



Skylarks

Summer has arrived 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

Hello everyone and hope this Summer edition of Skylarks finds you all in good health and you have been enjoying yourselves in all the sunny weather of late.

Since the last edition we have had three very successful events in the Wick Country Park. Firstly we had our ever popular Paws in the Park on 7th June, then our first ever Skylarks 3K Run on 21st July and finally the Crickets and Dragonflies walk on 25th July. A review of these events is featured on the following pages. Still to come this season is the exciting Nature Quest on 15th August at 11am to 4pm – please try to come along, it is a family event including lots of activities and stalls. Also there is the Kite Festival on 19th September at 1pm to 4pm, come along to fly your own or enter the competition to make your own on the craft table.

A note from Mark, the Ranger regarding fishing tickets for the lake – previously these were available from outside businesses but now they can only be bought from Mark.

On a sad note, we are losing our wonderful secretary Allison, who in August is moving to pastures anew. Allison's enthusiasm, motivation and humour is irreplaceable but Chris, currently one of the chairpeople, is going to give it a try, a tough job lies ahead!

Christine & Eileen
'Chairpeople'

Tribute to Allison



It is with great sadness we say goodbye to Allison who has been a stalwart of the Friends of Wick Country Park. Allison and her family are moving to Sussex and we wish them success and every happiness in their new adventure. Allison has been a member of the committee since 2005 when she failed to keep her head down when new committee members were being press ganged! It was a very fortunate day for the park and Allison's enthusiasm, hard work and positive attitude have made a major contribution to the development of the park. For example it is Allison's drive and positive attitude that we have to thank for our new picnic tables. We are really going to miss you Allison, good luck and come back and see us soon.

Nikki
Treasurer and Membership Secretary

Welcome to Phil

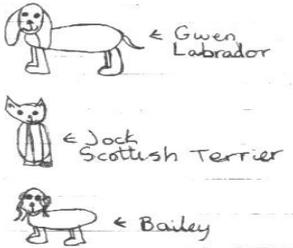
Good news, Phil Honour has now joined the Committee. Phil is our keen photographer and more of his photos are in this edition. Also he has been a most welcome addition to the team on our recent events. So from all of us "Welcome Phil".

PAWS IN THE PARK 2010

The success of Paws in the Park was achieved by our many volunteer helpers and thanks to you all. Our youngest and most senior helpers have written a report of their day and very entertaining they are too, we would like to share them with you. The first is from Molly aged 9 and following on is Eric's review of his day.

"Today was a really fun day because I like helping and I love dogs. I met some really nice dogs like Gwen who was a very calm, black Labrador, Jock who was very calm, still nice dog and Bailey who was very bouncy, hyper and beautiful. All of the dogs I saw were beautiful and there was one that kept barking and barking at other dogs. I liked setting up and collecting chairs, ordering clip boards, meeting dogs, hanging signs and putting plants on tables. Today was probably the most funnest days ever, if I could I would come here every day."

Molly also drew some lovely pictures for us:-



Now for Eric's view of his day:-

"6th June started with no great promise. The overnight rain had cleared away and by 06.00 the morning temperature was 17°C. A thin mist hung over the local lake and a gentle breeze did little to clear it. My morning walk was rewarded with the sound of chaffinch, wren and black cap. A tern circled over the lake, looking for its breakfast, all beneath a grey sky. The weather forecasters had predicted occasional showers by the afternoon and I was hoping it would stay dry long enough for the dog show to take place in the dry. I could have gone on a visit to Coalhouse Fort with the wildlife society but I had previously offered my services to the Wick Park, Paws in the Park, dog show. I arrived at what I thought was bright and early, only to find that things were in full swing. Many of the stall holders had already erected their gazebos and shelters and set out their stalls. My first task was to help with the erection of a gazebo for the welcoming party at the entrance. I then went on to find the location where I was to help with the registration of dogs for the show. The judging ring had been defined and we had a spot close by, where we soon settled down. The gentle breeze had freshened and sorting the forms for the registration of the dogs, proved to be a challenge. By the time 11.00 came, we were more or less ready for the first visitors as they started to arrive, steadily at first and then in increasing numbers. No one seemed in any hurry to register, which may have been as well, because by 11.30 the judge had not arrived and we began to wonder. Chris, whom I was helping, confessed to having no knowledge of judging dogs and my knowledge was limited to knowing that one end barked and the other wagged, which would not have been much use to the show. We need not have worried, the judge arrived in good time, before many of the owners had registered. Then, just before the show was due to start at 12.00, a sudden flurry of owners all anxious to register. The event began promptly at 12.00 and some late comers were still registering while the show was on. A tolerant judge accommodated them and all went well through the afternoon. The day ended with entertaining displays by many local organizations and by 16.30 I was able to take a look around the arena and was surprised by the number and variety of entrants. Having helped with some clearing away, I met some friends and after a chat, left about 17.00. On the way home, it started to rain and I was pleased that it had stayed dry long enough to allow a wonderful day to be enjoyed by all. How lucky was that?"



Skylarks 3K Run

Our first ever race took place in the park on Wednesday 21st July resulting in a successful event enjoyed by all. This was organised by our own Peter Bates and Pitsea Running Club. On a lovely sunny evening 49 runners of all ages lined up at the start to tackle the undulating course round the park. The winning times were very impressive – first man past the winning post was clocked in at 11mins 11 secs, then the first lady at 12mins 32secs. Equally excellent times were achieved by the children taking part – the first girl aged 15 came in at 13mins 58 secs and the first boy aged 9 at 16mins 47secs.

The pictures below tell the story:-



Crickets & Dragonflies

A bumper crowd attended the Crickets and Dragonflies walk on Sunday 25th July. At least 50 people joined in the walk on a lovely sunny afternoon and all really enjoyed catching and identifying the many species of crickets, dragonflies, damson flies and spiders that live in the park. It was particularly good this year as whole families joined in the fun and the children seemed to really enjoy themselves immensely. Mark the Ranger was kept very busy identifying all the species caught and a very impressive collection was presented to him.

Again the pictures reflect the fun of the afternoon:-



There has been an abundance of butterflies in the park this summer, below are a selection of some caught by Phil on his camera – have you seen them on your walks?



Comma Butterfly



Gatekeeper Butterfly



Marbled White Butterfly



Ringlet Butterfly



Small Skipper Butterfly



This one has yet to be identified – do you know the name??

Events for 2010

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 each month, 10am – 12noon (please note only one more left this year on 21st November)
Come and have fun and help the Ranger with improvements to the park.

Nature Quest



Sunday 15th August
11am to 4pm

Be a nature detective and discover some of the wild wonders of the Wick.

Kite Festival



Sunday 19th September
1pm to 4pm

Join in the kite making competition and pick up some top flying tips.



Yuletide Ramble

Sunday 5th 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.

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:

Christine Lee – Joint Chairperson
Eileen Cattell – Joint Chairperson
Nikki Gibson – Treasurer
Allison Tanner - Secretary
Peter Bates, Phil Honour

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