



# Skylarks

Summer is with us and we look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events. All the latest news is here to keep you up to date with all that is happening in the park.

## A Message from the Committee

Dear Friends

Unfortunately we will not be staging Paws in the Park this year but there are still events for you to enjoy on the horizon. The second Skylarks 3K race of the year is in July and our new event the Nature Day will be soon after, then the ever popular Kite Festival in September. Please check for details on our updated website. Hopefully we will see you at these events.

In this edition of Skylarks we also have reports on our recent events. In April there was the Birdsong Walk and then the first of Skylarks 3K Races, reports on these are featured in the newsletter.

Before this in February there was a 'Litter Blitz' in the country park, a successful day clearing many areas where the litter had been left to spoil the park for others. Multiple bags of rubbish were collected by all ages, it was even a family outing for some!



Hopefully the park will stay in this improved tidiness for the next events!

## PLEASE COME ALONG TO THE NEXT EVENTS IN THE WICK COUNTRY PARK

### **FRIENDS OF THE WICK COUNTRY PARK**

*in conjunction with Pitsea Running Club*  
**THE SKYLARKS' 3K RACE**

**WEDNESDAY 18 JULY 2018 at 7.30pm**

*The Wick Country Park,  
Tresco Way, Wickford SS12 9GP*  
Entry: £3.00 [UKA Affiliated runners = £2.00]  
(17 and under free)

**ENTRIES ON THE DAY ONLY**  
Refreshments available

*Further information: 01268 916289*  
e-mail: [linda\\_peterbates@tinyworld.co.uk](mailto:linda_peterbates@tinyworld.co.uk)  
[www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk](http://www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk)



## **NATURE EVENT**



**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2018**  
2 - 4pm



**Bug Hunting, Pond Dipping and More**



**Activities are FREE**



*For further details: email*  
[chair@friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk](mailto:chair@friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk)

[www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk](http://www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk)

## 'The Bird Song Walk 2018'

Unfortunately, the Friends do not seem to be having much luck so far with the weather for their events this year. After the snow at the Yule Ramble and the rain for the Birdsong walk ..... what next a tornado at the Nature Day???

Thankfully, some people decided to brave the rain and ten people turned up for the walk including Mark the Ranger who was leading it. We were dressed in waterproofs and suitable footwear as it was very soggy underfoot. There was also a very friendly and well behaved dog (a Golden Labrador called ??)



Despite the rain we were still optimistic we would see some birds and just listening to the birdsong outside the pavilion before we set off lifted our spirits. We headed for the boardwalk first and we have never seen the water so deep, it nearly came up to the top of the boards – we will have another lake here if the rain doesn't stop! We saw a few **Goldfinches** here feeding on the alders and heard **Blue Tit** and **Great Tit** singing. As we left the boardwalk we saw the first of the usual fat **Woodpigeons** around the park. We then came across a nice male **Blackbird** and he was giving us an excellent song as he sat in a tree. Next, there were a couple of **Great Tits** chasing each other in the bushes, they were probably fighting over a female! We carried on walking to the Old Oak Tree next to the bridge then decided to turn around as the path around the back of the lake was deep in water. We went back over the bridge and took a route that headed back towards the pavilion. On route we saw a lovely **Robin** singing its heart out at the top of a tree. There was also a little **Wren** hopping about in the undergrowth. Someone thought they had spotted what looked like a Toucan ..... "What" I heard someone cry "a Toucan in the park" what next? However, it turned out to be a very colourful balloon!! As we passed the Pavilion we saw a **Magpie** perched on the roof, one of many seen around the park today. We stopped for a few minutes at the Pavilion Garden where we had good views of **Goldfinches**, a **Blue Tit** and heard a **Wren** singing very loudly as it does. We took a left near the Pillbox and spotted a **Song Thrush** singing, this was one of the highlights of the day – for once it did not fly off and stayed at the top of the tree singing its varied songs. Excellent! We then saw a nice male **Greenfinch** nearby. We walked through the grass towards the Lake where a **Black Headed Gull** was sat on the bank. There were also a number of **Canada Geese** and a couple of **Tufted Ducks**, plus a few **Moorhens** and **Coots**. As we were observing these, a **Jay** swooped down on to the bank looking for a tasty morsel to eat. As we stood by the lake we heard 2 or 3 **Chiffchaffs** singing but sadly we could not see any of them. A **Great Spotted Woodpecker** landed on the post by the Owl box giving us some typical woodpecker views and a noisy **Green Woodpecker's** "yaffle" was heard by some of the group. As we were about to leave the Lake, three **Mallards** appeared from behind the reeds, to complete our count of water birds. Back towards the Pavilion, there were a number of **Collared Doves** and **Crows** about and the odd **Herring Gull** flying overhead. We were welcomed back at the Pavilion by Christine, who was ready and waiting with the refreshments. These were much appreciated by the group after the walk. While enjoying a cup of tea, a lonely **Sand Martin** was spotted flying through the park, the poor thing must not have known what had hit it, such dreary conditions after flying all the way from Africa. Then a **Blackcap** was spotted in the single bush opposite the pavilion - it is always nice to hear a Blackcap singing now they are back here. To top the morning off there was a pair of little **Long Tailed Tits** building a nest near the pavilion. The final bird of the day was a **Starling** spotted by me as we left the car park! Despite the drizzle and rain it turned out to be a very enjoyable morning with a total bird count of 27 species seen or heard.

(Written by Marie Singleton)

## Bird List

**Goldfinch** – a dozen or so heard or seen around the park.

**Blue Tit** – 5 or 6 heard or seen.

**Great Tit** – very common and showy today with at least 10 / 15 seen or heard.

**Woodpigeon** – several flying, one or two seen on the ground.

**Blackbird** – quite a few seen, some nice males perched singing.

**Robin** – lots seen and heard giving good views for all.

**Wren** – only seen by a few but 2 or 3 heard by all.

**Magpie** – around 6 in the park.

**Song Thrush** – very nice bird singing away at the top of a tree.

**Greenfinch** – a nice male perched.

**Black Headed Gull** – 2 or 3 loafing around the lake.

**Canada Geese** – up to 10 at the lake.

**Tufted Ducks** – a pair on the lake.

**Moorhen** – 2 or 3 at the lake.

**Coot** – 2 or 3 at the lake.

**Jay** – one seen by Mark on the hill, one seen by all at the lake.

**Chiffchaff** – 2 or 3 heard at the lake.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** – good views perched on the owl box post.

**Green Woodpecker** – at least one possibly 2 heard at the lake.

**Mallard** – 3 good looking males at the lake.

**Collared Dove** – 5 or 6 around the picnic area.

**Carrion Crow** – several flying overhead throughout the walk.

**Herring Gull** – a couple flying around the lake, seen from the Pavilion.

**Sand Martin** – one passing through the park.

**Blackcap** – hawking for insects from the bush in front of the Pavilion.

**Long Tailed Tit** – a pair building a nest in the Pavilion garden.

**Starling** – just one on the car park path on the way home.

## 'The Skylarks 3K Race April 2018'

It was a fine evening for the runners and supporters at the first Skylarks 3K Race of the year, a total of 44 runners taking part.

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. Everyone enjoyed the evening and I hope you will be able to support the next Skylarks 3K event on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2018 at 7.30 p.m. Looking forward to another great turnout, inspiring evening and fine weather.

First Man – Sam Nigh in 10:19

First Lady – Della Sussex in 13:13

First Boy – Liam Peryer in 12:45

First Girl – Unfortunately no girls took part in the race

\*\*\* Please also do not forget our next Skylarks 3K Run on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> July at 7.30pm \*\*\*

## 'The Litter Blitz'

On Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> February a 'Litter Blitz' took place in the Wick Country Park. Volunteers braved a cold day to clear the park of the litter that some irresponsible visitors who do not care what they leave behind to spoil the area for the people who do care about the environment. The results were numerous sacks being collected of all sorts of discarded items. Many, many thanks to all involved on the day!



## 'The New Information Boards'



On Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> April we had the grand unveiling of the two new Information Boards. One board is situated by the children's play area and the other is in the carpark through the gates to the actual park. A grant of £1000 was generously donated by Wickford Community Projects to help with the cost of the boards. The boards feature the layout of the park including areas of interest with pictures and text. A notable addition is the Q Reader which takes you to the website for 'Mark's Tour of the Park'.

Featured in the photo is Chris Brown from Wickford Community Projects, Nikki Gibson from the 'Friends' and Mark Williams the Countryside Ranger.

Come along and visit the park, enjoy planning your route!

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If you are not a member but would like to join the Friends of the Wick Country Park please contact by email: [membershipsecretary@friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk](mailto:membershipsecretary@friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk)

### **Friends of the Wick Country Park Committee:**

Christine Lee - Acting Chairperson, Hazel Broomfield - Treasurer, Marie Singleton - Secretary,  
Hannah Cooper – Membership Secretary, Alaric Cundy - Webmaster  
Committee Member: Peter Bates

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

Mark Williams - Countryside Ranger. To resolve an issue go to [www.basildon.gov.uk/street](http://www.basildon.gov.uk/street) or customer service on 01268 533333 (option 5). Any site enquiries to 01268 206665

Rob Baker - Parks and Countryside Supervisor, Telephone: 01268 553992

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

## EVENTS PROGRAMME 2018

The following events for 2018 have been organised by the Friends of the Wick Country Park in consultation with the Park Ranger. *Except for the Quiz, all these events start at the Wick Country Park Pavilion and booking is not required. Toilets, car-parking, cycle racks, and refreshments are available at all events.*

EVENT	DATE	DETAILS
<b>Wick Weeders</b>	<b>Usually twice each month</b>	Starting at <b>2 pm</b> Details: <a href="http://www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk/Wick_Weeders.shtml">http://www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk/Wick_Weeders.shtml</a> , or visit our Facebook page, or see the posters at the park, or contact <a href="mailto:weeders@friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk">weeders@friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk</a> . Equipment is provided. Help is always needed to maintain these gardens.
<b>Skylarks 3K Race</b>	<b>Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> July</b>	<b>7.30 pm</b> The second race this year organised in conjunction with the <b>Pitsea Running Club</b> . Open to all runners and power walkers - or why not just come to support?
<b>Nature Event</b>	<b>Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> July</b>	<b>2 to 4 pm</b> Activities will include Bug Hunting and Pond Dipping. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Dogs are welcome but must be on a lead.
<b>Kite Festival &amp; Classic Car Display</b>	<b>Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>12 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.
<b>Quiz Night (Provisional)</b>	<b>Friday in October</b>	<b>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 the Chair, as below.</b>

For the latest information, please email [chair@friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk](mailto:chair@friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk), or see our website: [www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk](http://www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk)

