



January – Woodcock
Scolopax rusticola



February – Barn Owl
Tyto alba



March – Snow Bunting
Plectrophenax nivalis



April – Lesser Whitethroat
Sylvia curruca



May – Roller
Coracias garrulus



June – Bullfinch
Pyrrhula pyrrhula



July – Turtle Dove
Streptopelia turtur



August – Little Owl
Athene noctua



September – Sparrowhawk
Accipiter nisus



October – Robin
Erithacus rubecula



November – Long-tailed Tit
Aegithalos caudatus



December – Pheasant
Phasianus colchicus

Front Cover – Juvenile Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

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 fifteen 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 over 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 100+ pairs – pride of place going to the birds which in 2008 finally tenanted the 'des res' created for them in a boarded off section of his loft back in 1993! Now aided by CCTV he can watch them at will on the upstairs TV and has his very own 'Springwatch' in house! Helped by all-year round supplementary feeding they tend to nest earlier and two broods are not unknown (fingers crossed for 2010!). His picture of the three young Barn Owls in the quatrefoil of Fulmodeston church (see July of 2010 calendar) went on to appear in the 'Daily Mail' in February 2010, various other publications worldwide, was mentioned on national radio and even led to a 90 second slot on 'Anglia News' to rival that of September 07 when his Red Kite image was used on the Royal Mail stamp issue! Though not quite in the league of his hour long DJ stint on 'What's Rockin' Norfolk' in late 07 it generated considerably more fan mail and print orders and gave his calendar a welcome late boost! Financial considerations have so far confined his 2010 travel programme to five glorious weeks from April into May commuting between the neighbouring Greek islands of Lemnos and Lesvos dodging the volcanic ash cloud! This trip was only made possible by strong demand for his guided birding services in the latter and generous sponsorship from the 'powers that be' in the former – bringing a possible site guide one step closer. A summer trip to Denmark and Sweden along similar lines is still under consideration but may have to be postponed because of the lure of his resident Barn Owls, an upsurge in his nesting garden Turtle Doves (helping to compensate for the total loss of his Tree Sparrows) and the attractions of the Norfolk summer music scene – prompting one or two good 'knees ups' now that normal service has been restored in that area!



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