



Colin's Blog

Back to Nature

14th July 2017

A big welcome to our new readers and subscribers from London Community Watch.

We are surrounded by rivers, canals and lakes. I for one, am only a short distance away from

the River Stort, and the River Roding, which goes into the River Lee, and flows into the River Thames. Last Saturday my wife and I walked alongside the Lee and the Stort, a peaceful and tranquil time, only disturbed by the occasional passing of narrow boats and day hire pleasure boats.

At one point, when we were overlooking the river at Dobbs Weir, we were greeted by a friendly shout from a man on a narrow boat, who, would you believe is our son's next-door neighbour from the Isle of Ely!

There were several occasions, when I was concerned to see the amount of discarded litter along the river bank, but, I was also reminded of the many occasions where fish stocks in both lakes and rivers have been affected by illegal fishing, much of which has been found in the past to be carried out by a small minority of Eastern Europeans, who have different cultural beliefs or values than the ones that most of us were brought up with, and live by in the UK.

This year, National Fishing Month will begin on the 22nd July, and conclude on the 29th August.

As in previous years, the idea behind National Fishing Month is to encourage every family member to have a go at fishing. It does not matter what age you are, or what previous experience you have. Nor does it matter which cultural or social background you may be from. Fishing is for everyone!

Fishery owners, organisers and angling coaches give up their valuable time to support National Fishing Month, so please take this opportunity to have a go at this wonderful sport. If you're a beginner and would like some tips on good fishing spots and events for National Fishing Month, or just want to join in the conversation, you can get involved on Twitter using the hashtag #NationalFishingMonth

The UK's marine environment is home to some of our most fascinating wildlife, such as basking sharks, grey seals, puffins and dolphins.

NATIONAL MARINE WEEK also starts on the 22nd July. Each year The Wildlife Trusts celebrate the UK's amazing sea animals and plants during National Marine Week.

This is your chance to explore the seashore, discover dunes and wallow with whelks – however you don't have to wait for National Marine Week to get out there.

Both coastal and inland Wildlife Trusts offer a wide range of events that uncover the magic of the marine world. Contact your <http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/>

If you are participating in the National Marine Week, chat about what you're doing to mark National Marine Week 2017 on Twitter using the hashtag #NationalMarineWeek .



The 10th July united the nation for National Don't Step on a Bee Day! Although this date has just passed, this year Friends of the Earth are calling for your help to protect our precious bees.

The recent press surrounding the 'Bee Crisis' has been hard to ignore. Not only do our bees help provide the honey, propolis and beeswax contained within your favourite Bee Good products, they

also help to keep us all fed and watered! Without the tireless work of our little buzzing friends, over a third of everything we eat would disappear from our tables.

What can you do?

This Don't Step on a Bee Day, we urge you to help spread the message! We would love it if you could share the message with your audience on Facebook or Twitter and tag **@BeeGood_UK** or use **#DontStepOnABeeDay** to help raise awareness!

Please see below for our Top 5 Bee Care Tips to give you inspiration for Don't Step on a Bee Day:

1. Don't step on a bee! (Of course)
2. Support your local beekeeper! The majority of our honey here in the UK is imported (85%!), but with the wealth of bee keepers on our doorstep there is really no need. Support your local bee keeper by visiting a near-by farm shop or deli and enjoy their precious produce for breakfast on some warm buttered toast – yum!
3. Plant your Bee Good labels! Our little tags that accompany all of your Bee Good product orders are impregnated with special wildflower seeds that bees simply can't get enough of! Just soak the label for an hour and plant under an inch of soil and watch your wild meadow grow!

4. Download the Great British Bee Count wonderful app created by Friends of the Earth allows you to log the app, and to record the bees you spot out and about. This builds a picture of bee health and activity in the UK to secure a thriving future for our buzzing bees! You can find out more about the app from Friends of the Earth:
5. Build a bee hotel! Did you know that bees need somewhere to rest when they venture out on their pollen mission? Get the kids involved and get building! You can find step-by-step guide here at: <https://www.foe.co.uk/>

Despite having been stung twice in my seventy years, I have always admired these beautiful little insects, who by any standards, are amazing workaholics, gathering the nectar, which, our beekeepers turn into Honey.

My first dangerous encounter, was across the road from the Waterworks, in Walthamstow, and, as an eight-year-old boy walking through a wonderful flower meadow on the edge of the forest.

Luckily, sixty-two years ago, (my long-term memory is still good), there was a little wooden hut, which was a St. John's Ambulance First Aid post, and a nice lady gently removed the sting from 'btm!' This has always been one of the drawbacks of wearing short trousers, alongside, encounters with stinging nettles, mosquitoes and red ants!

From that day on I have had a great deal of respect for bees, and, like Winnie the Poo, a tremendous enthusiasm and appreciation for eating Honey!

Whether we live in a rural or a urban environment, we are never far from nature. Most of us are lucky to have a park nearby, where, if we choose too, we can take time out either on our own, or with friends and family, to take stock, of our lives and the world around us.

We all get frustrated through things that affect us in our daily lives, and, it is all too easy to become downhearted and distressed, especially when we are affected by things that happen, over which we personally, have no control.

For our own sake, and indeed the sake of others around us, we must pick ourselves up, and try to go forward.

Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself!

POSITIVE THOUGHTS ON THE CIRCLE OF LIFE

As some of you will know, way back in 1999 whilst I was working as a Fundraising Manager for a National charity, I was asked to go along to BBC Radio Essex and to speak about the charity. I was also asked, to bring along a favourite piece of music. I chose the Pan Pipes instrumental version of 'Circle of Life,' and I wrote some words, which I recited over the music, to the radio listeners. This resulted in the radio stations switchboard being inundated with

calls asking for copies of the words, and the charity received several hundred pounds in donations.

I apologise, if you have seen the words before, but I have taken this opportunity to share them with you today, and they can be found as a separate attachment to my email.

In between writing this week's blog, I am putting together, the final preparations for the Essex County NhW Associations AGM and Conference, which I am facilitating at the Millennium Hall in Great Baddow, Chelmsford on the 12th July.

Every day, of every week, I see what a great difference that Neighbourhood Watch, and indeed, the new London Community Watch, can make to individuals and communities, as we all strive together towards Community Cohesion, and a better, safer environment. As we try to compensate in some way, for the ill-considered cutbacks which our Emergency services and other public bodies have striven to overcome, we know, that collectively, we can make a difference!

Now that my readership has expanded dramatically, I would like to invite you to submit items relating to NhW, or articles covered in my blog, that you consider will be of interest to the readership. Articles should not be politically biased or offensive in any way, but relate to important issues that affect us all.

Please send them to: colin@neighbourhoodmatters.org.uk

It is one of my intentions, once I get more into 'retirement mode,' to eventually create a website. So, watch this space

Spam Awareness Month is still ongoing



"I don't know why you're so wary.
There aren't any crooks on the
Internet."

INTER-CRIME ON THE INTERNET

Don't be Fooled - 2017

Phishing is the name given to the practice of sending emails at random, purporting to come from a genuine company such as a bank, but increasingly other organisations such as HMRC, in an attempt to trick customers, of the company or organisation into disclosing information at a bogus

website operated by the fraudsters. Fraudsters send out thousands, possibly millions, of spam emails in an attempt to convince unsuspecting people, to click onto

a link that will send them to a fake sight. These emails normally claim that it is necessary to 'update' or 'verify' your password, and they urge you to click on a link from the email that takes you to the bogus bank site.

Any information entered on the bogus website or form, will be captured by the criminals for their own fraudulent purposes.

What should I do if I have been sent a phishing email?

Any unsolicited emails should always be approached with caution, and you are advised not to follow any links contained in the email. Under the circumstances **NEVER** give out any personal details. http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud

ActionFraud
Report Fraud & Internet Crime
0300 123 2040

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As I reported last week, the problem of the stupid, foolhardy, behaviour of a minority of drone operators, is on the increase, putting aircraft using our airspace at risk.

Most of us live close to either an airport or airfield, and we should all be concerned about the stupidity of people who think it is fun to fly drones irresponsibly.

There is now a drone safe website at: <http://dronesafe.uk/drone-code/>

Whilst on the subject of safety of aircraft, I have found it almost unbelievable that there again, a minority of individuals, also think it is fun and OK to shine powerful lasers into , aircraft cockpits in an effort to blind or blur the vision of pilots!

On Wednesday I facilitated, at the Essex County NhW Associations AGM and Conference, held at the Millenium Hall, Great Baddow, where the Annual Co-ordinator of the Year awards took place. I will report the results in full next week.

Keep Alert, Keep Secure, Keep Safe and have a good weekend.

Colin

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