



# Skylarks

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

## Message from the Chair

Another excellent edition of Skylarks with stories from many of our dedicated committee members. Paws in the Park was again another success with many new faces and dogs and lots of stall holders supporting the event. We still have the Kite Festival to look forward to so we hope that there are many enthusiastic kite makers out there awaiting the event on 15th September. Thank you to all who support us boosting funds for the good of the Wick Country Park.



So come on down to the park and enjoy the fun and the sun!

Eileen Cattell  
Chairperson

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## OUR NEXT WALK IN THE PARK

Crickets & Dragonflies, Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> August, from 2 - 4pm



Join the Ranger & Friends of the Wick Country Park to search & attempt to catch with sweep nets, crickets, grasshoppers and dragonflies, and to learn more about these fascinating creatures



Free event – no booking required  
Refreshments available  
Meet at the pavilion  
Parental supervision required for children

## PLEASE DO NOT FORGET THE KITE FESTIVAL SUNDAY 15<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER!



Come and have a fun day, make a kite and pick up some flying tips from the experts

- Free event – no booking required
- Competitions – Best decorated & Best Flyer with judging around 3pm
- Refreshments available
- Meet at the pavilion
- Parental supervision required for children

Sunday 15th September, 11am to 4pm  
The Wick Country Park, Tresco Way, Wickford SS12 9GP

For full details see our website  
[www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk](http://www.friendsofthewickcountrypark.co.uk)



Looking forward to seeing you there!

## **PAWS IN THE PARK 2013**

It was a very successful 'Paws in the Park 2013' event held on Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> June. The sky was clear and the weather remained bright, albeit breezy, throughout the day. As usual this helped to ensure a fantastic turnout – over 650 visitors came along to enjoy the occasion.

The day began early and frantically for the Friends of the Wick Country Park. The park was buzzing from 8am as marquees were raised, bunting hung, quiz sheets sorted and refreshments at the ready in time for the 11am grand start. The stall holders began to arrive - early! Paul and Mike on pitches and car park duties were then up and running. It's a tough job and someone has got to do it, so well done to them for keeping the stream of traffic running smoothly. All was going well...the bouncy castle, ice-cream and burger vans made it just as the first trickle of dogs pulled their owners through the gates.

A reception marquee greeted visitors who were advised by two Friends of events and stalls on offer. Hilary and Chris also encouraged children to take part in the quiz – to find questions posted around the park. Yes that is what the cut-out pink rabbits were for. Dotted amongst the hedgerows, the beautiful bunnies tested the knowledge of budding naturalists. Exam papers back to the pavilion please.

The registration desk must have been the first point of call for most dog owners! The classes included Best Trick, Best Rescue, Child Handler, Scruffiest Dog, Best Veteran, Prettiest Bitch, Handsome Dog and Cutest Puppy. Many classes were booked full very early – can you guess which ones proved the most popular? Let's just say all responsible dog owners would be irresponsible if they didn't think their pet was the most attractive! Max and Trudie maintained crowd control and kept the ever-growing queue in order – whilst always asking "can your dog do a trick?" Reassurance was given to dubious owners, too shy to step their canine colleague forward into the spotlight. Even raising a paw raises a laugh and that's what Paws is all about – fun!

Michelle and her PA system were invaluable in calling entries to the show arena. The judges advised what they were looking for in each class before making their decisions and awarding rosettes from first to sixth place. But let's not forget, all entries are winners - just for taking part.



A special thank you to The Billericay Dog Display Team who put on another spectacular show. They really showed how a well-trained dog should behave. Unlike the Werewolf lookalike (a man in a mask)! Unfortunately for him, children were requesting him to chase them just so they could scream. Loudly! He might have been the busiest person there....

Christine, Marie and Eileen worked their magic throughout the arena taking photos, marking quiz papers and making constant cups of tea, coffee and squash. Who realised people can get so thirsty! Alaric and Dorothy manned the mini-arena for dog sports – including high jump, long jump and any other kind of jump. Eileen's grand-daughter Olivia took special care of the tombola stall. She did an excellent job and as a result could be a potential future FOWCP committee member. The craft stall also kept young attendees fully occupied...it was a frenzy of paper, colouring pens, glue and pipe cleaners.



Well done to all entries and a mention of the following first place winners – Lisa with Indie for Prettiest Bitch; Keely with Barney for Handsome Dog; Danielle with Bruce for Cutest Puppy; Carly with Ladd for Best Rescue; Oliver with Tess for Child Handler; Holly with Jasper for Scruffiest Dog and Carol with Robert for Best Veteran. Also extra congratulations to Ladd for being Overall Winner. His is a poignant story – having only been rescued the previous day by Castledon Greyhound Rescue. His rosette therefore is all the more well deserved!

Thanks to all for coming! Special thanks to the Judges and Mark the Park Ranger for their invaluable assistance. We couldn't have done it without you! And, of course, to entrants, stall holders, spectators and anyone who just turned up for a stroll. It was a great day and The Friends of the Wick Country Park look forward to seeing you next year. Don't forget to check our website for pictures of this and past events plus details of what's coming up.

(Written by Trudie Crow)

## **NATURE QUEST 2013**

The Friends hosted another "Nature Quest" event on Sunday 21 July at The Wick Country Park. It was a very hot and humid day as the pond was made ready for pond dipping and the nets were brought out for bug hunting. Families were invited to stroll around the park and find the hidden quiz questions, stop off for each activity before heading back to the Pavilion for a nice cold drink or cuppa.



Dorothy and Hilary were at the pond with Mark the Park Ranger, also Sarah and Marion, many thanks to them for their knowledge and support. Naturally, children love anything to do with mud and water and the pond was therefore a very popular place! Many species of wildlife were found. Newts were discovered on several occasions and at different life stages. There were numerous Damselfly larvae and Ramshorn snails in good numbers plus a small number of Great Pond Snails and Bloodworms. Abundant numbers of Backswimmers plus Caddis Fly, Dragonfly larvae and Mosquito larvae were also investigated by thrilled young naturalists. Over at the bug hunt marquee Meadow Brown butterflies were studied, along with the unfortunately named Bloodsuckers (Soldier Beetles) plus various varieties of grasshopper.

Back in the pavilion there was a lot of activity on the craft table - the theme of the day was making a butterfly and some excellent specimens were created. Thanks to Adie and Olivia for organizing and creating! Even more was happening as a quiz was also on the agenda, many of our younger, clever visitors succeeded in finding the hidden rabbits and putting together the answer to receive from Paul a certificate of achievement to take home. Check the FOWCP website for more pictures.

The Essex Kite Group also joined during the morning to add to the festivities. Perhaps they are in preparation for the next big FOWCP event - The Kite Flying Festival. Join us on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September for a spectacular kite display not to be missed. See you there!

We received the following e-mail from Lucy and family, new members of the Friends of the Wick Country Park: "I would like to say how much as a family we enjoyed Nature Quest. We met another family while there and have since returned together to the park to fly our kites. When we attended the Nature Quest it was early, so I hope you had a good turn out later in the day. We stayed for over 2 hours and there was a lot to enjoy. It was very well organised and everyone was very helpful, informative and kind. Anyone could see a lot of effort and time had been put into the event. I can't wait to come to your other events. Well done to all involved". Thanks Lucy your message means a lot to us.

(Written by Trudie Crow & Nikki Gibson)

## **SKYLARKS 3K RACE ON 24<sup>th</sup> JULY 2013**

Our second Skylarks 3K Race of the season took place on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> July. A lovely sunny evening ensured another great turnout and again lots of happy runners of all ages took part with enthusiastic support from the sidelines. Excellent times as always ranging from an extremely speedy time of under 10 minutes through to a more leisurely 29 minutes. Well done to all those who took part. Here are the results:

First Man - Crispian Bloomfield  
First Lady - Rachel Flannigan  
First Boy - Jamie Greenhalgh  
First Girl - Chloe Nation



Check out more pictures of the race and the prize giving on the Friends website.

## **'SUE'S CORNER'**

The family of Sue Agate made a generous donation to the Friends of the Wick Country Park in memory of Sue following her sad and sudden death. Sue was a 'friend' of the park in every way. Helping in the garden and also enjoying peaceful walks round the park. The thoughtful bequest will be spent in the autumn on plants for the Pavilion garden. The family has also donated a bench and had it placed in a beautiful quiet corner with delightful views across the park towards the lake.

A lovely memorial for someone who obtained great comfort from the tranquility of the park.

(Written by Nikki Gibson)



Mark the Park Ranger with Nikki and Dorothy enjoying the tranquility at 'Sue's Corner'.

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## **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)

**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, email [mikenikki@supanet.com](mailto:mikenikki@supanet.com) or Christine Lee on 01268 571302, email [cleeb@btinternet.com](mailto:cleeb@btinternet.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 - Manager of Countryside Operations and Development, Telephone 01268 465380

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