

# Skylarks

**Thank you to everyone who took part in or came along to the Nature Quest and Paws in the Park events and made them such a success. Read on to find out more about these and future events.**

## **Paws in the Park – a howling success!**

You may remember that last year we held a Dog Awareness Day in the park. This was so successful that plans were soon underway to hold a bigger and better event this year. So with a change of name and a lot of organisation 'Paws in the Park' took place in June.

It was a huge success with seven hundred people attending the park, either as visitors, exhibitors or helpers. Sadly we weren't able to count the dogs, but they came in all shapes and sizes (including one that looked very much like a black bear). There were 170 entries in the fun dog show with classes from 'scruffiest dog' to 'dog the judge would most like to take home'. The Billericay Dog Training School put on an obedience and agility display and stall holders provided advice, information and pet-related gifts.

Over 40 children took part in the quiz and many enjoyed the craft activities in the pavilion. New members were enlisted and offers of help for future events were made. Ice creams were licked and burgers eaten and everyone had a wonderful time. Even the sun shone on what turned out to be probably one of the hottest days of the summer.



*Crowds gather at Paws in the Park 2007*



*Buffy Tiffen – winner of Prettiest Bitch and the Best in Show*

We are already starting to make plans for Paws in the Park 2008!

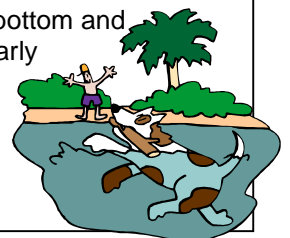
If you would like to offer your help for any of next year's events please do get in touch.



## **Notice to Dog Owners**

The Wick Country Park is a great place to walk your dog but please kindly refrain from letting your dog swim in the lake. Not only does this stir up the bottom and affect the wildlife, particularly the birds, but it is also an annoyance to anyone fishing.

Thank you.



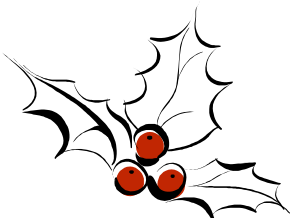
## **A Yuletide Ramble**

Join us for a festive stroll around the park followed by mince pies and mulled wine at the AGM

on

**Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2007**

**Starting from the pavilion at 2pm**





Pond dipping during Nature Quest

## Nature Quest

Back in May we held another event called Nature Quest and again the weather was kind. This family day was very well attended with participants heading off into the park to explore and take part in a quiz.

Part of the quiz involved a spot of pond dipping in the pond next to the pavilion. This popular activity had the adults just as intrigued as the children to find out what kind of underwater creatures we have living in the park. A variety of creatures were found including pond snails, dragonfly nymphs and, the children's favourite, newts.

If they could be persuaded away from the pond there was a chance for youngsters to get creative making some bugs and beasties in the pavilion. Most important of all was the certificate for all our nature detectives signed by Ranger Mark!

## Natural Nibbles

Hi! Phil here!



Do you remember that in 'Skylarks' in February I asked you to think about what some of the birds in the park eat? Well here are some *fascinating facts* about **Blackbirds!**

Blackbirds feed mainly on the ground. They run and pause, run and pause, run and pause. Each time they stop, they scan the ground for prey. If they see a worm, they search more thoroughly before moving on. This is because worms tend to live in small groups, so if a blackbird has found one another won't be far away.

As well as feeding on lawns, blackbirds love fallen leaves. They toss leaves away to find small edible creatures underneath. They will even do the same with snow! But how do they know to dig under that particular bit of snow or to look under a certain leaf? They listen, with very sensitive ears.

Source: RSPB Website October 2006

## Join the party!

Interested in the park? Want to get involved but not sure how? Why not come along to a work party and help the ranger with improvements to the park. There are currently a variety of jobs to be done.

Work parties are held every third Sunday of the month from 10am to 12noon and 1pm to 3pm. Bring your wellies if it's wet and meet at the pavilion at the start of each session or bring a packed lunch and stay all day. Tea and coffee are provided. Parental supervision is required for children.

If you would like to help but prefer a weekday please contact Mark (details below).

## Coming soon...

You will soon be able to surf the internet and find The Friends of the Wick Country Park. Our website is currently being developed. We hope to include some history about the park, a gallery of photos and details of past and future events.



Watch this space!

## Events

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

### Work Parties

*Third Sunday of each month  
10am – 12noon and/or 1pm – 3pm*  
Come and have fun and help the ranger with improvements to the park.

### Yuletide Ramble

*Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> December  
2pm start*

Take a break from the Christmas shopping and join the Friends for a festive stroll. Meet the committee at the AGM and enjoy a warming cup of mulled wine and a mince pie.

## 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](mailto:mikenikki@supanet.com)



## The Friends of the Wick Country Park Committee:

Deborah Bolverstone - Chairperson  
Nikki Gibson – Treasurer  
Tricia Marshall - Secretary  
Allison Tanner  
Gill Clarke  
Maureen Bradford

Contact Deborah on 01268 572732 or email [dbolverstone@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dbolverstone@yahoo.co.uk)

## Basildon District Council Countryside Services:

Marcus Hotten  
Countryside Officer  
Telephone: 01268 550088

Mark Williams  
Countryside Ranger  
Telephone: 01268 562921