



January – Fieldfare
Turdus pilaris



February – Barn Owl
Tyto alba



March – Grey Partridge
Perdix perdix



April – Kingfisher
Alcedo atthis



May – Corncrake
Crex crex



June – Spoonbill
Platalea leucorodia



July – Short-eared Owl
Asio flammeus



August – Young Barn Owls
Tyto alba



September – Young Swallows
Hirundo rustica



October – Lapwing
Vanellus vanellus



November – Long-eared Owl
Asio otis



December – Pheasant
Phasianus colchicus

Front Cover – Singing Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

RICHARD BROOKS became a professional wildlife photographer in the early 1990's, and although best known for his association with Lesvos and especially his book *Birding on the Greek Island of Lesvos* (which first appeared in '98), he has now been photographing wildlife near his home in Fulmodeston, Norfolk since moving there full-time thirteen years ago. Apart from 60's and 70's music and sampling as many different beers as possible, birds of the feathered variety are his main passion – especially owls, and in particular the Barn Owl (which he photographs whenever possible from his 4x4 by using it for the purpose for which it was intended rather than for weekly trips to the supermarket!). Owls also figure prominently in the range of limited edition greetings cards, prints and framed pictures he produces; whilst his articles and images feature regularly in the bird watching press. He won the professional section of the *Wild Bird Photographer of the Year 2000* run by *Bird Watching* magazine, and has frequently been placed amongst the top ten entrants in the annual *British Birds* photo competition. From October 2004 he took the logical but painful step of embracing digital photography, and he now owns two Nikon D300's and has recently upgraded his trusty Nikon 500mm AFS lens to the new Image Stabilised (or VR) version for the cost of a small family car! Other than financial repercussions the main downside to all this is having to spend a number of hours a day downloading and editing images over the computer instead of being out in the field or indulging in his increasingly time-consuming and largely unpaid conservation work, which has now seen him virtually single-handedly site close on 600 Barn Owl boxes throughout North Norfolk. All are now regularly monitored under licence (yielding much useful information on the birds' breeding success and eventual dispersal) and currently provide a secure home for close on 100 pairs - pride of place going to the birds which in 2008 finally tenanted the owl hole he had installed in the end of his cottage 15 years ago (a site they reluctantly shared with a family of Jackdaws!). To this end he is always on the look-out for more potential sites or unwanted tea chests. Through regular feeding, sympathetic management and the provision of nest boxes on his 'mini nature reserve' of about an acre he has also managed to attract a varied population of breeding and wintering birds - including threatened species like Turtle Dove and Tree Sparrow. Apart from his annual spring trip to Lesvos he also managed a May trip to the Uists, Mull and Speyside again in 2008; but in view of rising fuel costs this may have to be his last. As yet he is still awaiting payment for the use of his Red Kite image (reproduced here) on the September 07 Royal Mail stamp issue, which led to a short appearance on *About Anglia*, an *Eastern Daily Press* article and an hour long appearance on *What's Rockin' Norfolk* – *Radio Norfolk's* version of *Desert Island Discs*. Sadly the resulting fan mail comprised just one email! If anyone wishes to add to this feel free to contact him for more information about his work and the full programme of talks and products he has on offer! In the meantime this calendar aims to capture some of the highlights of his year's travels.



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