



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.

A Message from the Chair



Hopefully it is never too late to wish you all Health and Happiness for 2016. What better way to keep fit and active than to spend time in our beautiful Wick Country Park. Usually at this time of year I would be saying look out for the first signs of Spring, but this year that began in December! It will be interesting to see how the plants and wildlife cope with the unusual weather we have had this winter.

Do you want to dust off a few brain cells then why not come along to the Quiz night? It is very popular and each year there is some good hearted rivalry between teams whether they are vying for the coveted winner's balloon or the losing team's lemons! The one question no one can answer before the night is what bizarre 'Marathon Round' will Michelle think up this year?!

Thank you to the majority of you who have renewed your membership, your support gives a great boost to the committee and is an indication that all our hard work is worth it. If you have yet to do so e-mail me or drop £3 through my letterbox, 126 Church End Lane, SS11 7DP. Sadly this will be the last Skylarks newsletter to be sent to those who no longer wish to be members of the Friends of Wick Country Park.

Nikki Gibson, Chairperson



Quiz Night on Friday 4th March 2016



It is the beginning of Spring, everything is waking up so it must be time for the FOWCP annual Quiz Night. This very popular night will be held again at the Barnhall Social Club.

Arrive at 7.30 pm to set up your team of 8 or less with their snacks from home and their drinks from the bar. Sharpen your minds and pencils for a prompt start at 8 pm. Bring along your sense of humour and your money for the raffle and we will do the rest.

Tickets cost £5 per person and must be bought in advance by contacting Nikki on:
chair@friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk or
ringing 01268 734293

Barnhall Community Centre is situated behind the parade of shops on Alderney Gardens, off Brock Hill, Wickford SS11 7JP.

For more information visit
www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk

Tickets sell quickly so do not delay!

Bird Song Walk Sunday 10th April

At 10.am starting together from the pavilion enjoy a stroll round the Park with Mark the Park Ranger to see just which birds we can spot and/or hear. Suitable for all levels of interest. This event usually lasts an hour to an hour and a half. Bring binoculars if you have them. This will be followed by a social drink and biscuits provided by the committee in the pavilion.

YULE RAMBLE 2015

Our last event of 2015 was the Yule Ramble on Sunday 13th December. Thank you to all who came along and joined Mark the Park Ranger on this interesting walk around the country park. The weather was very overcast with a hint of drizzle and those conditions made bird watching difficult. Never-the-less full marks to Martin Singleton for his identification of a juvenile Mediterranean Gull amongst a large flock of Black Headed Gulls that were resting on the banks of the lake. In addition Blackbirds, Blue Tits, Great Tits, Chaffinches, Goldfinches, Starlings, Collared Doves, Woodpigeons, Field Fares, Crows, a Green Woodpecker (Heard), Coots, a Moorhen, Canada Geese and Mallards.



This intrepid group of ramblers then returned to the Pavilion for a warming cup of mulled wine and nourishing mince pies. The AGM then followed to discuss the Ranger's report and Committee matters. Mark reported that there was a problem last year with fly tipping and getting the rubbish collected. The recent merger between Countryside and Park this has resulted that he now has a contact and things have been much better. The paths around the park are improving. The lake had not been cleaned for a few years and this year it was cleaned out. Wire mesh has been placed on the boardwalk which was a difficult job and he is grateful to Richard and Brian for their help. Mark hopes to improve storage in the container. The road is being done in two stages, the first stage has been completed and the second is due soon. This requires doing on a yearly basis. Wildlife-wise there have been Cettis Warblers in the small reed bed by the outlet pump.

A further report on the Friend's activities and achievements in 2015 presented by Nikki to the AGM can be viewed on 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 nikkigibson621@btinternet.com

The Friends of the Wick Country Park Committee:

Nikki Gibson - Chairperson/Membership Secretary, Richard Rowsell - Vice Chair, Dorothy Cundy - Treasurer, Marie Singleton - Secretary, Alaric Cundy - Webmaster
Committee Members: Peter Bates, Christine Lee

Basildon Borough Council Countryside Services:

Mark Williams - Countryside Ranger, Telephone: 01268 562921
Steve Prewer - Manager of Countryside Operations and Development, Telephone 01268 465380

Neighbourhood Policing Team: Telephone 0300 333 4444 or 07875 003503



WICK COUNTRY PARK EVENTS 2016



The following events have been organised by the Friends of the Wick Country Park in consultation with the Park Ranger.
With the exception of the quiz night, all events start at the Wick Country Park Pavilion and booking is not required. Refreshments are available at all events.

EVENT	DATE	DETAILS
Wick Weeders	Usually the 2 nd and 4 th Monday of each month	Starting at 1.30 pm (see the website & posters for confirmation of the dates). Equipment is provided. Help is always needed to maintain these gardens.
Quiz Night	Friday 4 th March	A light hearted quiz, for tables of up to eight. At Barnhall Community Centre, Alderney Gardens, Wickford, 7.30 pm for an 8 pm start. Booking is essential – please contact Nikki, as below.
Bird Song Walk	Sunday 10 th April	Starting at 10 am (two hours) . Both experienced and novice bird watchers are welcome. Last year we spotted, or heard, a total of 22 species.
Skylarks 3K Race	Wednesday 20 th April	7.30 pm This race is organised in conjunction with the Pitsea Running Club . Open to all runners and power walkers - or why not just come to support?
Paws in the Park	Sunday 12 th June	11 am to 4 pm Our hugely popular annual fun dog show, for dogs of all types, ages and sizes is a must for all dog lovers. Keep an eye on the 'Events' web-page for details of this year's categories and side-stalls.
Skylarks 3K Race	Wednesday 20 th July	7.30 pm Another race organised in conjunction with the Pitsea Running Club . Open to all runners and power walkers. Supporters welcome.
Nature Quest	Sunday 24 th July	11 am to 4 pm The whole family can come, be it for just a couple of hours, or for longer. Pond dipping, bug hunting and more. Children must be accompanied by an adult.
Cricket & Dragonflies	Sunday 7 th August	Starting at 2 pm (two hours) Led by the Park Ranger, catch and identify insects found in the park, and observe the beautiful dragonflies. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Dogs are welcome, but must be on a lead.
Kite Festival & Classic Car Display	Sunday 11 th September	11 am to 4 pm Another great family day out. Allow at least an hour. Learn how to make and fly a kite; This event is held in conjunction with the Essex Kite Group and the South Eastern Vintage and Classic Vehicle Club
Yule Ramble & AGM	Sunday 11 th December	Starting at 2 pm Finish the year with a sociable and leisurely walk of approx 1 – 1.5 hours around the Park, led by the Park Ranger. Dogs are welcome, but must be on a lead. Afterwards, enjoy some mulled wine and mince pies. Everyone is then invited to the AGM.

For the latest information, please contact Nikki Gibson on 01268 734293 or email chair@friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk, or see our website: www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk