

January Mistle Thrush



February Red-necked Grebe



March Marsh Harrier & Buzzard



April Male Lapland Bunting



May Turtle Dove



Cover Barn Owl and Tawny Owl



NOTABLY NORFOLK 2017

Bird Calendar - By Richard Brooks



June Little Owl pair



June 2017

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3 White Swanley 4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17 Jubilee Day 18	
19	20	Summer Solstice Leap Day 21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

July Greenshank



August Icterine Warbler



September Water Rail



October Isabelline Shrike



November Grey Partridge



December Cattle Egret



As the front cover demonstrates, my nightly owl feeding programme continues to bear fruit (aided by siting a standard lamp and comfy seat just feet away from the favoured feeding post!) - placing me so close to the action that I only need the 80mm end of my Nikon 80-400mm VR and D810 with pop-up flash. Sadly I can only take single pictures, and whilst the Barn Owls offer a sporting chance by first hovering over the post, the same can't be said for the Tawny, which can prove infinitely more challenging! Visits peak during the breeding season (when the Tawny generally returns about every twenty minutes), and activity then intensifies during the winter. Trying to capture the perfect image is proving so addictive that I tend to sit out most nights (often into the early hours!) braving the winter cold and summer mosquitoes and midges! Yet I feel so privileged to have these opportunities (as I write in July the Barn Owls in my loft have already fledged one brood of three and the female is now incubating a second clutch) that I'd be mad not to make the most of them. In fact I've even managed to partly offset the feeding costs by allowing the odd photographer to join me on occasions for a modest fee - something I may expand in the future (though being mindful that the welfare of the birds comes first I'd limit numbers to three and restrict it to those not in direct competition who do it largely for their own pleasure). Anyone just wishing to observe for a small fee is also welcome!

But of course nothing is certain in life, and I realise the situation could change at any time and I may be denied this wonderful spectacle - just as I lost my garden Turtle Doves and Tree Sparrow colony some years back (in spite of my best efforts to conserve them). Anyway, talking of conservation my mother is now almost 101 and is fortunately still able to reside at home. This has obviously meant my spending more time locally - though I did manage an eleven day trip to Poland in May (my first in three years) with a fellow photographer to experience the rich birdlife of the ancient Bialowieza Forest and Biebrza Marshes. Space doesn't permit a list of the stunning bird species encountered, but suffice it to say I was able to put my new Nikon 500mm F4 E VR lens to good use; and it's just a pity that I wasn't then in receipt of the new Nikon D500 which I'm currently experiencing excellent results with (as also with the four new HD cameras in my owl loft). Sadly this all comes at a price (which calendar and card sales and photo royalties do little to offset!) and since I don't do the lottery and continue to deplete my funds with my feeding and Barn Owl conservation programme I'm having to watch the pennies now that I'm an official OAP - though thankfully I still have all my own hair (see pic). Some might say I photograph better from the rear!

Richard Brooks Wildlife Photographer

Tel 01328 878632 Mobile 07780 886600

email@richard-brooks.co.uk

or r.brooks662@btinternet.com

www.richard-brooks.co.uk

Sales of this calendar directly benefit my conservation work and feeding programme