



Skylarks

Spring is not too far away, we look forward to seeing you soon at one of our many planned events. All the latest news from the Friends of the Wick Country Park is here to keep you up-to-date with all that is happening in the park.

Message from the Chair

Happy New Year to you all and best wishes for a successful 2012!

Since our last edition of Skylarks we have had two successful events. Firstly the 'Great Tree Planting' on Sunday 20th November - Trudie has again written an excellent article describing the activity of the day. Secondly on Sunday 4th December we had our ever popular Yuletide Ramble followed by mulled wine and mince pies in the Pavilion. After this we held the AGM, all went well there and the committee send their greetings to you.

Another busy year is ahead of us, all the planned events are featured on the last page of this edition. We look forward to seeing you soon.



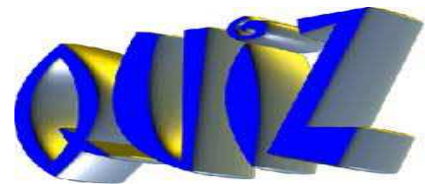
Eileen Cattell
Chairperson

Please do not forget.....

To renew your membership!

Thank you so much to all of you who have renewed your membership. If by any chance you have not yet renewed your membership then please send or deliver your £3 or £1.50 to Nikki Gibson, the Treasurer FOWCP, 126 Church End Lane, Runwell, Wickford SS11 7DP. Your membership means a lot to us!

Our first event of 2012 - The Quiz Night



The date: Friday 17th February 2012

The time: 7.30 for an 8.00 pm prompt start

The place: Barnhall Community Social Club,
Alderney Gardens, off Brock Hill,
Wickford, SS11 7JP

The price: £4 per person

Support the 'Friends' Quiz Night.

Make a team of 6-8 or join one of ours.

Enjoy very reasonably priced drinks from the bar. Individual prizes for each member of the winning team.

The questions will cover a wide variety of subjects. Also a chance to win great Raffle prizes.



**For more info or to order tickets ring Nikki on
01268 734293**

A date for your diaries!!

The 'Bird Song Walk' on Sunday 15th April at 10am

Join the Ranger and team in a spring stroll around the park to spot and identify the birds in their habitats.



THE GREAT TREE PLANTING EVENT

Members of The Friends of the Wick Country Park gathered in great expectation outside the Pavilion on Sunday 20th November for the great tree planting event. The Friends application for 105 tree saplings had been accepted by The Woodland Trust. The saplings were a mixed variety for all year-colour and included cherry and silver birch. The delivery had been made - now the hard work was to begin! A shiver of anticipation ran through the group – Would the ground be too hard? Would the sapling root balls require large holes to be dug? Would we end up with bad backs from over exertion? Mark Williams, the Park Ranger had a plan.

The Friends followed Mark out into the centre of the park pushing wheelbarrows, carrying spades and wondering when the first tea break would be. Mark demonstrated the procedure.....



First place the shovel, push down with the heel and dig a nice, clean hole. Next, take a sapling and gently tease the root open, holding it over the hole so that any peat from the root might fall in. Thirdly, cut some grass from the removed earth and place in the bottom of the hole (to aid root growth) and place the sapling gently into the middle of the hole. Replace the removed earth and push down with boot to compact the earth firmly. There were only another 104 to go.....



In actual fact things went to plan with no injuries or catastrophes! The ground was firm but still soft and as the team worked together the saplings were planted within a couple of hours. Most of the trees were planted in groups of a circular fashion with a dozen or so reserved to create a hedgerow at the back of the park. Hopefully, these will grow and enable bats to navigate when flying. It was beautiful weather. At the lake a flock of Canada Geese were silhouetted against the misty, white sun and all was still and calm. The last part of the planting was rather ceremonial! The final sapling was a Royal Oak from the Queen's royal gardens which was included as part of the Queen's Golden Jubilee. The team gave a round of applause to finish a very special occasion, and we all hoped the trees would grow and prosper and have a long, happy life in the Park.

We trooped back to the Pavilion for tea and cakes feeling satisfied at a job well done and looking forward to getting home for a well-deserved Sunday lunch!

Friends of the Wick Country Park would like to thank Mark, the Wick Weeders and volunteers.
(Written by Trudie Crow) (Further pictures can be found at the website)

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
Committee Members: Peter Bates, Paul Clarke, Maxine Crow, Trudie Crow, Hilary Sim


Basildon District Council Countryside Services:

Mark Williams - Countryside Ranger, Telephone: 01268 562921
Steve Prewer - Countryside Officer, Telephone 01268 550088


Neighbourhood Policing Team: Telephone 0300 333 4444 or 07875 003503


Events for 2012


The Friends' Committee has arranged the following events with the Wick Country Park Ranger. Some events are organised by the Friends of the Wick Country Park (FOWCP) and others by Basildon Council (BC). *For all events (except the Quiz Night event) meet at the Wick Country Park Pavilion.*


Wick Weeders (FOWCP)  *2nd and 4th Monday of each month, starting at 1.30pm (see website & posters)*


Work Parties (BC) *These are bi-monthly on the 3rd Sunday of the month, 10am – 12noon. Come and have fun and help the Ranger with improvements to the park.*


 **Our first event of the year - Quiz Night (FOWCP) on Friday 17th February at Barnhall Community Centre, Alderney Gardens, Wickford, 7.30pm for 8pm start.** A fun evening that will be as light hearted or as serious as you wish to make it.


Bird Song Walk (BC)  *Sunday 15th April, Starting at 10am*
Join the Ranger and Friends of the Wick Country Park in a spring stroll and try to spot and identify birds in a wide variety of habitats.


Skylarks 3K Race (FOWCP)  *Wednesday 18th April, Starting at 7pm*
The Friends of the Wick Country Park in conjunction with Pitsea Running Club present the first of the Skylarks 3K Races at the Wick Country Park. "Run for the Skylarks through the delightful Wick Country Park". All proceeds go to the further development of the park. Refreshments will be available.

Paws in the Park (FOWCP)  *Sunday 10th June, 11am to 4pm*
All dogs and responsible owners are invited to this very popular annual event. A fun dog show, display of dog obedience and agility, stalls, refreshments, games and children's quiz.

Skylarks 3K Race (FOWCP)  *Wednesday 18th July, Starting at 7pm*
The Friends of the Wick Country Park in conjunction with Pitsea Running Club present the second Skylarks 3K Race of the season. Come along and give it a try, cheer on a friend, come along for the cup of tea!

Cricket & Dragonflies (BC)  *Sunday 22nd July, Starting at 2pm*
Come and search for these fascinating creatures. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Dogs welcome on a lead.

Nature Quest (FOWCP)  *Sunday 12th 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 (FOWCP)  *Sunday 16th September, 1pm to 4pm*
Join in the kite making competition and pick up some top flying tips. Children to be accompanied by an adult.

Yule Ramble & AGM (FOWCP)  *Sunday 9th December, Starting at 2pm*
Finish the year with a sociable walk round 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