



# 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

Welcome to 2013, hopefully it will be as successful as 2012 was at the Wick Country Park. We have a full year of dates which are listed in this edition of Skylarks and the committee hopes again to see many of you supporting all of our planned events.

Our new revamped pond is looking good thanks to Veolia and will look even better in the coming months. Unfortunately the paths around the park are looking very bad due to the wet weather we have had in the last few months but some repairs are under active consideration.

Perhaps you would like to help out in the park; we are looking for volunteers to join the work parties. Please see in this newsletter for further details.

A happy new year to one and all!

Eileen Cattell  
Chairperson



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**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, Membership Secretary FOWCP,  
126 Church End Lane, Runwell, Wickford,  
SS11 7DP.

## Our first event of 2013 - The Quiz Night



**The date:** Friday 22nd March 2013

**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:** £5 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 21st April at 10am**

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



## Yuletide Ramble 2012

Our last event of the year, the Yuletide Ramble, was an exhilarating afternoon walk round the park led by our ranger, Mark. The terrain was rather wet and slippery to negotiate but we made it and enjoyed the fresh air and seeing the park in its winter role. We were a happy group and even more so when the sun came out for us. One thing we noticed was the owl boxes recently put up in the park.



Then it was back to the pavilion for a welcome cup of hot mulled wine and mince pies. This was followed by our AGM and then back home to continue getting into the festive mood.

## Our Dipping Pond!

The construction work on the dipping pond has been completed. Eco Site Solutions, a countryside management company arrived in November to reline the leaky pond. First task was to cut down the tall grasses from a round the pond and make a pile a short distance away. This heap of vegetation had an important role to play as a safe temporary home for 25 frogs and 4 newts which had to be removed. The water was pumped out and a digger was used to shape the pond to the right depth and with the important sloping sides and ledges. The hollow was lined with butyl and this was then covered with a thick layer of clay, which would have been teeming with tiny wildlife. Water from a nearby ditch was pumped back in and with the addition of heavy rainfall the pond was soon full.

A decision was made not to put back the aquatic plants as the plants we wanted were so tangled up with Reedmace (Bulrushes) which would have been too aggressive for this size of pond. We were absolutely delighted when Eco Sites Solutions not only offered to purchase new aquatic plants, but also to put top soil round the edge of the pond and seed it with wild flowers and grasses at no extra cost. Benches were installed and fences repaired and replaced. Now we can sit back and watch the pond gradually naturalise and become a wildlife haven.

A big thank you to Veolia Trusts and Basildon Jubilee Fund for helping with the cost and to Eco Sites Solutions for their excellent work and generosity.

Before:



After:



## Volunteering for Work Parties at the Wick Country Park

Do you have a small amount of time available - or perhaps even a lot of time - to help to improve the Country Park for all visitors by joining a Work Party?

The Park Ranger, Mark Williams, organises work parties from time to time to tackle such tasks as planting new hedges or clearing the pond, or whatever else needs to be done to enhance the park. If you think you could help - be it on a regular basis or just once in a while - please contact Mark so that he can build up a 'register' of potential helpers. As and when a task is identified, Mark will contact the volunteers. Of course, if the specific date doesn't suit you, well, never mind, but perhaps you'll be able to help next time.

# Events for 2013

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 meet at the Wick Country Park Pavilion.*

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



**Our first event of the year - Quiz Night (FOWCP) on Friday 22nd March 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 21st 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 24th 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 9th 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.

**Nature Quest (FOWCP)**  *Sunday 14th July, 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.

**Skylarks 3K Race (FOWCP)**  *Wednesday 24th 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!

**Crickets & Dragonflies (BC)**  *Sunday 11th August, Starting at 2pm*

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

**Kite Festival (FOWCP)**  *Sunday 15th September, 11am 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 8th 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](mailto:mikenikki@supanet.com)

Latest information on events throughout the year can be found on our website: [www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk](http://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](mailto:mikenikki@supanet.com)

## The Friends of the Wick Country Park Committee:

Eileen Cattell - Chairperson, Nikki Gibson - Vice Chair/Membership Secretary, Dorothy Cundy - Treasurer, Christine Lee - Secretary

Committee Members: Trudie Crow, Maxine Crow, Hilary Sim, Marie Singleton, Peter Bates, Paul Clarke, Alaric Cundy

## 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