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Bird News

BRISTOL ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB

Fifty years • 1967 – 2017

Birding in the Bristol Region: A Celebration

A note from the editor, William Earp

The Committee first started discussing how to mark our 50th Anniversary around two years ago. My feeling then was that we might do something in addition to the obvious and essential ways, such as a Dinner, of marking the occasion. Much of this project was originally conceived to appear on the Club's website (in the hope of generating some extra footfall there) but my fellow Committee members soon felt that we could be more ambitious in our aim and also offer something more tangible and permanent.

I wanted very much to get a cross-section of contributors reflecting every all level of expertise amongst the membership, and it is gratifying to have done so. '50 Birds of Avon', in particular, is a communal, heart-warming effort. It has been a privilege to encounter such enthusiasm, knowledge and willingness to share experiences, in many cases acquired over a lifetime. It's also been inspiring to have had so much help from several veterans of the local birding scene: Robin Prytherch and Richard Bland in particular have lent distinction to the result.

A word about the photographs: it's been wonderful to have been able to include so many from contributors to '50 Birds of Avon' but inevitably there were a lot of gaps to be filled and a suitable cover to be found. These days we are used to seeing many jaw-dropping images, but the first time I saw Pete Blanchard's cover image of one of the Avon Gorge Peregrines, it stopped me in my tracks. Pete has also allowed us the use of some other photos from his exceptional portfolio and I urge you to take a look at his website <https://www.flickr.com/photos/flyingfast/>. Gary Thoburn's work will also be known to many. If you visit his website at <http://garytsphotos.zenfolio.com/> you will see an astonishing display of photos from Gary's travels all over the world, beautifully presented and documented. Loyal members Rob Miles and Alan Gilbert have also played an essential supporting role by filling the remaining spaces. We are indebted to all four of them.

Our printers, Norwich-based Swallowprint, are one of the market leaders in this field – they also print *British Birds*. They have been crucial in enabling us to realise our ideas for this book.

Assembling this material has made me aware that our Club has a distinguished history. We draw our members from a relatively small area; even when it existed, Avon was not a large county. *Bird News* itself is a remarkable effort. We believe we may be possibly the only bird club in the land to have been able to maintain a continuous monthly bulletin. This is a moment to feel proud of what has been achieved so far.

Additional copies – perhaps for family or friends – are obtainable from William Earp at 4 Pitchcombe Gardens, Bristol BS9 2RH (william@wearp.wanadoo.co.uk) for £12, inc p and p.