

## Cubs, calves & kits

The months of April, May and June have proved fruitful for many of our animals and we're pleased to say we have a number of thriving cubs, calves and kits.

### Badgers

As many visitors will have spotted, the underground observation badger sett has been temporarily closed as our female badger, Humbug, gave birth to two cubs and we wanted to give them peace and quiet in the early weeks. The cubs are doing well and now respond to the Keepers. They particularly enjoy having their backs scratched! Visitors to the Centre can currently view their activities on the screen in the coffee shop, by means of our 'cub-cam', an infra-red camera secreted in the nesting chamber. The badger sett will be re-opened for viewing in time for the summer holidays.



### Deer

A tiny orphaned roe deer kid was brought into the Centre, just a few days old. This young buck, who is just getting used to walking, is being cared for by our Head Keeper, Matt, and being bottle-fed with goat's milk. Out in the deer park two red deer calves have been born and more are on the way. So, look out for the youngsters this summer.

### Otters

As reported in the spring issue of *Wildlife News* two otters, Stirling and Thistle, joined us from Scotland at Christmas. As a proven breeding pair hopes for cubs were high and we have not been disappointed. Three healthy cubs were discovered in the holt in early May. As experienced parents Stirling and Thistle are attentive carers and all three cubs have a very good chance of reaching maturity. Visitors may be able to see this family group out and about in our third pond throughout the summer months.



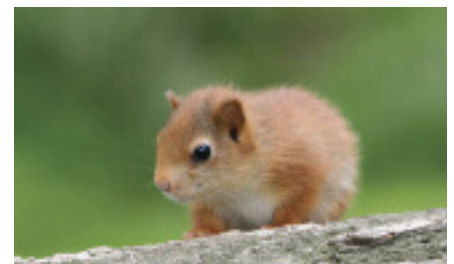
### Inside this issue...

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- *Dates for your diary:*
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*And more....*

### Red Squirrels

We've had a small number of red squirrel litters this year so far. The kits are much needed to fulfil an important purpose. They will be moved out to the Copse when this has been transformed into the walk-through red squirrel enclosure - see page 3 for the latest news.



### Stars of Springwatch

The otter and badger cubs have attracted attention from the BBC's primetime wildlife programme *Springwatch*. Cameramen from their crew visited the Centre recently to obtain some close-up footage which was shown in recent episodes. On the subject of *Springwatch*, presenter Chris Packham popped into the Centre in May with a certain famous comedian - read all about it on page 3...

# A Multi-Mayoral Visit



*Love that bling! The Mayors in full civic regalia*

We were honoured to receive a visit from all the Mayors of Surrey, as part of a day out hosted by Tandridge District Council. The aim of the day was to demonstrate just a few of the many great places of interest in the Tandridge district, including eateries, pubs, garden centres and of course visitor attractions, a category we

were happily chosen to represent. The group received a guided tour by owner, David Mills, and even though the sun did not honour us with an appearance, all the visitors were very pleasantly surprised with all they saw. They vowed to return to us with their families very soon. Now, where's that red carpet?

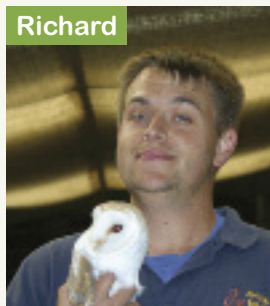
## Meet the Keepers

Our dedicated team of keepers not only take excellent care of all the British wildlife we have here at the Centre, their knowledge of the subject is extensive. The illuminating talks they give for both the visiting public and school groups bring the topic alive and underpin our core philosophy, "Conservation through Education". Here we learn a bit about their background and why they enjoy working at the Centre.



Matt

Head Keeper Matt has a particular interest in British wildlife, studying a HND/Foundation Degree in Animal Science at Plumpton College. "I came to the BWC 5 years ago and refused to leave! I love being outside observing the animals and their behaviour, and I enjoy educating visitors about our own, often overlooked, wildlife." Matt's special interest is red squirrels and pine martens. He's developed a particular bond with our pine marten Bonnie.



Richard

After 2 years studying IT networking Richard longed for the outdoors and answered the 'call of the wild'! He studied Animal Management at Hadlow College, and worked part-time at the Centre, becoming a full time keeper last summer. "I love the wild cats, but the foxes come a close second! Educating

the school groups is particularly satisfying, the kids are so enthusiastic and it's great that they go away knowing so much more about our fabulous British wildlife".



Laura

Since working in an insurance office Laura was very keen to work outside with animals. She's had experience on a children's farm and a dairy farm, joining the BWC last July after completing an Animal Management Course at Brinsbury College. "I think it's such a privilege to work with the animals at the Centre, especially elusive species like the badger which most people just don't get to see. I'm also keen on our foxes, particularly the latest arrival, Luna".



Izzy

Izzy has a life-long interest in animals and volunteered with both the Swan Sanctuary and Animal Line. She studied Animal Management at Plumpton College. "I've always wanted to work at the BWC. I enjoy the outdoors and being part of a friendly team. It's fantastic getting close to animals you rarely see in the wild". Particular favourites are the red squirrels and otters. "I recently spent time getting new otters, Stirling and Thistle, to hand feed".



Louise

Louise studied Animal Management at Merrist Wood College, spending time here on work experience, becoming a full time keeper on completing her studies. "I enjoy speaking to members of the public about the animals at the Centre. All our residents have their own personalities and stand out in different ways. The Mustelid family of mammals are my particular favourites". Louise is currently on maternity leave, caring for her new baby boy, Harvey.

Members: please see the back page for full details...

## We ♥ Luna!

A bundle of fun, named Luna, has won the hearts of staff and visitors alike. She was brought to us in March by a member of the public who found her cowering under a van on an Oxted road. She was then just 3 weeks old and in obvious distress.

Our Keepers, Richard and Laura, kept her warm and well fed, taking her home overnight during the early weeks to provide 24 hour care. As a result she's blossomed into a playful, adventurous and very lovable fox cub. Luna is so at ease around people and enjoys a bit of rough and tumble play. Her first public appearance was during the Easter holidays as the star of the keepers' fox talks and she's continued to charm visitors and photographers ever since. She's growing fast and once matured Luna will be moved to an outdoor enclosure with company of her own kind, where we are confident she'll continue to flourish.



## Attracting Wildlife Summer Tips

Summer provides more bounty than winter and spring when it comes to natural food for wildlife, but some extra assistance is always appreciated. A little effort will reward you with greater wildlife variety in your garden as well as some natural pest control.

❖ Resist the temptation to use spray to rid your plants of insects. You'll end up killing the useful ones as well as the 'pests', whilst reducing available food for birds.

❖ Colourful, sweet smelling plants are a great draw for butterflies. Nectar rich or seed producing flowers provide a useful food source for insects and birds, so don't trim off seed heads too soon.

❖ Birds burn up lots of energy catching insects to feed their young. Providing seeds and nuts for busy parents will give them a quick, valuable source of energy.

❖ Going on holiday? Stock up your bird feeders and ask a friendly neighbour to top them up whilst you're away.

❖ Ensure water is always available for drinking and bathing. Even timid birds may be tempted out for a drink and a wash.

## Red Squirrel Walk-through ...latest

Work to transform the Copse into a walk-through red squirrel enclosure is making excellent progress. The new fencing is in place and ready for painting and the latest trees are well established. Visitors are already taking advantage of the extended boardwalk, using the new seating to rest in the shade. The summer tree foliage is the finishing touch, giving the area a true woodland feel. This season's squirrel kits will feel right at home when they move in later this year, ready for the 2010 launch.

## Countryfile competition launched here by Jo Brand and Chris Packham

The British Wildlife Centre proved to be the perfect venue for the launch of the BBC's Countryfile 'Wild & Wonderful' photography competition. The launch was hosted by renowned wildlife presenter, author and supporter of the BWC, Chris Packham, and Britain's best female stand-up comedian Jo Brand.

Chris, an experienced and award-winning wildlife photographer, tutored Jo, a self-confessed 'point and shoot' merchant, how to achieve imaginative and original wildlife shots. By using alternative angles, considering the backdrop and use of the zoom, Jo succeeded in getting some excellent shots of the otters and red deer in the natural settings here at the Centre.



Reassuringly Chris maintains that expensive equipment is not necessary to produce a fantastic picture, it's the techniques and the imagination of the photographer that really count. So there's hope for us all! This episode of Countryfile was shown on 10th May.

...of this year's Members' Evening on 4th July

## Diary Dates

### Heather Angel - Autumn Workshop

We are pleased to report that Heather Angel and her son Giles have agreed to run their second photographic workshop of this year:

Tuesday 29th September  
9.15 am - 5 pm

Heather Angel, a top professional wildlife photographer and her son Giles, a commercial photographer and digital re-toucher, combine tuition and photography, with access inside some of the enclosures, in order to get some fantastic close-up shots of the animals at the Centre. Heather will provide expert advice on composition and lighting. Giles will recommend ways in which Photoshop can be used to make the most of your images. As usual numbers are limited so advance booking is essential. For more details please check our website or call us at the Centre for availability.



## WANTED!

Do you have any unwanted:

- FISH TANKS
- REPTILE TANKS
- RODENT CAGES
- PET CARRY CASES
- TINNED PET FOOD

Please consider donating them to us. We would be able to put these items to very good use.

*Thank you*

### Calling all Members!

#### Members' Evening: Saturday 4th July

One of the most enjoyable benefits of BWC membership, apart from a years' free admission, is the annual Members' Evening held every summer. This year it falls on **Saturday 4th July**. We are open as normal in the day, but after 5 pm we remain open for a further 3 hours until 8 pm - just for Members!

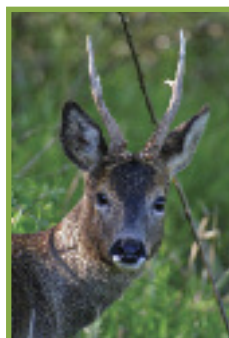


This informal evening will give you a greater insight into what goes on at the Centre. Owner David Mills will give a welcome talk and update, providing the latest news on the exciting wildlife projects currently under way. There will of course be fascinating talks by the keepers, with the focus on the rarely seen pine marten and roe deer. Special feeding sessions with the otters, foxes and badgers will give you a chance to these animals at close quarters as

well as other species not normally seen. We will all be on hand throughout the evening to chat with and to answer your questions.

This is a members-only event and entry will be free. Of course you are welcome to come at any time during the day and stay on for the evening. The coffee shop will be open should you require sustenance during the evening. The gift shop will also remain open. To help us plan our staffing, we'd be grateful if you could let us know if you are attending. Please email us at:

[members@britishwildlifecentre.co.uk](mailto:members@britishwildlifecentre.co.uk)  
or if you're not on email please do call us.



### British Wildlife Centre

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Newchapel, Lingfield,  
Surrey RH7 6LF  
01342 834658

We're open every Saturday, Sunday and public holiday from March to October and daily during all school holidays.

#### Summer/Autumn school holidays:

Summer holiday  
Sat 18 July to Sun 6 Sept

Autumn half term  
Sat 24 Oct to Sun 1 Nov

Please call us or go online for information on membership, animal adoptions, school visits, private tours and special access for photography and film.

*We would like to thank all our members and supporters.*

Wildlife News - photography, text and design: British Wildlife Centre  
Next issue Autumn 2009