



Skylarks

Spring is on the way and we look forward to seeing you soon at one of our 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.

A Message from the Committee

A belated Happy New Year to you all!

Welcome to our first issue of the Skylarks newsletter in 2020. The Events Calendar is included in this edition and the committee hopes again to see you at the Wick Country Park enjoying our planned events.

Our next events are the first of the Skylarks 3K Races on Wednesday 15th April and the Bird Song Walk on Sunday 26th April. We hope to see many of you happy runners and walkers again having a good time.



There are 2 new additions to the Events Calendar this year, firstly the monthly walk around the park on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. This is a leisurely walk looking out for the birds and other wildlife that are in the park. The first one took place on Wednesday 19th February, a report of this is detailed in the newsletter.

The second new event is the Moth Night and Star Gazing in July. This is organized in conjunction with the Wickford Wildlife Society.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy 2020, we look forward to seeing you soon.

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

BIRD SONG WALK



Sunday 26th April 2020

10am to 12 noon

at the Wick Country Park

Tresco Way, Wickford, SS12 9GP

Led by the Park Ranger

FREE EVENT



*For further details: email
contact_us@friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk*

www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk

Before that please do not forget.....

THE SKYLARKS 3K RACE

**Wednesday 15th April 2020
At 7.30pm**

*"Run for the Skylarks" through the delightful
Wick County Park, all proceeds towards the
further development of the Park"*

'The January Jaunt & AGM 2020'

It was a beautiful sunny day for this year's January Jaunt and over 30 happy walkers joined Park Ranger Mark leading a walk to enjoy the country park at this time of the year. The Wickford Wombles also came along and did an excellent job of clearing litter on route, thank you to such a dedicated team! Then it was back to the pavilion for some welcome mince pies, hot mulled wine and fruit punch before settling down for the AGM.



At the AGM the committee reported that as in 2018 a reduced number of events was held in 2019 due to the amount of resources available. The Nature Event scheduled to be held on Sunday 7th July had to be cancelled due to the lack of volunteers. The events that did take place were the Bird Song Walk led by Mark, the two 3K Races kindly organized by Peter and the Pitsea Running Club and then our final event was the Kite Festival and Classic Car Display, with The Essex Kite Group (EKG) and the South Eastern Vintage and Classic Vehicle Club.

All in all it was still a good year with plenty of visitors to the events so many thanks to everyone who has contributed and attended. We would also like to say a big thank you to Ali Riley for her management of our Facebook page and also to the dedicated team of Wick Weeders who have spent many hours to make the pavilion garden look good, however due to events beyond our control we have had to cancel these sessions during the Winter season.

To keep the success going we are appealing for more volunteers, also to join the committee to help us arrange and give new ideas for this year's events. The list of the events has now been published - though we are always open for new suggestions to add in. Another piece of good news is that we are continuing free membership for another year!

Mark reported that Bat Boxes have been installed in two locations, there is also a sheet of ply that the Bats can go behind. In 2004 there was Teasel and Skylarks but the Teasel disappeared along with the Skylarks. Currently in the process of creating the habitat. Some path repairs have been done for a modest fee. I have recently checked the path and at present there are 19 dips that need repairing. Due to Essex clay it is an ongoing problem. The bridge by the Oak tree has been replaced and there have been repairs made to the one at the wetland area. There was some free material made available to repair the road, but this hasn't worked. The Wickford Wombles carry out litter picks and there is even a volunteer who picks up dog mess left round the park.



'The Wick Country Park Wildlife Walk - Wednesday 19th February'

An intrepid group of 6 walkers went on the inaugural Wick Country Park Wednesday Wildlife Walk on the morning of Wednesday 19th February. This walk is organized by Martin Singleton from the Wickford Wildlife Society and the aim is mainly to get out and enjoy some fresh air and see some wildlife but also to create a record of what wildlife lives in and uses the park. For a fairly cold winters day a surprising amount of birds were recorded, including a little Goldcrest and a hunting Kestrel, both of which have not been recorded by Martin in the park before. There were also lots of Black Headed Gulls and Woodpigeons which were hard to count when they were flying around everywhere.



The recorded number of birds are detailed as follows :-

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Total Count</u>
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	7
Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	c40
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	2
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	c50
Mew Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	1
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	2
European Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>	1
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	1
Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	c12
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	5
Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	10
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	3
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	3
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	1
Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	3
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	1
Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	2
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	2
European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	10
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	2
European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	7
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	2

Further walks are planned, these will take place on the 3rd Wednesday of every month starting at the pavilion at 11.30am and will normally last 1 to 1.5 hours. If you are interested in joining one of these walks please email Martin on b512rubble@btinternet.com



Kestrel



Goldcrest

EVENTS PROGRAMME 2020

The following events for 2020 are being organised by the *Friends of the Wick Country Park* in consultation with the Park Ranger. *All these events start at or near to the Wick Country Park Pavilion and, except where indicated, booking is not required. Toilets, car-parking, cycle racks, and refreshments are available at all events.*

EVENT	DATE	DETAILS
Wick Weeders	Usually twice each month	The first Wick Weeders session of 2020 will be on Monday 16 th March. Starting at 1.30 pm Details: For further up and coming sessions please go to the website: http://www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk/Wick_Weeders.shtml or email contact_us@friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk Equipment and refreshments are provided. Help is always needed to maintain these gardens.
Skylarks 3K Race	Wednesday 15th April	7.00 for 7.30 pm This race is open to all runners and power walkers. Supporters welcome.
Bird Song Walk	Sunday 26^h April	Starting at 10 am (two hours) . Both experienced and novice bird watchers are welcome. Last year we spotted, or heard, more than 20 species.
Skylarks 3K Race	Wednesday 15th July	7.00 for 7.30 pm start. The second race this year is open to all runners and power walkers - or why not just come to support?
Moth Night & Star Gazing	Saturday 18th July	7 pm. A new event for 2020 organised in conjunction with the <i>Wickford Wildlife Society</i> . Due to car-parking arrangements, pre-booking is essential, please.
Nature Event	Sunday 16th August	1 pm to 4 pm The main activities will be Bug Hunting and Pond Dipping. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Dogs on a lead are welcome.
Kites & Cars	Sunday in Sept or Oct tbc	12 am to 4 pm Another great family day out - held in conjunction with the <i>Essex Kite Group</i> and the <i>South Eastern Vintage and Classic Vehicle Club</i> . Allow at least an hour.

Friends of the Wick Country Park Committee:

Christine Lee - Acting Chairperson, Hazel Broomfield - Treasurer, Marie Singleton - Secretary, Hannah Cooper - Membership Secretary, Alaric Cundy - Webmaster
Peter Bates – Skylarks 3K Race Events

Basildon Borough Council Countryside Services:

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

Neighbourhood Policing Team: Telephone 0300 333 4444 or 07875 003503