# Nature lovers: get ready for the best ever Festival of Birds!

**Thursday 15 January, 2015**

Nature lovers are in for a treat as one of the highlights of the birdwatching calendar; the Festival of Birds at WWT Slimbridge Wetland Centre in Gloucestershire returns this month. The annual festival is back on January 31 and February 1 and promises to be one of the most exciting events to date!

The festival, which includes walks, demonstrations and entertainment will also feature talks by One Show star Mike Dilger, falcon expert Ed Drewitt and 'Birdgirl' Mya-Rose Craig, who at 12 years old became the youngest person to see 3,500 species of bird.

For the first time there will also be a bird race, with individuals or teams competing to spot and record as many wild species as they can. This shouldn't be too difficult as there are around 100 species you could see at Slimbridge, including the famous Bewick's swans which migrate to Slimbridge each year.

There are also plenty of other activities, such as swan bill sketching, wild bird feeds, dog decoy demonstrations and a lively talks programme spanning the two days. Visitors birdwatching over the weekend will benefit from knowledgeable Guides in the Hides who will be helping them spot some of the more interesting species from each hide.

WWT Slimbridge will also be featuring its own experts with a talk by reserve warden James Lees on its global conservation work, a talk by Paul Rose on the latest flamingo research and a behind-the-scenes look at making Wildlife Weekly, a video blog produced from Slimbridge each week.

James Lees, Reserve Warden, said: "Whatever your age or experience in bird watching, there is plenty to get excited about this year at the Festival. The Festival of Birds is a chance for us to really showcase what a fantastic day out Slimbridge is for wildlife lovers and this year we'll also be talking about WWT's conservation successes across the world, which I don't think we do enough!"

You can buy a special weekend ticket (£15) online ahead of the Festival. On the day you can buy a ticket at the normal admission price. WWT members can attend for free.

- The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) is one of the world's largest and most respected wetland conservation organisations working globally to safeguard and improve wetlands for wildlife and people

Founded in the UK in 1946 by the late Sir Peter Scott, today we complement wetland conservation work carried out worldwide with a network of nine UK visitor centres

Wetland Centres are where people can have close encounters with awe-inspiring nature – wildlife clusters near water so there is always something to see at a Wetland Centre, every day of the year

As well as hundreds of species of birds, you can also see other wetland creatures like otters, watervoles and dragonflies in their natural environment

WWT Wetland Centres hold year-round events such as walks and talks, safaris and feeding sessions, photography and craft classes, children's activities and a host of special guest speakers

All WWT Wetland Centres have comfortable hides, easy pathways, fully stocked cafes and gift shops, Disabled and Mother & Baby facilities and lots of interactive ways to get close to wildlife

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