

## Edwin's Pages - Nature Notes

“Dear friends, one of my favourite hobbies is recording the sounds of nature onto tape and more recently mini disc. One morning in Spring I was able to drive over to Godolphin Woods and try to record the dawn chorus. Dawn broke at 04.40, the air was still, away to the east a flicker of light and



a Robin broke into song, the first chorister to greet the new day. Gradually more birds joined in until 22 male voice singers formed the choir which was to explode into song with mother nature's test piece, “Dawn Chorus”. It was now 05.10, the sun now a ball of fire ripped through the morning sky, shedding light through the arching branches of Oak, Beech and Alder, which form part of the canopy at Godolphin Wood. This beautiful area with a mix of habitat creates a wonderful environment for many species of birds and animals. Great Spotted Woodpeckers hammering out their exciting drumming on dead or dying branches, a Nuthatch wedged a beechmast into a small crevice of a very large Oak tree and then began to attack it to open the kernel. As I sat on an old Alder stump amid a sea of bluebells, three badgers passed within a few feet of me, occasionally stopping and sniffing the air, probably trying to identify the brand of coffee I was sipping; a few more sniffs, a grunt and they were off back to the safety of their sett. Just above me a Marsh Tit acrobatically fed on Alder cones whist at the same time uttering its call notes.

Around 06.30, the mass male voice choir had ended and now it was time for the individual soloists to take their stand on the rostrum and “top of the pops” without doubt was the Blackcap Warbler. This brilliant songster thrilled the wood audience with its fantastic tonal quality of liquid notes. A Green Woodpecker didn't agree with my adjudication, he laughed away heartily for some minutes.

By now the sun was really warm, the acoustics in the wood were really good and ideal for capturing the sounds onto tape/disc. After coffee I moved along to a boggy part of the wood and these blue damsel flies were flitting over the sedge reeds like performing ballet dancers. Spider webs stretched across the reeds, shimmering in the now brilliant sunlight. “Chrr, chrr,” what was that? I stopped in my tracks. The sound came from a stand of Beech trees which looked beautiful, clothed in their new green leaves.

A rustle then a leap from one branch to another, yes, it was a grey squirrel, scolding me for trespassing on his private domain, no doubt. The wood echoed to the sound of Willow Warbler, Chiffchaff, Blackcap, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Mistle Thrush and many more.

It was now 07.00 and man-made noises began to infiltrate into the world of nature. Time to be off. On my way back to the car, a long drawn out hoot came from an old knarled Pine tree which signalled the end of the day for a male Tawny Owl. He was saying Goodnight to his wife, who replied with a soft gentle “Ke-wick, “Ke-wick.



Edwin Carter