

Learn Bird calls



Late winter is the time of year when the first birds begin to sing and it is the best time to learn bird songs. The species of birds that sing at this time are few, this makes it easier to learn some of the songs of our resident birds, without our summer visitors joining in.

* Dawn and dusk is the best time of day because it is cooler and calmer. The sound transmission travels further and is clearer.

* Birds sing to mark their territory and impress the ladies. All spring songs start at 4am and are sung by the males; they improve their singing with age. Most females sleep through the dawn chorus. The chorus in good weather conditions can be a fantastic experience.

* Do not try to learn all the songs at once. Concentrate on one bird at a time and try to recognise it. It may be worth buying a bird calls CD to help you.

* Birds to listen for in late winter are the Mistle Thrush, also known as the Stormcock, as it sings through bad weather, and the Song Thrush which repeats its phrases.

* Early spring birds to listen out for are the drumming of a Great Spotted Woodpecker and the fluty song of the Blackbird. The Great Tits' song sounds like 'teacher teacher' and the Wren has a loud ringing warbling song.

* Mid spring sees the arrival of our summer migratory visitors and the height of the dawn chorus the Chiffchaff sings its name repeatedly. The Blackcap is known as the Northern Nightingale has a fluty warbling song and is very similar to the Garden Warbler. The Willow Warbler has a descending warble which is a favourite of many bird lovers and the Whitethroat has a scratchy warble which is easy to recognise.



Thank you to Peter Dowse of Bollington, Cheshire for sharing this great activity.