



APRIL BIRDLIFE ON THE WEST CHASE, ASHDOWN FOREST

DURING THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN 2020

The weather early this April has been ideal for migration, with warm weather and southerly winds from the Continent.

By the beginning of April two warblers from the Mediterranean, Chiffchaffs and Blackcaps had already arrived in good numbers.



These were followed on 5th April by a flood of Willow Warblers and small numbers of tree Pipits, both from sub-Saharan tropical Africa who have now staked out their breeding territories on the West Chase.



One day later, on 6th April, the first male Cuckoo was calling from woodland edge and also several brightly coloured Redstarts also from sub-Saharan tropical Africa had taken their territories in Scots Pines on the heath.

While a large number of other summer visitors (birds not people this Spring!) are yet to arrive it is encouraging to know that the resident birds of this Chase have survived the winter and have been making their appearances on the gorse & heather, in the pines and on the Forest floor .



Of note have been:-

Red Kite, Common Buzzard, Kestrel, Sparrowhawk, Dartford Warbler, Woodlark, Common Crossbill, Stock Dove, Lesser Redpoll, Linnet, Yellowhammer, Stonechat and Woodcock.



We are so lucky at this time if we live near the Forest and can take our daily exercise here, (especially in the morning for the little birdies!) and in the afternoons for the raptors, when the warm thermals bring them up.



Clive Poole.

Voluntary Ranger, Ashdown Forest.

11 April 2020.