

Christmas Day was a much quieter day, and a chance to just enjoy the traditions of another country. There was no chance of any snow, just some damp Scotch mist hanging around. We knew it would be an inside day once celebrations began, so we headed off for a walk in the woods. Although Jo's house is pretty central, there are quite a few green spaces nearby. A short walk took us to Hermitage Woods, then on to Blackford Hill and Blackford Pond.



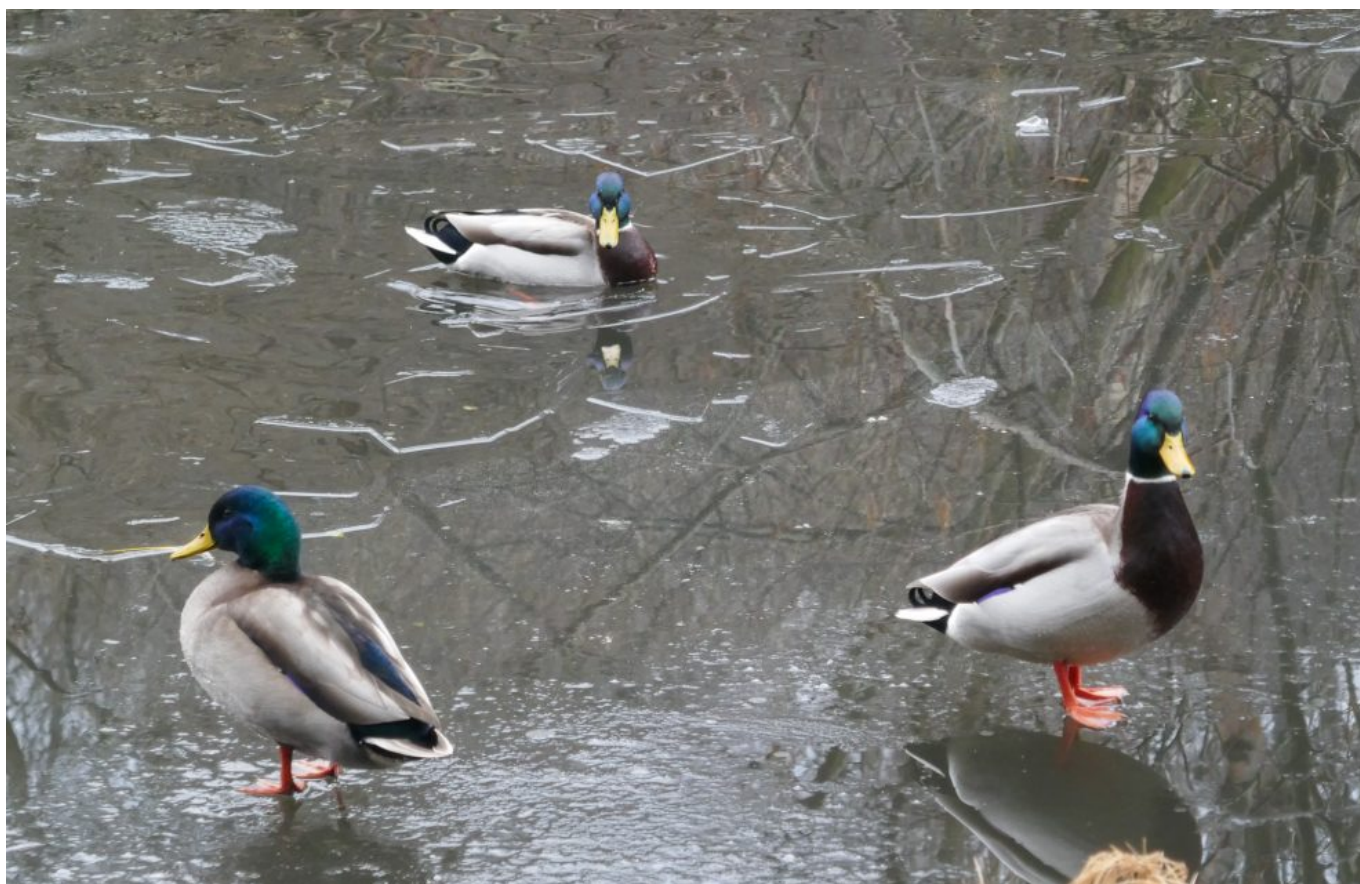
Christmas walk in the woods

There were plenty of other people doing the same thing, and there were lots of "Happy Christmas" wishes (you don't say "Merry Christmas" here!), along with lots of greetings from enthusiastic Scottish doggies. Blackford Pond was another of my 6 year old Edinburgh memories, where I remembered Jo taking me to feed the ducks. The pond was semi-frozen so it was pretty entertaining to watch the birds ice skating and landing on the frozen pond.



Blackford Pond





Ice Skating Ducks

We were joined by Anne (from across the landing) and Bill for Christmas dinner. Bill visits us every couple of years in NZ with Jo, but we missed him on the last visit after he got very sick and had to return to the UK early. So it was fantastic to see him again, and great to see him looking so well. Santa had managed to find his way to the Manor, so we all had a few goodies to unwrap.



Yummy Christmas Dinner



It was a really special day being with life-long friends on the other side of the world. It was also a chance for a much-needed quieter day in our busy schedule. A white Christmas would have been nice, but we'll forgive them with all the good Scottish weather we are enjoying. Apart from LA, we have been surprised that Scotland has given our warmest weather so far.