

27 May 2011

## Treat cows with caution this Bank Holiday

A farmer and lawyer is fronting a national campaign to alert people exploring the countryside this Bank Holiday to the dangers posed by cows with calves.

"At this time of year, cows are grazing with their calves and can be fiercely protective," said Stephen Lawson, secretary of not-for-profit campaign group APIL (Association of Personal Injury Lawyers) and Cheshire-based farmer.

"Too many people are unaware that this is when these seemingly docile animals pose a very real danger to the public."

APIL is issuing advice to countryside walkers after members reported cases of severe injuries, sometimes fatal, after people walked through fields containing cows and calves.

Clive Monk was walking in the North Yorkshire Moors in April with his partner and two friends, when the footpath led them through a field of cows grazing with their young.

"One of the cows broke away from the herd and wandered over, a bit like she just wanted a better look at us. But when she was about three or four feet away, without warning, she suddenly charged me.

"When we set off across the field I had no idea this could happen. I'd had a good look around when we entered the field but to be honest I was checking for bulls."

The cow trampled Clive at least twice before stopping and sitting on his legs, snapping his ankle. The 56-year-old also has a dislocated shoulder, which may need surgery.

Stephen said: "I can understand how anyone would find it difficult to see the threat in such a docile creature. Cows are very curious animals, and most of the time if they approach you it's just because they want a better a look. But at this time of year innocent passers-by are sometimes seen as a threat to their babies."

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“My advice is – enjoy the countryside but don’t take for granted that if a field has a footpath it must be safe. If you can see alternative route, take it. Otherwise, move slowly with minimum noise, never walk through the herd and never run through the field in an effort to get through it quicker. Running and shouting will excite cattle.

“Keep dogs on a short lead and if a cow is threatened and starts to charge, it is better for your own safety to let go of the dog.”

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Notes for editors:

- Photograph of Stephen Lawson with ‘Daisy’ attached.
- APIL (Association of Personal Injury Lawyers) is a not-for-profit organisation whose members are dedicated to campaigning for improvements in the law to help people who are injured or become ill through no fault of their own. APIL also provides an industry recognised kitemark to lawyers who reach a required standard of competence and specialist expertise in personal injury law. APIL also works to prevent needless injuries.
- For more information, please contact Chris Birkle, press and communications officer, t: 0115 943 5409, e: [chris.birkle@apil.org.uk](mailto:chris.birkle@apil.org.uk), or Jane Hartwell, assistant press and communications officer, t: 0115 943 5416, e: [jane.hartwell@apil.org.uk](mailto:jane.hartwell@apil.org.uk).

