



# Skylarks

Summer is here and lots has already been happening in the Wick Country Park. Read all the latest news from the 'Friends' and we look forward to seeing you at our next event, the ever popular and successful Kite Festival will be flying high in September. See you there!

## A Message from the Chair

Dear Friends

I hope you will enjoy reading about all the events that have taken place in the park since the last edition of Skylarks. Other exciting news is reports coming in from visitors about birds they have seen. Next time you visit the park look out for Little Egret, Green Woodpecker, Greater Spotted Woodpecker, Blackcap, Whitethroat, Sedge Warbler, Reed Bunting in addition to the usual more common birds. Reports are also coming in that after many years the Kestrel box provided by the FOWCP is now in use. Three birds have been seen there and, although as yet unconfirmed, the most likely inhabitants are Sparrow Hawks.

Several Terns have been observed around the lake. Thought is being given to building a raft where Terns can nest safely. One of the challenges is how to provide this in a way that prevents them from being disturbed by people or dogs swimming in the lake.

Bats were detected on our recent Bat Walk and we are hoping to improve one of the Pill Boxes to provide a suitable habitat for roosting and hibernating Pipistrelle bats.

If you see something interesting in the park do let us know by emailing me, or posting on our Facebook page or our website,  
[www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk](http://www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk)

Nikki Gibson, Chairperson

**PLEASE COME ALONG TO THE NEXT  
EVENT**



## Kite Festival



*Make and fly a kite*



**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2017**  
**11am – 4pm** (*allow at least an hour*)

**Wick Country Park**  
*Tresco Way, Wickford, SS12 9GP*

*Plus*



**A Classic Car Display**

A **FREE** event. Refreshments available.

details: [www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk](http://www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk)  
or contact Nikki on 01268 734293  
[chair@friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk](mailto:chair@friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk)

## 'Paws in the Park 11<sup>th</sup> June 2017'

It was another successful **Paws in the Park** event on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> June, the event that all can enjoy. The good weather brought out approx 600 wonderful visitors - with their canine friends naturally! A wide range of breeds of dog came along to enter the many classes. Alongside the arena there were many other activities and the charity stalls to support. Lots of activity in the pavilion too, the children enjoying the creative activities available at the craft table and all enjoying the refreshments on offer.



To entertain in the lunch-time break the *Essex Flyball Team* provided a spectacular display of dog ability and training. The judging then resumed to complete all the classes - out of a total of 166 dogs entered, it was a difficult decision for the judge to decide but the winners were:-

- Most Handsome Dog: Merlin owned by Wendy
- Best Veteran: Madge owned by Lyndsey
- Prettiest Bitch: Ellie owned by Jackie
- Dog Most Like Its Owner: Mabel owned by Caitlin
- Cutest Puppy: Arthur owned by Danielle
- Best Child Handler: Nora owned by Ollie
- Most Appealing Scruff: Hudson owned by Alison
- Best Rescue: Ted owned by Rob
- Waggiest Tail: Pebbles owned by Millie



Many thanks to judge Linda for all her hard work in the 9 classes. It was a hard decision for the Best in Class but it was the winner of the Best Rescue 'Ted' that excelled, pictured with his proud owner Rob.

Thank you also to the charity stalls - Dogs Trust, Hopefield Animal Sanctuary, Many Tears Animal Rescue and Romford Greyhound Homing Kennels - that came along, also to the Essex Flyball Team for yet again another spectacular display. One Stop Vans and Chengs Doughnuts provided the food to keep us all going throughout the day, many thanks to them for their excellent service. Lastly a big thank you to our many supporters and helpers that joined us in making it a such a memorable and successful day.

\*\*\* A date for your diaries, Paws in the Park next year will be on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2018 \*\*\*



## 'Nature Quest 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2017'

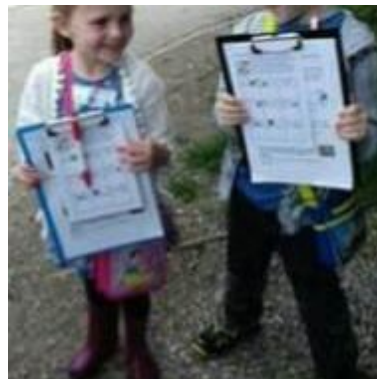


The children were excited and eager, proudly wearing their 'I'm a Nature Detective' stickers, as they entered the park in droves! Armed with clipboard, pen and a wealth of card, questionnaires and flyers they set about finding and completing all the challenges, which would enable them to be awarded a Nature Detective certificate, and put their name on the Wall of Fame. But where will they start? Would it be pond dipping or bug hunting?

All the equipment necessary was laid out ready, and smiling volunteers were on hand to advise and assist. Hooking fish from the paddling pool looked fun, but making your own candle from bee's wax looked cool too. A new game this year was identifying which animal belonged in which habitat. A dormouse in the bat box? No, that can't be right! Will they start with the messiest and therefore the best activity mixing birdseed and lard and smearing it on a pine cone? That will bring lots of birds into their garden. As each activity was undertaken the stamp card was filled and the questionnaire completed. What's this, how many legs has a centipede? Hopefully this tree with photos of all manner of insects hanging from it will help. Ooo! Look, real snails! No legs there, but they do have a foot, amazing!



There was a lot more to do in the pavilion. Make a bat with those funny googly eyes and learn to make an origami frog. Back outside decorate a pot, fill with compost and plant a broad bean. Send a photo of your own bean stalk to the FOWCP Facebook page.



The balloon modeler can help with the final question then time to receive a certificate and enjoy a freshly made Chengs doughnut. A brilliant free day out!

All the activities, equipment and materials were paid for out of FOWCP funds which have been raised by the committee and a band of marvelous supporters. A big thank you to everyone who played their part in making the day possible.

(Written by Nikki Gibson)

## 'The Skylarks 3K Race 26<sup>th</sup> July 2017'

It was a cool evening on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> July for the second Skylarks Race of 2017 but that did not stop an excellent turnout of runners and their supporters. There was a total of 68 runners racing around the country park, enthusiasm and speed excelled - once again Crispin Bloomfield was first past the post with another time breaking performance. The more leisurely runners still proved that endurance counts and all passed the post with satisfaction and a smile on their faces. Another fine show of how the Wick Country Park is multi-purpose for all sorts of events.



Many thanks to Peter Bates and his team for the excellent organisation, also to all the hardy runners taking part and the supporters cheering them on.

The winners of the race are listed below:-

First Man - Crispin Bloomfield in 9:41

First Boy - Jamie Greenhalgh in 12:44

First Girl & First Lady - Rebecca Omer in 14:44

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## 'The Bat Walk 20<sup>th</sup> May 2017'



This was a late edition to the events calendar, a Bat Walk organised by The Essex Bat Group. An intrepid group of 16 walkers set off at dusk complete with bat detectors to monitor the bat world in the Wick Country Park. All agreed it was a most enlightening evening to learn how the bats lived in the park.

A more detailed review of the event can be found on our website [www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk](http://www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk) and for lots more information on the bat world please go to the Essex Bat Group website: [essexbatgroup.org](http://essexbatgroup.org)

The next Bat Walk has already been organised for Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September starting at 6.30 pm. An email will be sent out giving further details nearer the time.



## EVENTS PROGRAMME 2017

The following events for 2017 have been organised by the Friends of the Wick Country Park in consultation with the Park Ranger. *All events start at the Wick Country Park Pavilion and booking is not required. Refreshments are available at all events.*

EVENT	DATE	DETAILS
<b>Wick Weeders</b>	<i>Usually the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month</i>	Starting at <b>2pm</b> (see the website & posters for confirmation of the dates). Equipment is provided. Help is always needed to maintain these gardens.
<b>Kite Festival &amp; Classic Car Display</b>	<b>Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>11 am to 4 pm</b> Another great family day out - held in conjunction with the <b>Essex Kite Group</b> and the <b>South Eastern Vintage and Classic Vehicle Club</b> . <b>Allow at least an hour.</b> Learn how to make and fly a kite.

*For the latest information about the Country Park, the Friends group and our events, please see our website: [www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk](http://www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk) or contact Nikki Gibson on 01268 734293 or email [chair@friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk](mailto:chair@friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk),*

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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](mailto:nikkigibson621@btinternet.com)

### **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: Ali Riley, Christine Lee, Peter Bates

### **Basildon Borough Council Countryside Services:**

Mark Williams - Countryside Ranger, Telephone: 01268 562921  
Rob Baker - Parks and Countryside Supervisor, Telephone: 01268 553992

**Neighbourhood Policing Team:** Telephone 0300 333 4444 or 07875 003503

