

Jeskyns Update

Sep/Oct 2012



Skylark populations soar at Jeskyns!

A summer breeding bird survey undertaken at Jeskyns Community Woodland has shown a three fold increase in the number of Skylarks over the last seven years.



Above: Skylark

The survey, which was a direct repeat of one completed in 2005 when the Forestry Commission first acquired the site, provided good news all round as it has shown a 26% increase in the overall number of bird species holding territories at Jeskyns.

Most notable was the increase in territories held by Skylarks from 20 to 60, but there were also significant increases in Linnets and Goldfinches.

Six new species were also recorded: Yellow Hammer, Reed Bunting, Meadow Pipit, Mallard, Little Grebe, Eurasian Sparrowhawk and Rose-ringed Parakeet.



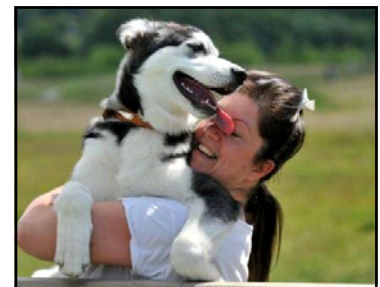
Above: Rose-ringed parakeet

Jeskyns—a special place for everyone.

There has been a recent increase in the number of complaints about out of control dogs at Jeskyns.

We are fully aware that most of our visitors with dogs are very considerate and keep their dogs under close control. We also appreciate that visitors without dogs sometimes need to exercise patience and understanding—dogs are not robots and even the best trained dog can sometimes misbehave!

However, if your dog does have a lapse in his normal impeccable manners and



causes upset to another visitor, please do smile and say sorry - an apology is often all the other party is after and usually prevents the issue escalating.

Unfortunately we regularly hear of dog owners who have told the dog free visitor that "Jeskyns is a dog park and people who don't like dogs should not be there!". This response does not usually help! As we all know, Jeskyns is a place for everyone....not



just people with dogs! Please help us to show that visitors with or without dogs can get along fine and have a great time whenever they visit Jeskyns.

Can ewe roll me over?

The sheep on site have been causing a bit of a stir lately as they keep getting stuck on their backs! The problem is that they are so well fed on the Jeskyns



meadows and so relaxed that they often rollover and simply cannot get back up!

This is not usually a problem, because they are checked twice daily by Meopham School Young Farmers who simply turn them back up the right way. However, in particularly hot or cold weather being stuck the wrong way up can cause them some distress or even injury.

If you spot a sheep with its legs in the air please do take the time to report it to the Meopham School Young Farmers on 07583 558377. If there is no answer then do please inform our 24hr security staff on 08452 574567. Thank ewe for your help!

Is your dog itching for a swim?

Please be aware, that during long periods of hot, dry weather, bacteria and algae levels can increase considerably in all ponds and water bodies. This is a natural process and levels usually quickly return to normal with the onset of cooler weather and rainfall.

However, whilst it is unlikely to cause a problem to most visitors, increased levels in these microbes can cause upset stomachs and allergic reactions in some dogs after swimming in such water.

Jeskyns—a haven for hedgehogs?

We constantly monitor the wildlife at Jeskyns and lately we have been surveying for hedgehogs. Nationally, numbers of hedgehogs have dropped by an alarming 25% so we are keeping our fingers crossed that Jeskyns may be home to some.



We will let you know our findings in the next newsletter.

There is only one way.....

You will no doubt have noticed that the car park works have been completed and we now have many new spaces and some shiny new picnic tables! Many thanks for everyone's patience during these works.

Please note that the one way system is now in place.



Please use your judgement. If you think your dog may be susceptible to an adverse reaction, please avoid use of the pond during particularly hot and dry periods of weather.

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