and and I'm not sure I'd want to do that, so I imagine this. Imagine it's a human threat rather than anything else. I don't sort of when I was trying to decide what photos to put in and want to take a bit of a. An internal discussion about what was nature and what was wildlife? Uhm, because

**that's interesting.**

I did. And and there there's a. There's a picture of the fox in here as well, uh, but I was out early today and I saw a rabbit and I think one is that is that that as well as it being more difficult to photo? I mean, I was if I was kind of hoping to see a heron and I would put that in, but it did get me thinking about well. What was nature? And what was wildlife? And I think my go to. Frame of reference for nature was was plants and and environment rather than animals, which I would describe more as being wildlife even though they are, you know, these these Swans that is nature, but that's not. What sort of? I I first thought of, yeah, do you think that's? I mean is that?

**Is that just you know, true for the whole of the world? Or is that particular to to what that what this is like in in city, particularly or.**

I don't know. I don't think it's necessarily different for for for being in in the city. UM, I think I would probably have the same kind of. Saying if I was. In the in the in the Amazon or something I don't know, it's just that when you want to talk about the natural world, I would kind of that terminology would make me think of everything. But when I talk about nature, I think I probably more thinking of flora rather than fauna. Yeah, but wildlife would be the the the former. You know the animals, UM?

And when it comes to. Urban wildlife that's probably less well. I mean the weren't got to the fox yet, but the reason that the fox is is there is that this morning I was having coffee. Having my breakfast and and and I turned around and that Fox was in the garden, just looking, looking, looking in the yeah. So that's just, uh, yeah, it was really a quite nice looking fox and our garden is not very big and he was just kind of who stood still for ages looking in the window. And then he sort of turned off to to go there. So and then I was and I kind of thought. Well, we're talking today, and the fox is in the garden. And I spoke. We think about nature. Well, that kind of seems like that, yeah, what more does it need to do to get in there in the morning?

There's a sort of that's to me, not entirely natural, because the fox is are living in our back gardens and eating discarded kebabs and pizzas and and stuff like that. Uhm? But maybe you know the with the heron or the the Swans, that's perhaps a bit more nature, but I still find still kind of probably put that under the under the wildlife heading, in which case, Mr. Fox, who would come in come under wildlife quite quite happily kind of thing you say. Yeah, magnificent, and not too mangey.

Yeah I mean, yeah probably quite a young one and I think they kind of get worse as the year goes on kind of thing and then they have a very short lifespan. I think Foxes come in in in London despite how many there are, but I kind of just thought. Well you know the given the day that is there was another picture that I didn't put in when I went down to I was helping bottle wine at Renegade Winery in Bethnal Green which is an urban Winery. And I was a bit keen and I got there, uh, I thought we start the session started at 9 actually started at 10 so I was there an hour early and then it's gonna like well I'll go and get myself a coffee and I went up to sort of. Opposite where the Museum of Childhood is on on Bethan Green Road and grab a Coffee.

I mean, it was drizzly, but there's a little park there just to the South of the museum. And I went in there. And there was a, it was sort of more park-like, but some nice big trees. And I was kind of thinking ‘is this nature?’, and I sort of decided it wasn't. But then a fox came out of the bushes and wandered, wandered through. And I took a picture of it, but it wasn't very good picture 'cause it was quite a long way away, and I wasn't really expecting it.

Kind of I didn't put that one in the end because to me it was more park. It was sort of, UM, cedar trees and pine trees and more sort of Arboretum. Kind of style things. But so. But the first picture I took for for for for this I had a fox involved in it and then talk. And I thought, well, I probably I should put the fox in there now. So that's why that's why he's in.

**Yeah, well, I'm glad to see him in there. Yeah, he said, we've had many in our garden. Yeah, they come in and destroy everything. Infuriating.**

Yeah, not here, but in our in our old flat ones or just totaled one of our my Maple trees that had enough. But I think it's the young ones. Just come in and chew on stuff or they'll just leave random crap in the garden. And I don't mean actually. I mean she had these are bags and stuff and you can think what's that. And I wish we had a nappy. I think in then we had.

**We've had nappies. The strangest one had is an entire piece of Brie.**

Let's keep looking for some crackers or something.

**I'm gonna jump jump back. I’ve tried to keep these kind of in order as well. I think I know where where this is, is this Wick Woodland?**

Yeah it is. Yeah uhm. And again, I I made in fact it took me three attempts to get here. So when the sun on the sun was it Sunday the other day and I thought well go for it, I'll go for a bike ride and get some, get some photos 'cause I know where I want to go and and and we were we. We took a bit too long on my daughter got a bit fed up. It's kinda well, we'll just go home and forget it. I'll come out again. And then I come. I went for runs couple of days ago and wasn't feeling great and I got kinda to the river Lee and to the Marshes and thought no, I'm not sure I'm gonna be able to make it so I turned around and didn't get it down here and then.

So I went out again yesterday in the rain on the bike again to go and get these but the so that so the the one on the left is looking back towards the towards Stratford so that the the the road is on the left. Inside of that picture with the the playing fields to the to the left kind of thing. So normally I would sort of run from where this is pointing towards towards where I'm sitting kind of thing, so that's that's taken in the reverse direction, UM, but. I love the way that the path is all overgrown at the moment.

It's actually quite difficult to cycle down, it's gotten muddy and it's really narrow when you when you're running, you can kind of jump through that a little bit, but when you get into this bit of woodland from the corner by the A 12 junction Mm-hmm, which really busy junction and there's fly overs and those buildings, yeah, you can see the Olympic Park in the center as soon as you're sort of like 10 paces in.

This, and although there's the main road on the left hand side. You, you're hidden and and I've never really explored the other side and and. Almost 'cause there's a kind of. Fear then yeah, I'm not quite sure what's in Wick Woodlands. 'cause it kinda looks like the place that neer do wells would hang out. You know you're never quite sure what you might come across in there and I quite but I quite like that and and even though this you know the A-12 kind of thunders along on the right hand side of that and I think there's some. There's some redwoods in there.

I was just reading. But if you know that, but London is a Forest by Paul Wood, he talks about about this bit of woodland? And it's not that old. I can't remember when it was planted in the 80s or something, and it's fairly sort of unmanaged again, when it it probably is, as the way all Woodlands are, but some. It's sort of, not it. It. It's kind of unregulated. If you like.

Then and then the one on the left, there's this is going. If you've run, if you come along the path on the on the on the the picture on the left where I'm sitting, and then you kind of turn that into the left running parallel to the Lee navigation. Yeah, where the A-12 goes over the Lea, there's just this row of plane trees and they just reach up to the sky and tower over you and all seasons. I just love that the bark on them is amazing, but just the the the reach of them. And the size makes it feel quite otherworldly, uhm?

And it's just a yeah that that that there's lots of places and I wanted to get a picture. Sort of like this of of rows of plane trees. And there's some in Clissold Park. There's some along the top end of Hackney Downs, you know. The path goes goes along the top end up, but this was the one that I wanted to to share because I just think it's a magnificent. Hundred 200 meter stretches of these huge trees. And yeah, just the way that they they, they reach up and sort of lean across. I said I think they're Plane trees. And yeah, pretty sure that's why they they kind of look a bit Beachy from here. But I think they're Plane trees, but just the way. They're kind of. Almost like fingers reaching up and over the path I think is is great and again you know you got that you got the rest of the woods on the left, which has got parts going through it but nothing signposted. And it's got that kind of slight. Well, I'm not quite sure what's going on in there, so we just would run on until we get home.

Yeah, and Wick Woodlands. It's kind of. It's not, you know it's not a huge forest. It's not a. It's not very big. And you can hear the traffic. But I think it's very under visited that you don't often see people in there And also when you do see people in the middle was you know what are they? What are they doing? And I think that's where that kind of like. I'm not getting in the middle because that's a bit scary because if I if I go somewhere like Epping Forest, it's sort of annoys me a bit. But I can still hear the traffic 'cause I expect not to be able to come, but when I go there I don't mind that I can hear the traffic 'cause I'm getting this in return, right? So a bit of traffic noise and. Yes, I kind of it's great and I can go.

It takes me 20 minutes to run to run, to hear UM maybe half an hour, UM? Whereas yeah, if I'm going to Epping Forest, it's more of a day and it's car journey and and I like sort of expect greater return. Whereas yeah, just to be able to run run here.

**Is there anything to do with that? How you know Epping Forest is this kind of natural ancient bit of woodland, whereas this like he said. You know it's only. 30 something years old, potentially.**

No, I mean there. Yeah, you do get more of a sense of. The ancientness, I suppose in Epping, but you know, so that's that was Pollarded and coppiced for hundreds and hundreds of years. So it's not. No, Oh yeah, some of some of the trees are ancient, but a lot of it is is is sort of a a derelict semi industrial landscape. Really it it's, you know it's managed for, for for firewood UM. Whereas these trees haven't been and there maybe not as old, UM? So I I don't, I wouldn't consider this. Really, any less natural than Epping Forest, actually? Yeah, it's it's a bit smaller, but I think the the the density of it is yes, not many places in Epping that are like this, and even at this time of year, I mean there's got the beaches and stuff, but there's loads. And yeah, it's a big canopy overhead with anything but there. There's not that sort of density of of of greenery like like there is in Wick Woodlands.

**These silver birches are there as well?**

I think that's right, so that's on that side, but it's on the left of that first picture. Yeah, and then the I'm not quite sure what this purple plant is, but you know you see loads of it at the moment on the riverbanks and stuff. So that's on the UM coming back up the river Leon. The coming back up the the Lee Navigation from UM the same stretches where the where the River Lea. That's that's more down by the A12 underpass.

**The flyover, yeah? Where there's that strange kind of encampment?**

Yeah, thing yeah yeah, I'm not yes over semi perm permanent. Nobody gonna thing yeah with the occasional graffiti artists and generally a fire burning I'm like yeah again I'm not quite sure what goes on under there but then the the, the the depths of night gonna think but yeah I've

**I've encountered some of those people in the middle of Wick Woodlands fields actually. Yeah, then yeah, you kind of walk through and there's like you know big structures built for speakers or I don't know. Someone in a hammock there or something.**

Yeah, yeah, I imagine there's there's, you know I don't quite like you know I still like going to festivals and and UM I'm I'm quite happy with that but I don't necessarily want that all the time. But it does feel quite alien. UM and yeah. It's sort of an interesting little countercultural bit that that come under the A-12 there that.

It doesn't quite belong to us, and when I cycled through the woods the other day 'cause it was on on the bike, I sort of went all the way under the bridge and then across to the tow path and it kind of felt like I was a little bit in somebody else's space, even though it's not their space. UM, but, but then there's also another part of me that kind of nice bit of a mess, you know 'cause some of it just looks like it's people dumping rubbish and stuff like that, and therefore they sort of that's damage in the natural environment? UM, but I'm not sure that that's necessarily the same people who are living on the water. So you know and and it's difficult to sort of compare to try and apportion blame. He, he's he's he's doing what they're kind of thing, yeah, yeah, yeah.

But yeah, and then these silver birches. Yeah, that's kind of in in Wick Woodlands. They come along the side of that path. It's just. That sort of made me think of Russia, or you know, some sort of a Eastern European steppe somewhere where it's just got this impenetrable woodland that will go on for miles and miles, and they make a Netflix mystery around, but that that that it takes like 5 minutes to walk to the other side. Has that feeling of kind of you know you're in the Balkans somewhere?

**Yeah, yeah, there's something kind of sinister about that somehow, yeah.**

There is about that word, and I may because it is quite impenetrable. It's not. There's no big clearings in sunny spots and stuff and. Not far as I I know, it's it's so it's you've got the traffic. You've got the there's no, there's no habitation aboard in it you got the road, the A12. In the canal and quite thick woodland then it's kind of yeah that's pretty wild that's that's that that's always less less nature and and and more. Wild Wilderness kind of thing. You know in in in both sort of societally and ecologically it cool, yeah, but while that whole corner, but you know, I we talked about with with yeah, just random people gonna just doing doing their thing. You know God knows what?

**Yeah, yeah, yeah I've encounterd them actually like going for a walk on say a Sunday morning. Yeah, the the stragglers from the previous evening.**

That's right. Yeah, we will. I think this man my son was cycling day in that that path we were looking at earlier and some could hear this music playing. What kind of thinking that says I like on a boat or something. And as we we sort of got further and further in, this must have been on. I think it was on Bank Holiday Monday but it was about 1:00 o'clock in the afternoon and there was a sound system. So there's a lorry park over the other side of the river there. And Yeah, this is I just saw this the this this was just someone making an early start and then it it dawned they actually know that that they weren't getting. They weren't getting started. This was still going on from the night before and it was just half a dozen people just kind of barely standing up at this kind of nodding. So until they fell over. But it's good. I like seeing that it was. It was it kind of like yeah 20 years ago. That might have been me.

**No comment.**

Yeah, I don't recall that, yeah. I don't know whether it's it kind of looks like a lime tree, but I thought it might be a Linden tree and one of the and the reason I want to take that one is. You’ve got to bear in mind that this circuit that we're sort of going on, and all of these places at the moment there's such a lovely scent in the air of blossoms. Whether that's the Hawthorne or this, whether it's lime or Linden, UM and I kind of wanted to illustrate that somehow that you know, every time I've I've done that that run OK, not in that. Not that's not in the winter, but there's always sort of different smells. It could be, The wood smoke from the from the boats. It could be the the the blossoms, the wild flowers UM. And the the the new track that they put in that sort of goes underneath this tree. And so I was just, you know, centimeters away from these from these flowers.

So I stopped in and turned around and took some photos of the UM, 'cause they they look nice, but it was mainly for the for the smell, yeah, 'cause that was very much part of the nature and again living in London. We don't have the freshest of air, but it's not that difficult to to get somewhere, and there's always the smell of the river as well. Actually, whether you're on the river side of the Marshes or the the Lee Navigation, and I love that. It's not sort of a no. Maybe he's no zone. It's not like a seaside smell. But it's a sort of in almost like a stagnant water smell it, but I don't know, but it's like a river that the the mud and the the the dampen the stuff all has a a certain aroma that I really actually enjoy.

UM and it's very natural that so and then the the the the one on the left is actually in Hackney marshes, so it's coming back there yesterday and along the sort of the north side where the path goes. Uhm, I sort of looked across, and they're all these. All these flowers come. I probably prefer the stuff at the back of Lee Valley because it's yeah, this is clearly been planted as a wildflower Meadow, but

Sorry, it's this thing is. Is it Hackney Downs? Yeah yeah, yeah sorry and so yeah, I don't know if you've seen but they've they've clearly planted some areas of the playing field and I think this is the the North End of Hackney Downs, uhm? And yeah, but it looks magnificent and there's a couple of grass paths cut through it. UM, and that didn't smell much there, but just visually. It just looked really nice thing to to see and it kind of was trying to bring nature closer to to people. I think what I'm really liking at the moment is the way that the Council has. They're not cutting the verges as as as they used to, and I think that's I don't think it's just a a an economic thing. I mean, it does help and and I've seen it in Enfield and other places like that. But just where stuff is overgrown, well, that's a overgrown. It's not, it's only overgrown. If you consider it over and it's just. It's just growing naturally, but having the all of the grass is and the flowers growing up around the base of the trees I think is excellent rather than just lots of well manicured lawns. I've got a well manicured lawn myself and that's good. Just 'cause it's my garden. It's not, you know, and I want to be able to sit in it if it ever stops raining and but I like the fact that other places are a little bit more chaotic, and I think so that one. Yeah, I just thought it, it just visually. It looks lovely. It's clearly nature and you know, and very colorful, but quite unusual for for where we are with that of pallet of colors and stuff.

I don't know how. You know whether you if you stopped mowing Hackney Downs I don't think you'd get that growing up. You'd get lots of dock leaves and nettles like we've seen in all the other pictures something so therefore it's quite so it it's not. It's not as natural as the Marshes, but they are there wildflowers, it just look lovely.

**Yeah yeah yeah, it's a beautiful sight I I can't remember I said last time but I'm just on X road on the other side of the Downs so yeah again, that's that that's on my daily route.**

Yeah, if you go under the railway line. By the yeah, it's just kind of yeah, I thought that the slope kind of thing I over there.

**Yeah, it's really beautiful. It's funny though, every time. I mean, I've been one of them walking past it. There's like crowds of people with phones place. Yeah, it's such an Instagram sensation. I suspect,**

yeah, but I, you know all the times I've taken all of these photos, I didn't see anyone else taking any photos of anything. No, uhm? I mean, maybe it wasn't the sunny thing, but you know, I think a lot of stuff goes unnoticed. Certainly I don't see people taking pictures at the back of the ice rink, maybe, maybe sunflowers else elsewhere, perhaps, but yeah, I mean, that's clearly a just, I mean just that photo as it is. I mean, I that's why I haven't done anything to it, but it looks like a Laura Ashley print.

**Yeah. Do you think I mean like is it? You know you were talking about going foraging and. Obviously you're visiting these places. All manner of places every week. What kind of benefit should people stop and look more? And what and why might they want to do that?**

I just sent two. Engage a bit more with what's around them. I mean, I I do that quite a lot and I often you know, and I. I take it interesting in places and in history and and and stuff like that and hopefully you got another couple of pictures that will bring out a bit and people sort of say, well you know all that stuff about stuff and I'm like, yeah, that's 'cause I'm not on Facebook and you know, and I don't. OK, I do watch the TV but I don't watch a lot and I'm not interested in sports so I don't shout along to people kicking the ball about it, but I'd much rather spend two hours walking in the woods and smelling the soil and and and maybe 'cause I'm into food and wine and stuff. Things like aroma and appearance are quite important, and so I sort of relate to that, and

I think living in in a city it's easy to sort of miss some of that stuff, and so I've actually, you know, really enjoyed doing this 'cause it's kind of made me. Look even more and I yeah, I don't think I I ignore stuff, but it's sort of mainly through actually is that? Is that worth stopping for a photo kind of thing? And and I think. Yeah, just I think an appreciation of of of nature. From an ecological point of view, I think if you notice it, you might be more wary of someone chopping it down in order to build yet another supermarket or a housing development or any of those. Any of those things, I mean for me environment. He's a. He's a sort of a a a strong consideration, more sort of, you know there there should be more thought given to the environment than the than the economy in my opinion.

And you know, it's kind of everything. I don't like this or the whole economic growth first thing and there needs to be more thinking about environment. 'cause that's what sustains at all and therefore so stopping and smelling the flowers. So I smell in these these, the the, the blossoms on the on the left and. And I often do walking down the towpath and stuff like that, stop it, then what? What does that smell like? That's partly 'cause I'm in in I'm doing this wine thing and it is of course it's all about aromas and you can't. You can't just say it smells like flowers. You got to say whether is it a case here, is it Linden is it Hawthorne? Is it whatever? Honey? So it's got notes of honeysuckle and it's gonna? Yeah, but actually how many people invite that? Actually know what honeysuckle smells like that it's all part of my sort of wine lexicon I suppose to some to something but. I I think you know everyone would.

It's nice to stop and smell the flowers, isn't it? You know, you know that's very much a cliche, but I think there's a lot. There's a lot in that.

**Yeah, absolutely. I I'm something I'm always doing and actually in in the kind of throws of the pandemic which, when nobody really knew what was going on. So I just found myself habitually doing it. And then I was thinking, oh God, I hope I haven't. You know, somebody else hasn't put their nose in. For me, getting hit by smelling flowers, yeah. Uhm, so we're talking about kind of looking up close things, and these ones seem to speak to that.**

Yeah, so when we were talking last week, I was mainly thinking of the again the plane trees in in Castle Park so I didn't have go up to to Clissold park or any park this this week. But so this this is at the back of a plane tree on

**Connection drops**

Yeah where were we? Where were we

**we were talking about plane trees and you're saying about the ones in Clissold Park and then this is where this one is?**

So this one is not in there. Yeah, this ones on Hackney Downs, but when we were talking last week I was thinking all that the the the bark on those trees. Uhm, you kind of want. That's that's nature to me. Come and actually the ones that are the ones in happy that it's probably better because they're they're in a slightly more. Natural environment really not natural, but yes, I'm a Clissold Park is so it's so busy but it's.

No, uhm, so I thought this is the yeah this would be best but but I love the the the size of those trees especially the huge ones by the house. I love that. Yeah, I always make a point of looking at them when I go past and just have the colors of the bark and so that's why that one made it well.

I call it the abstractness of it them. And. On my To Do List, at some point in the future lifetime I I quite like the idea of having UHM 3 grand. This is sort of a picture like this, UM, of just big pictures of that kind of abstractly kind of up. I'm thinking if you look at it closely enough then you don't really know what it is. Yeah, and there's almost certain like and relief landscape kind of map. There you know with all the ups and downs, but then you've also got all the bugs living in there and things. And you know, if you do look closely, there's normally insects and stuff in there. Uhm? But yeah, and I think that's something that you don't. This web and it's very London thing to see those trees when we go up to us talking. You know last week by going up to the North Pennines and not having neighbors or walls in the big open spaces. But you and there's, there's a lovely lovely views and and lots of trees and stuff you don't get that kind of. Bark effect on on many things, but the you know it were trees I;ve seen this week where they they. They've got very deep grooved bark very vertical and I'm not sure what those are but you know you can get your fingers in between. This is the bottom up and it's just another thing that adds to the sort of. Natural. Color if you like or they're not coming, but you know that the whole kind of the environment you know those yeah.

The texture in the pattern and the randomness of it, and the way that they're all completely different. And I really like.

**Wonderful, sorry I cut you off a minute ago. You were gonna start talking about the other image.**

Yeah, so the other one. So I'm today no this this this you will like so I had to come get the air conditioning fixed on my car but I don't I. I think I might miss the opportunity for years in the air con this summer but last last time when it was hot the air con wasn't working so I had to take it to Kwik Fit in. And if you took it and they couldn't fix it a couple of weeks ago so it's take it to to Kwik Fit in late. It's going to take a look at it all day, but I will say so. I thought I'd go and grab a coffee or something so I walked back down to Lea Bridge station and there's a place there called the water. The Water Works come and I'm not been in there before and I said it was a cafe.

The cafe was closed but I just love going down there and having a look and there's a bridge goes over the the one of the the flood channels to, the nature reserve. I've never been in before and so I'd actually intended reading and reading the book in a cafe, but I ended up spending them. That was it, and there's a sort of wildlife garden. As I was going down the back of it I I spotted these two little mushrooms come and. Do you get mushrooms in summer? Never not many you know, so I thought like they kind of stood out 'cause there's something and. So this time when I I took this picture and maybe a couple of others to come come.

It's a place that. I've never been to before, but have run past so if you go up again going back to this, this whole route, that sort of, UM, you go past the the waste transfer station at the desk and then you go with the green bridge over the over the the Lea Navigation and turn around to the left then so put onto the marshes and enter there, bear right again. So you write the top of the Marshes and with football picture on the left and then there's a. There's a red bridge where they recently replaced the the flooring. And if you sort of crossover there and follow the path range will get to the tunnel that goes under Lea Bridge Road and up to the ice rink, and the horse riding centre. And just to the right of that you want when you go along there, you crossover some cobbles UM, and I've always kind of thought that was a bit strange. Well, why this bit cobbled and the other side of that. The fence where those cobbles are on the right hand side is this nature reserve.

And I don't think you can get from one to the other. UM, you have to sort of go round and up leaving. Right about that, but it's just this. This massive, UM? Industrial landscape postindustrial landscape that was built in the 1880s I think to to clean the water in London and and I kind of come across bits of it before. 'cause if you go South of the river Lee come. Where does it pop? But again, quite near the ice rink. UM, is it there's a pub on the water from where, where, where Le Bridge.

**Princess of Wales**

That's right, yeah, yeah. So if you go if you go. Aside from that, you cross over the river and ends up in the left hand side behind the wall. There's a nature reserve in there and and and that's got lots of, UM, industrial archaeology. UM, hidden around UM. And so I knew a little bit by that, and I've been to the Markfield beam engine, in Tottenham. While I'm so new that was all built for this dinner. I actually quite huge UM industrial. Uhm, public health kind of thing. I've never been into this. I didn't know you could go into this other bit round the back and it's absolutely amazing. And so yeah. So these these two. So this was new. A new place for me today, yeah? Which I haven't really intended to go to, but I just kind of got in. This all began. The camera is that I wanna show you some of these to to that later come and.

This one on the left is there's probably about twice the distance. If you can, as you can see there, UM, of this of this walkway. That reminded me of being in Australia many years, going next track numbers, sort of walkways through the through the Blue Mountains and up in the rainforest. Doesn't matter, so I said the the the filter beds were closed in the 1970s and 1970 and bits of it they they've managed as habitats. But this section, uh, it's almost like a sort of a hexagon or Pentagon or something. And there's sort of, there's there's quadrants and they they sort of doing things to them. But this one is is completely up. You know, I'm I'm unmanaged UM and I've got this walkway for and it just goes down into the end and there's a small palm that you can imagine is teeming with with frogs and stuff like that and there's there's quite a few interpretation panels.

But yeah, it was lovely and again, just really, that's one sort of real dampness today. 'cause it had been wet, but it was a bit sheltered under there and I was just thinking on my daughter would would love this. 'cause she's quite interesting wildlife and nature and stuff and I suppose I I was there for about an hour and I saw. Three other people in this huge area come. And yeah, like nobody else. I mean, I, I suppose it was. What does it mean when Wednesday morning? But it's not like.

Even you know more from the wetlands and marshes and and that that track that I'm still talking about that goes under the tunnel under the road, it's always quite busy all times of day. And at this I mean this is going to be one of my new go to places I think maybe not for running because it's a nature reserve, but just I think to just go to and and I could imagine taking a picnic over there and and and just find a quiet spot, spot benches. And it's also a little bit if you go further up the river. It's talking now. She's done. If you've been up there up by, towards UM. The other side of Tottenham Hale's over the the the, the and and and up to his chin for there's there's a bit so a little bit like this but yeah, I really like this this this walkway that it took you into this. An unknown so little bit again.

A bit like we would say anywhere in London where you're completely on your own, is slightly disturbing. It, uh, maybe maybe more thrilling kind of way. I find myself kind of thing doesn't happen around here. I could. I could kind of do what I want if I wanted to do something that I don't really throw away. 'cause I mean I don't know. It's just that kind of. It's a one used to be somewhere where you're not at all overlooked. There's no sense of being watched and there's nobody else. Do you just surrounded by birdsong and leaves and? Greenery and and I'm like hey this is a man made structure kind of thing but yeah I felt quite. Almost a privilege to be there.

So like a bit of an interlocal kind of thing, but in, that's like mysterious going away, you know, and yeah, so that's good. Well, enjoy that. And then the the one on the right is a similar in the same area but sort of another quadrant. And there's a. Uhm? Here they have like a uh, a central section with these. These sort of UM. Big plants, reedbeds all of that because when you come in from from. One way. I mean you go down this kind of gangway as this hexagon with these and it's all come a bird hide.

And yeah you can lower these hatches and then look at the binoculars and I don't know how often anyone uses it, but I quite liked about this. I took a few pictures here but this is one that I put in because you've got this sort of concrete pipe up or something in the foreground and then the then the wall going diagonally across there and just the way that it's reverting to to nature and. And and being overgrown and it it's it's again that there must be some degree of management in there, but it's not. Being preserved as such, it's just being allowed to decay and and in turn into a wildlife habitat.

I didn't see anything that excites or few Swans, some coots couple of start with pigeons. But I imagine if you're there a bit longer, you know there's lots of stuff living in there and then there. And yeah, he got the pylon in the in the background, so you'll never far, far from them, and that that I think the the age. Well, then Lea Bridge Rd is kind of just beyond those. Those Bushes, I think, and it's really good.

So I spent an hour in there today. And then I went back and picked up my car and then drove home and and I'm sort of been having a bit of a tough week this week dealing with stuff and it's been really quite nice going out and. Looking at all of this stuff, instead of taking my mind if especially this kind of thing, I should probably be be doing some studying this earlier, but actually I'm I'm here and I've got. I can't go home. You know, I've got an air I could sit in the cafe and drink. Not very satisfactory coffee. I could just get an explore this and that kind of goes back to you.

Yeah, when you say do people need to know about these places to me, I guess I learned something today all about the sort of the the the water supply to London and that's that's all helped with my knowledge. I've pieced together another piece of of my local which I think we talked about that last week was sort of saying my my. Locality is moved eastwards over the last year, 18 months. As I've spent more time. At home but exercising around Walthamstow marshes, taking my car to Chingford and running home from from the the A 406 and still going through Tottenham Marshes UM, my wife's 40th birthday. We went on a bike ride and got to got to picketts lock, but the main feature of it was sort of going past the Edmonton waste incinerator. Yeah, it’s a right birthday Treat this.

So the Lea Valley and that's kind of become my axis a bit more, yeah? Until I've gone. And I'm fine. I've lived in this area for 20 years. I've never been to the place where these two pictures were taken today and and it just shows you that there are there is nature to be to be found. You might have to just. Look a bit uneven just walking from from Kwik Fit down into the road. Don't don't aware this was. It's a road that I've driven on loads and loads of times just by walking along it.

You know you get to get a look at the buildings you get to go to. Look at the view. You could look at the railway line and there's certainly other and dumb. I think if you just slow down a bit, there's there's a lot more to see than than zooming. Zoom in past in a car, and when you do, when you visit an area that you do normally zoom past in the car and you know you get to see all these to the treasures that are there hidden behind these these bushes. Yeah, and yeah that was that was sort of looking the other direction from where from the from where the filter beds in the concrete work.

So this is kind of the central section of right. At this this the hexagon and dumb again, I thought, well, it you know is that the kind of image that I wanna I wanna put in 'cause I I. Consciously haven't put in pictures like this. Yeah, for them when I've been walking around I'm I'm sure I could find a dandy lion growing through the pavement just outside the door, but I kind of didn't really consider that nature, but this one because of where it was in this. A very quiet. Clearly crumbling landscape. Seemed a little bit more. Uhm, natural.

**That's interesting because it's to do with the landscape and the environment rather than just like you know, an organism?**

yeah. If you see a dandy lion grown in the pavement on on Denver Rd or something and the chances are it'll get grabbed up by the Council or it'll get trodden down. All this stuff, yeah, but you know it, it's not. It's not a part of the recolonization of Walford Rd by by nature. Where is this I'm at? You know, it kind of is because next year they'll probably be a couple more and then the year after a few more until it sort of gets completely overgrown and sort of turns into some sort of lost area.

And you know from what I've been traveling, I love exploring ruins and things. I like the idea of things reverting back to nature and getting overgrown by plants and hidden. Uhm? And on the way, they've, they've they've done it at this nature reserve. Numbers are pictures of what it used to be in the past, but there's enough interpretation there to make you realize that it's a industrial. Landscape but but it's reverting back to toward this. Yeah, they're not repairing anything here, but there's just that. I quite like that just a position of sort of man made things where there's a will. There's railway tracks so that was about with the cobbles references over that track there's there's a. Quite a long section of railway track and I've always been interested in trains and travel and and so whenever you see train tracks, it's kind of. There's also something I quite like.

And so when we go up to the North Pennines there's a UM, an old railway line that went went over this big viaduct instead of before we get to the border. There's this set of buffers in the trees and and and whenever we get there I'll get the kids to sit on the buffers. We've got them at various. Sizes

and there's another another one, where if you go Run Saints Day in the river past the Olympic Stadium, and then you cross over that, because over by where the stadium is and you go down under the railway line up so we've got the Olympic Park on your left hand side and they kind of built flat something I don't know. But and as you sort of come out somewhere this bridge is up on the the embankment there again there's a there's a set of abandoned train buffers it's the end of the siding.

And I I love spotting things like that so hidden away. And decaying that sort of show that there there was something going on there, but now it's going. It's going back to the plants and soil. Disused railway and industrial archaeology thinking,

**so most kind of like what you were saying about Epping Forest about it being, you know, index, the landscape that was producing firewood. And yeah, it's very managed.**

And yeah, exactly. There's very few places. In in this country. Yeah, even yeah. So I'm thinking of anywhere that I would kind of consider. Properly wild, I mean that is parts of northern Scotland, but a lot of that was cleared and it's grazed. North Yorkshire Moors is burned for grouse shooting, uh, the New Forest is. Mainly for people to drive around and look at ponies. I think you have to go. Quite a long way to find something you know. Big big forests that that really wild and then this of a Canadian or American kind of kind of way.

Yeah, so take what we've got here. Yeah, most of the space we've got is. Forestry land is is used for paper and and and wooden stuff isn't it? Yeah we don't. Yeah, but a huge expansive virgin forest you might be in some other places.

**I guess that that more less brings me to to the fox. I think the only other folks who left his. Is our friend the fox by him. So yeah. I mean you know compared to the stuff up if I have.**

If I have seen a fox in the place where I was today, yeah, but I wouldn't bet on my phone. They probably don't live there. 'cause why would they? They could just live on the street and and you know, eat kebabs all the time instead of them to eat ducklings and and things and and and work hard for their dinner. So yeah, I mean it did make me think about this. Difference between wildlife and nature and I think I ended up definitely on the. On the side that that nature was was more more plants and more. On unmanaged, so I went for sort of not very manicured kind of stuff but yeah, you used the word Organism. Yeah well, they're all organisms doing their thing, but there's there's something. More natural and yeah, there are a slightly sick looking Bay Tree is only there in the foreground. 'cause that's when the fox was. You know, it's gonna. I wouldn't consider that natures as such or the lawn, and they say he's in there just 'cause he's looking in the window.

Well, you know this morning and I think I'll stick some animals there as well for their find apartment. But yeah, something it's more about. I think the greenery the the space. But also the enclosure. And the yeah, the the cover when you get in this over there, the being undetected in some of these places but also have young players love Walthamstow Marsh is we've got big big open spaces with lots of fun. Lots of wildflower meadows. The bird song and the smell is gonna be so much closer. Makes it better for me.

**Yeah, yeah yeah yeah I'm that makes that makes absolute sense. And yeah, thank you for kind of summarizing everything there. You make my my job. Not bad for flavor, yeah? Well, it's been a real real pleasure speaking with you and thank you so so much for taking part and for taking the time and to get coming in again after the battery went as well.**

So it's been enjoyable. I mean, it's it's. It's been good. It's gonna probably spend more time on it than I perhaps intended kind of thing, but equally I kind of once got an idea. It's kind of like one was going to talk about the pictures of that out front. You know, it's kind of. I've got an idea of what I wanted. Talk? Yeah, I don't know how. I mean it has. It has all ended up being sort of honor on a linear bit from sort of labeled road to act, which kind of thing. But that's kind of where my most experienced nature, I suppose, yeah. And and I, and I do go out. And I do experience that so so other than that, serendipitous kind of experience is more than the funding somewhere new that completely fitted the bill but wasn't going out looking for. It's just gonna log on article or look. It is fantastic place. So yeah, yeah yeah, hope hopefully that all that all that all works for you and. Kinda kinda stuff you you. You know it's just. Yeah absolutely 100% hundred said it's really it's interesting. I mean not just what you can saying, but also a few other people have come. Taking photos of, you know, I could have been in the same spot, really. Yeah lot of that kind of area then yeah but but you know people say such different things as well and there's so many different experiences or the ways that people think about things or the kinds of things they're doing in those same places. Totally different. Yeah, yeah, I suppose it's how they experience nature, isn't it? And yeah, and I experience it when I'm running or cycling or walking in those places. And you know when, when my daughter is gone, ice skating should not go too much now. But yeah, if she was going to couple of times a week and she would go into the ice rink and we'd sit outside, uhm, you know. It will go for wand around the marshes and stuff like that and try and try and take us an opportunity to do that. Or you know, I haven't done Abney Park here, but yes, that kind of trouble trying to put stuff in. But no, those those those pictures in those areas and that's it. My my local nature yeah yeah. Cool. It's done well. Thank you.