



January 2012

Winter special offers

Happy new year! If you haven't already been to see us in 2012, we look forward to welcoming you here soon.

As a thank you for your support through the winter months, we are offering some special deals to e-news readers, or if you have friends who aren't RSPB members, why not bring them along for a free visit?



a million voices for nature
miliwn o leisiau dros fyd natur

Find out why people love Conwy nature reserve

Bring this voucher to the reserve and:

TREAT YOUR GARDEN BIRDS ON US
free 100g bag of dried mealworms when you
spend £5 in the shop, or

HAVE A DRINK ON US
buy-one-get-one-free on filter coffee or pot of tea, or

ENJOY A DAY OUT ON US
free entry to the reserve

RSPB Conwy nature reserve
A55 junction 18, Llandudno Junction LL31 9XZ
www.rspb.org.uk/conwy 01492 584091

Terms & conditions apply. Voucher valid for one offer only. Entrance ticket offer for max two adults and accompanying children to value of £5. Mealworm offer subject to availability; only valid on product 402099; RRP £4.99. Drink offer only on filter coffee or tea bought in single transaction; max RRP £1.80. Offers end 10 February 2012

Registered charity: England and Wales no 207076. Scotland SC037654

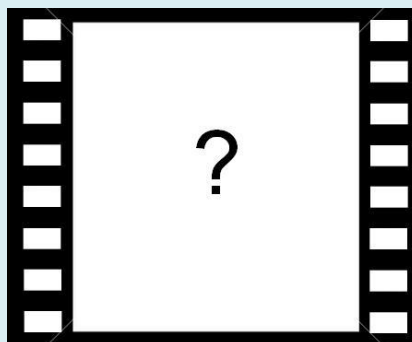
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- New year, new bridge
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- Are you doing the Big Garden Birdwatch?
- Caitlin and Jordon are stepping up for albatrosses



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Photostream 2012



Will your photo be one of our favourites in 2012?

We like to make the most of the amazing photos that visitors take at RSPB Conwy, so each month we choose our favourites to feature in our e-news, social media, on display around the reserve and in the monthly *Warblings* column in the North Wales Weekly News.

Towards the end of 2012, a gallery of our favourites will be displayed at the reserve, and visitors will be invited to vote for their favourite. The winners will be announced by the end of January 2013.

*Scenery... People... Birds...
Insects... Flowers... Close-ups...*

Whether you've got a point-and-shoot camera or the latest DSLR, we'd love to see your pictures.

Upload them to
www.flickr.com/groups/rspb_conwy or
www.rspb.org.uk/conwy.

*See either website for details of the rules. Copyright of photos remains with the photographer. By uploading your photos, you allow the RSPB to use images to help promote Conwy reserve and the RSPB's work.

Some of our favourites in 2011: little egret, by Jeff Cohen; Welsh ponies by Linda Edwards; Redstart by Rhys Thatcher; Crazy paving by Paul Hancox.



a million voices for nature

Sit down, **relax** and

step up

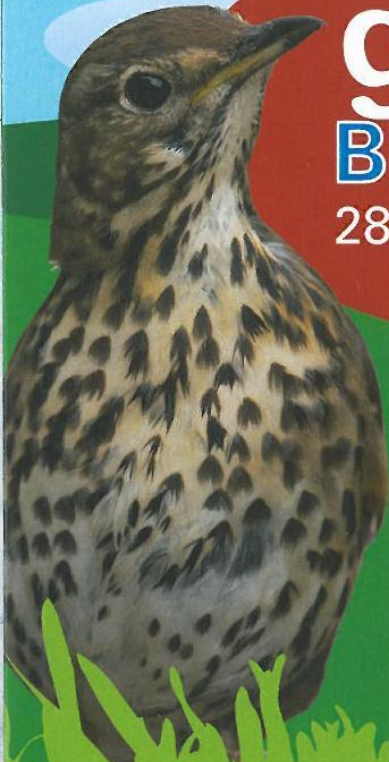
for **nature**

big

garden

BIRDWATCH

28–29 January 2012



Don't forget to take part in the world's biggest garden birdwatching event later this month. You can register and [download](#) your free pack today.

The weekend before the Birdwatch, on 21/22 January, Joy Vyner will be in the wildlife garden, giving tips and advice on how to take part (drop in between 11 am and 12.30 pm, and 1.30 pm and 2.30 pm).

And on Birdwatch weekend, 28/29 January, there'll be bird-cake making for children in the Visitor Centre, creating delicious treats to encourage birds into your garden (drop in any time between 1.30-3.30 pm, 50 pence a go). We'll have lots of advice on bird food and feeding too.

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Events and activities throughout the winter

Free walks and self-guided activities

Every Saturday morning

[Guided wildlife walk](#)

January

**Saturday 7 and
Sunday 8 January**

[Binocular and telescope
demonstrations](#)

Wednesday 11 January

[Coffee shop opens at
11.30 am](#)

**Saturday 28 and
Sunday 29 January**

[Big Garden Birdwatch at
RSPB Conwy](#)

Wednesday 25 January

[Conwy Farmers' Market](#)

February

**Saturday 4 and
Sunday 5 February**

[Binocular and telescope
demonstrations](#)

Tuesday 14 February

[Muddy Puddle Club: Love
Bugs](#)

Wednesday 29 February

[Conwy Farmers' Market](#)

Friday 17 February

[Family Springo Bingo](#)

March

**Saturday 3 and
Sunday 4 March**

[Binocular and telescope
demonstrations](#)

Wednesday 7 March

[Coffee shop opens at
11.30 am](#)

Wednesday 28 March

[Conwy Farmers' Market](#)

Saturday 17 March

[Family pond dipping](#)

New year, new bridge



The bridge over the pond, a popular part of the walk between the Tal-y-fan and Carneddau Hides, is feeling its age. We'll be refurbishing it in late January, replacing the main supports, the boards and the handrails. Coed Dinefwr, based in Carmarthenshire, have come up with an interesting design that reflects the wetland habitats, and the 'reed' design handrails will extend as a fence along the edges of the pond. During the two-week construction, the bridge pond will be closed, and there may be short periods where the alternative route closer to the A55 is temporarily closed. We'll confirm dates on the website and social media as soon as we can, and alternative routes will be clearly signposted on the reserve.

Recent sightings



In between the recent gales and drizzle, hardy birdwatchers have been getting out and seeing plenty of birds around the reserve. The highlight of recent weeks have been three **firecrests**, initially found by birders looking for the reserve's first **yellow-browed warbler** in early December.

Firecrests are the same size as goldcrests, making them the smallest British bird; they don't breed in North Wales, but occur at Conwy in most winters. Look for them

between Tal-y-fan and Carneddau Hides, especially towards the A55.

The yellow-browed warbler was elusive during its ten-day stay here, after being found by its call by an alert Rob Hughes, working here on a 12-week placement. Rob soon added more scarce birds to the reserve's tally for 2011 with a smart male **yellowhammer** on 22 December, and a **razorbill** on the shoreline, though sadly the last of these was a headless corpse. By the year-end, 149 bird species had been recorded here during 2011.

It's been a good winter for **whooper swans**, with groups of up to 10 birds on several dates through November and December, while a **pale-bellied Brent goose** was among the wigeons on the estuary during the month. Two **snow buntings** were present for just a few hours on the estuary path early in December, while two **choughs** flew regularly over the reserve between their roost and feeding areas. However, it's been a poor winter for **starlings** so far, with roost counts of fewer than 1000 birds – far fewer than the 45,000 during the cold snap in December 2010! Read more on our [sightings blog](#).

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Your pictures and your tweets

We get some great photos of the reserve and its wildlife on our [web community pages](#) and the [Flickr](#) group set up by local photographers. Why not visit to see more, or register today and add to our picture portfolio?

We select a Photo of the Month from the images posted by visitors and announce the winner on our [Twitter feed](#). November's winner was a reed bunting by Dilwyn Lloyd and December's was Pete Wood's firecrest. See page 2 for news on our *Photostream 2012* competition.

Reed bunting, by Dilwyn Lloyd

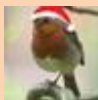


Firecrest, by Pete Wood



Tweet, tweet!

Follow us on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#) for all the latest reserve news



[@AnnRSPBNBucks](#) Ann
#FF [@rspbconwy](#) - a great reserve in a superb location in North Wales - worth a visit any time of the year



[@C Dearden](#) Chris Dearden
My favourite story of 2011 includes contribution from [@RSPBConwy](#) - hear it here:
<http://audioboo.fm/boos/601482>



[@localhero01](#) Anne Rogers
Good to get out in the fresh air for a long walk at [@rspbconwy](#) today. Great lunch & cakes too!



[@AshleyCWildPics](#) Ashley Cohen
Was nice to see the clwyd bird report at [@rspbconwy](#) with my slav grebe image on the front cover :) cheered me right up.

Snippets

This is where we came from, our exhibition of visitors' stories and photos of the creation of the nature reserve from the A55 tunnel, has been really popular. So popular, in fact, that we've decided to keep it on display in the Coffee Shop into 2012.

Job opportunities at Conwy

We'll shortly be advertising posts as a Field Teacher and as a Cleaner at the reserve. Keep your eye on [our website](#) and Twitter if you'd like to Step Up For Nature and join our team.



Hey tiger...!

Thanks to everyone who supported our Naturally Christmas event in December. As you see, shop manager Angela did her bit to promote the RSPB's work for tigers and other animals in Sumatra

New scopes for 2012

We have some great spotting scopes in the shop: the Viking AW65 and AW80, and the amazing new RSPB 82HD. We're impressed, and we only looked across the car park! Why not book a 1-1 demo to see if you will be impressed too. Ring us on 01492 584091.



Gwynt-y-Môr windfarm funding

Local people are being asked their views on how the Community Benefits Fund, being made available by Gwynt-y-Môr Offshore Wind Farm Ltd, should be spent. We'd like to see wildlife and people's access to nature as part of the mix, but what do you think?

An online questionnaire is at <http://www.gwyntymor-consultation.com>



Caught on camera

Moses Avenell and Michael Nev-Williams recently produced a short video as part of their course at Coleg Llandrillo. It features the reserve, its wildlife and people, and you can see it on [YouTube](#).

We think they've done a great job!

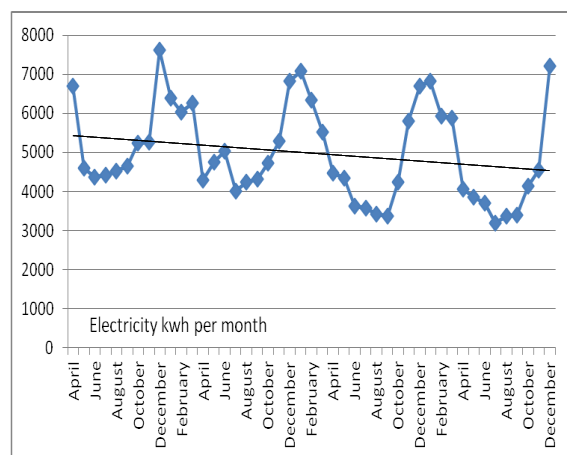
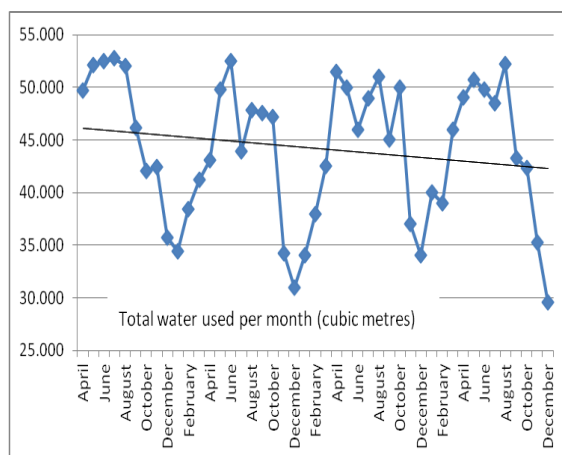
Keeping Conwy green

Like everyone else, we use electricity and water to manage the reserve, and we throw away some items that can't be recycled. But that doesn't stop us trying to reduce our 'footprint', the impact that we have on the Earth's limited resources.

A 'green team', comprising staff and volunteers at Conwy, monitors our performance, suggest ways to reduce our carbon emissions, our water use and our waste, and trains the reserve team in ways to be greener. We've been helped in 2011 by a clever piece of kit called a Voltage Optimiser that mediates the electricity current on the reserve, and by new kerbside recycling facilities from Conwy County Borough Council that enable us to send food waste from the coffee shop for composting. But many of the things we do are very simple things that we can all do at home and work, such as switching off lights and computers when they're not in use.

All this means that we're making some great savings:

- We've saved 88,492 litres of water since we started monitoring in April 2008. It means our water bills are lower, so we can spend more of your money on conservation.
- We've saved 20,868 kwh of electricity, and at around 10p/unit, that's over £2000 of supporters' donations that we can spend on saving nature. And importantly for the planet, that's almost 9 tonnes of carbon dioxide that we haven't released into the atmosphere.
- Our last audit in 2009 showed that we recycle 83% of our waste, and with the new food waste collection, that will almost certainly have increased in 2011.



Over the next few months, you'll be seeing new information about what we are doing to make the reserve greener, and some ideas how you can help too. Look out for posters designed by volunteer Alan Gray that will help visitors understand what we are doing, and why we think it's important.

Caitlin and Jordan help albatrosses



Caitlin and Jordan Davies, from Llysfaen, have Stepped Up for Nature, by organising a collection of used stamps for the RSPB.

They collected stamps from family, friends and at school, and delivered them to the reserve over Christmas – all 6,159 of them (they counted every one). Well done them!

The RSPB's work to save albatrosses is making a real difference, saving the lives of thousands of these huge birds in the southern oceans, by funding local staff in Africa, Asia and South America to work with fishermen, changing the way they use baited long-lines.

Read more about our Albatross campaign [here](#), and about how used stamps are a simple way to make a big difference [here](#).



The RSPB speaks out for birds and wildlife, tackling the problems that threaten our environment. Nature is amazing – help us keep it that way. Registered charity: England and Wales no. 207076, Scotland no. SC037654

No longer wish to receive Conwy E-news?

Please send an e-mail to conwy@rspb.org.uk with 'Unsubscribe' in the subject line

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