



Welcome to our latest slim-line edition of our newsletter. We hope to cover news in a more timely fashion, attempt to broaden the subject matter we report on as well as pointing out what could be seen in the coming month.

This year the annual Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC) recorders conference was held in Littleton, Winchester and attended by Steve Goodwin (Butterflies) and Sue Hiley (Birds). HBIC was launched in 2002 with the principle aim of bringing together information on Hampshire's wildlife. The theme this year was devoted to looking at local trends set against national trends. The photo shows Brian Harrison (Wildlife Sound Recordist) demonstrating the equipment required for recording bird song.



Littleton Millennium Hall, Winchester

To Let – Room with a View



During the winter we have been busy making and putting up some new bird boxes in the Meadow. Already some of the boxes have attracted attention from Blue and Great Tits. With one pair of Great Tits observed carrying nesting material into a box. It is vital to erect the boxes early in the season as the female may roost in the box for some days or even weeks before building the nest. In addition four new boxes have been situated within the Orchard. The original two boxes have been adapted by the resident squirrels and it has been decided to

leave these in situ as occasionally the squirrel may be seen sitting within the box. This takes the total number of boxes to 14. Please do let us know if you see any activity at any of these boxes.

The winter thrushes, the Redwing and Fieldfare, will be leaving for north and eastern Europe during the next few weeks, and some of the summer migrants are already arriving. At time of writing March 25th, Rutland Water has seen 8 ospreys return, 7 females and only 1 male so far! The young ospreys migrate to Africa and will normally not return to the UK until they are at least two years old.

Lesser Celandine - One of the first woodland flowers of the year. A member of the buttercup family with heart-shaped leaves. A native perennial found throughout the British Isles. Also known as 'Pilewort', an infusion was traditionally used as a remedy for haemorrhoids. The leaves are high in vitamin C and were also used to prevent scurvy.



Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A secretive but highly active woodland bird with a remarkably powerful voice; ten times louder, weight for weight than a cockerel. The song by the male can be heard most of



the year. The Wren forages on the ground or in low vegetation, creeping along the woodland floor in short hops sometimes mistaken for a mouse, feeding mainly on invertebrates, especially beetles and spiders. Usually feeding within 2m of the ground, lower in winter than summer. The males are highly territorial throughout the year, but less so in winter. Birds roost communally in hard weather, clustered together in sheltered positions. Each male constructs several 'cock-nests' and the female

will select the one she prefers, she then lines the nest. Wrens are highly polygynous - the male can have more than one female with an active nest on his territory. On some of the Scottish islands there are four separate races, all differing slightly from the mainland race.

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Work Parties for April Only two more left this season!

Date	Meeting Point
Thursday 3 rd April	Down Grange Meadow. Homesteads Road Interpretation Board
Sunday 13 th April	Old Orchard. Kendal Gardens.

Times: - Sunday's 10:00 - 12:30. Thursday's 14:00 – 16:00. Anytime you can spare is valued!

If you would like to join us for the first time please ring Marion on 470171

