

Weekend Workshop Report, March 2023, by Annie Clouston

Birdsong, a workshop to help us identify our native birds by their songs or calls, was led by Andrew (the Lapwing) Lapworth. Andrew and Ruth are ardent and immensely well-travelled birders and photographers and so it was a great privilege to have them share their experiences and knowledge with us. It was, I think the 23 people assembled in Guide HQ would agree, a tour de force. Andrew's conscientious but light-hearted presentation – if not perhaps his end of term exam – were greatly appreciated, not least because inevitably our outings into the garden, the Dale and the Fells will be enormously enhanced by our increased awareness of our surroundings and the birdsong about us in those habitats.

He gave the following top tips from Lucy Lapwing (no relation):

- Start in January
- Use binoculars to watch a bird singing
- Start with easiest & most common: Robin, Wren & Blackbird
- Practice, practice, practice

Find your own way of learning: Phone app; CD; Ring tone; alarm call; books + think about where you are (ie habitat)

A sample of his references, if you missed the workshop and want to be able to gain more from your rambles are:

Further listening : *Bird Songs & Calls of Britain and Northern Europe*, by Geoff Sample. 2 CDs and a book to help you identify bird sounds. Collins Field Guides, 1996.

RSPB Guide to Birdsong, by Adrian Thomas. Includes 1 CD. Bloomsbury, 2019.

Apps: *British Birds: Birds of Britain and Ireland*. Natureguides Ltd. www.natureguides.com
Collins Bird Guide. William Collins/Natureguides. (considered the best current field guide)

Radio: Tweet of the day: a year of Britain's birds from the acclaimed Radio 4 series, by Brett Westwood & Stephen Moss. John Murray 2016. Also: Kindle Edition with audio

Thanks go to Andrew for a great stimulant to go out and **really** listen.

This photograph of a red grouse is from Andrew's website : www.andrewlapworth.co.uk **which has fabulous photographs of native and non-native birds**

