

Skylarks

Summer is now with us and all the latest news from the Friends of the Wick Country Park is here to keep you up-to-date with current and future events.

Message from the Chair

Welcome to the latest edition of Skylarks. All the committee and their helpers are busy with the planning of our main event of the year 'Paws in the Park', so fingers crossed the weather is good to us on Sunday 12th June and we hope to see you all at the Wick Country Park with all your canine friends. Plenty of doggie activities, also a quiz for the children along with our usual craft table.

Our following events in the summer are 'Crickets & Dragonflies' on Sunday 24th July and then the ever popular 'Nature Quest' on Sunday 7th August, details on the back page.

Featured in this edition are reports on our recent successful events - our first ever 'Quiz Night', the first 'Skylarks 3K Run' of this season and the 'Bird Song Walk'. Also an article on our work parties written by Trudie Crow and Paul Clarke – new recruits on these are always very welcome!

Eileen – Chairperson

'Paws in the Park'

Fun dog show with many categories- best bitch, cutest puppy, scruffiest dog etc etc, "have a go" dog agility. Plus children's quiz, stalls, tombola, exhibits & children's craft activities.

Sunday 12th June 2011, 11.00am to 4.00pm
Wick Country Park, Tresco Way, Wickord
Admission Free, Refreshments available



What are Lions doing in the Park?

Following a short talk about the Wick Country Park to the Basildon and Wickford Lions Club they very kindly agreed to donate some money towards equipment for our events. With their £150 donation and money raised at the Skylarks 3K race we had £200. We were delighted when Basildon District Council agreed to match fund this amount. With the money, after very careful deliberation, equipment will be purchased which will be used at Friends of the Wick Country Park events. This will include equipment for pond dipping, sweep nets and magnifying pots. So a big thank you to the Lions Club, Pitsea Running Club and BDC for all their support.

The very successful Quiz Night last February, as well as being great fun, also raised funds which went towards a notice board to be placed near the play area close to the entrance to the park. This will be very useful for informing visitors about some of the many features the park has to offer and about future events.

Nikki
Treasurer



Enjoy the dog show at Paws in the park!

GET DOWN TO ONE OF THE WORK PARTIES!

Members of the Friends assisted in cleaning up litter at the last work party held on Sunday, 20th March. It was a glorious day both sunny and warm. Perhaps not the right weather conditions to be wearing waist high rubber waders but these were a necessary item of clothing for the task in hand. Mark, the Park Ranger, pointed out the litter hot spots and guided those Friends brave enough to enter the lake to waist height. Much of the litter is caught in the reeds and around the bank of the water's edge. Obviously, this creates an unsafe environment for the wildlife and birds and it is important it is removed on a regular basis. The strangest item dragged out of the water was a pair of socks (not just the odd one surprisingly) plus 2 good footballs and 3 empty jars which had at some point contained pickled eggs – there's no accounting for picnic tastes! It was a successful clean up as 5 sacks of rubbish were collected. The Friends are sure that all the regular park lovers are considerate visitors who take their litter home. Let's all help to keep the park a clean and beautiful space.



(Did you know that a plastic bottle takes about 450 years to decompose, plastic bags 10-20 years, tin cans 100 years and fishing line 600 years, rubbish being carelessly thrown away is a problem for a seriously long time and one we can well do without. It is therefore important that rubbish should be taken home and not left as harmful waste)

KEEP ON RUNNING!



On Wednesday 13th April at 7.30pm the park hosted the first of our Skylarks 3k Runs of this year. All ages took part, youngest aged 7 and there were 39 runners in total. The feedback from the runners was very positive and they were very pleased with the support they received. The first man past the post was Greg Wiskem, first lady Pennie Arthurs, first boy Aaron Gourley and first girl Angel Flannigan. An excellent achievement by all!



Please do not forget, the next Skylarks 3K Run is on Wednesday 20th July at 7.30pm, lots of fun for all!!

SPRING ARRIVED – BIRD SONG WALK!

Led by ranger Mark we moved off around the park, now whether it was because it was a later start we initially struggled to find a bird singing. However, we soon heard our first bird, a Robin in full voice marking its territory. Then in quick succession we heard the distinctive voice of a Wren, a Greenfinch quickly followed by a Goldfinch with its quick trilling. As we moved further along the path we encountered our first Whitethroat, well in voice only as it remained well hidden in the bushes! We stopped by the lake to watch the Mute Swans swimming but as yet not starting to build their nest close to the reed beds. Then suddenly out of the reeds popped a male Reed Bunting, easily identified by its striking black head, light brown back and white front. As we continued around the path we could hear Great Tits & Blue Tits issuing their warning calls as we got close and to keep away. At the top of the hill a Green Woodpecker was calling deep in the trees but again we were unlucky and did not see it. The main aim of the morning was to identify birds by song which we did and can now identify our feathered friends before they come into sight.



Events for 2011

The Friends' Committee has arranged the following events with the Wick Country Park Ranger. *For all events please meet at the Wick Pavilion.*

Wick Weeders

2nd & 4th Monday of each month
Starting at 1.30pm

Work Parties

These are bi-monthly on the 3rd Sunday of that month, 10am – 12noon (the dates for the rest of this year are 17th July, 18th September and 20th November). Come and have fun and help the Ranger with improvements to the park.

Paws in the Park



Sunday 12th June
11am to 4pm

All dogs and responsible owners are invited to this very popular annual event. Fun dog show, stalls, refreshments, games, children's craft table and quiz.

The second Skylarks 3K Race



Wednesday 20th July, 7.30pm

Run for the Skylarks through the delightful Wick Country Park!

Crickets & Dragonflies



Sunday 24th July
2pm to 4pm

Come and search for these fascinating creatures. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Dogs welcome on a lead.



Nature Quest

Sunday 7th August
11am to 4pm

Be a nature detective and discover some of the wild wonders of the Wick. A fun day for all the family. Explore the park and investigate the underwater world of the dipping pond. Parental supervision required.



Kite Festival

Sunday 18th September
1pm to 4pm

Join in the kite making competition and pick up some top flying tips. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Yuletide Ramble & AGM



Sunday 4th December
Starting at 2pm

Finish the year with a sociable walk around the park with the Ranger and Friends. Enjoy some mulled wine and mince pies, stay for the AGM, meet the committee and have your say about the park.

For any more info on the above please contact Nikki Gibson on 01268 734293 or email mikenikki@supanet.com. Latest information on events throughout the year can be found on our website.
www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk

Membership

If you are not a member but would like to join the Friends of the Wick Country Park please contact Nikki on 01268 734293 or email mikenikki@supanet.com

The Friends of the Wick Country Park Committee:

Eileen Cattell – Chairperson
Nikki Gibson – Treasurer
Christine Lee - Secretary
Peter Bates,
Trudie Crow, Maxine Crow,
Hilary Sim, Sharon Hunt.



Maxine & Trudie

Basildon District Council Countryside Services:

Marcus Hotten
Countryside Officer
Telephone: 01268 550088

Mark Williams
Countryside Ranger
Telephone: 01268 562921

Neighbourhood Policing Team:

Telephone: 0300 333 4444 or 07875 003503