

**Front cover**

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## **KEY**

1. The Hall
2. Marquee
3. Optics viewing point
4. Sunken garden
5. Main entrance to Hall
6. Wheelchair access
7. Toilets
8. Walled garden
9. Nature Trail
10. Digiscoping
11. RSPB Reserve Tour Start Point
12. Bird Ringing demonstration
13. Exhibitors Car Park
14. The Glade (RSPB activities)  
and Licensed Bar

## **From Gravel Pit to a Bird Haven!**

### **Join one of the special preview tours of the new RSPB Middleton Lakes Reserve**

There will be morning and afternoon tours on both day of the Birdwatchers Spring Fair, starting at 11.00am and 2.30pm, led by RSPB wardens. Here is a great opportunity to gain a special insight to a vision for the future of wildlife at Middleton.

Booking is essential as numbers on each tour will be limited. Stout waterproof footwear is recommended. These walks are not suitable for anyone with an incapacity, nor are they suitable for very young children. Each walk takes approximately 2 hours to complete. Walk times are subject to weather conditions.

# MIDDLETON HALL ROOM LAYOUT

The Hall is linked to the Marquee at the side entrance leading to the illustrated talks room, more exhibitors and a cafeteria, providing a continuous circuit of both exhibition areas.

In the 17th Century, Middleton Hall was the home of Francis Willughby, a founder member of the Royal Society. His interest in natural history and industrious study of the subject was inspired and encouraged by John Ray, one of Britain's greatest naturalists.

A great deal of both their life times' work was carried out at Middleton Hall where, after Willughby's early death, Ray continued to live. He arranged for the publication of Willughby's work and published much original material himself.

It is perhaps not widely know, but Willughby and Ray's early work on the classification of flora and fauna formed the basis of the Linnean system still used today.

# So much to see ... So much to do!

## Welcome!

**Welcome and greetings to you all**, from me, Alan Richards, organiser of this the sixteenth consecutive Birdwatchers Spring Fair and our fourth back at Middleton Hall, since we were last here in 2000! With its woodlands, walled garden, nature trail, lake and lovingly restored buildings—parts of which date back to medieval times—it makes an ideal site for an event of this sort. Additionally, the close proximity of the RSPB Middleton Lakes Reserve provides even greater interest for wildlife enthusiasts and birdwatchers especially!

As in previous years there are many exhibitors, societies and organisations devoted to birds and other wildlife, who have a presence this weekend (see exhibitor list). Particularly, I would like to mention Focus Optics, The West Midland Bird Club, Birdwatching magazine and Opticron Limited who are sponsoring this year's show.

Along with all the many other exhibitors, housed in the main marquee, the Hall and the Glade there is something that should interest everyone! Have a great time and enjoy.

**Alan Richards, Organiser**

## Guided Bird ID Walks

Join West Midland Bird Club experts and learn how to identify by sight and sound some of the many bird species which are to be found in the Middleton Hall grounds and woodland surrounding the Great Pool. Each walk lasts approximately one hour. Stout footwear is recommended—and a pair of binoculars would be useful! Meet at the front of the Hall. Look for the "Guided Bird Walks Start Here" sign. There is no charge for these walks which start at 1000 hrs and 1430 hrs on Saturday and 1100hrs on Sunday. *Subject to possible time changes or cancellation dependent upon the weather.*

**For details of guided tours on the RSPB Middleton Lakes Reserve, see previous page.**

## Bird Ringing Demonstrations

The ringing of wild birds is an important part of their study. Over the years this has resulted in the acquisition of much information, especially about their migration and distribution. The Mercian Ringing Team, led by Rob Skeates, will be demonstrating catching techniques and explaining the processes of ageing, sexing and weighing the trapped birds, before their release, unharmed. In previous years both Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Great Spotted Woodpecker and Kingfisher have been among the numerous other bird species which have been caught during demonstrations. The Ringing Team is pleased to accept donations which go towards the purchase of rings and mist nets, etc.

## Bird Painting Demonstration

We are most pleased that internationally acclaimed bird artist Mike Warren is with us once again. He is located in the main marquee, where he can be found working on a new painting. He is always happy to discuss his "brush techniques" with interested visitors! Mike will also have on display a selection of his recent paintings, that are for sale along with copies of his several publications, including his most recent, *Images from Birding*.

## Wildlife Photography Workshops

Join Nick Martin, one of the country's leading wildlife photographers and learn the "tricks of the trade"! During an hour-long session, Nick will explain and demonstrate the use of different camera equipment in an outdoor setting. From stalking, to *f* stops, to hides and camouflage, he will reveal the many secrets which will result in you getting a pleasing and natural image of the type and quality at which he excels. Morning session from 11am. Afternoon session from 2pm. Cost: £12 per person.

## Digiscoping Workshops

The popularity of digiscoping continues apace as new technology, cameras and telescope attachments come onto the market. For practical advice and demonstrations of the latest equipment that you need to obtain quality bird pictures, come and talk to expert Chris Galvin on the Opticron stand in the main marquee.

The location of the stand looks out over the Island Pool. With an established feeding station within viewing distance, telescope and cameras are set up to photograph the birds that come to the feeders.

## Pond Dipping

Always popular with children and adults alike, here is your opportunity to discover some of the denizens of the deep! Nets and buckets are provided and RSPB staff will be on hand to identify your catch. There is a small charge to join each session. Adults should accompany small children. Book at the RSPB Information tent in The Glade.

## Moths, Mothing & Butterflies

The Butterfly Conservation Society (Warwickshire Group) will be in The Glade over the weekend and will be displaying their catches from the previous night. These should include some of the more interesting "Hawkmoth" species, such as Eyed Hawkmoth and Poplar Hawkmoth, as well as many less glamorous, but nevertheless interesting, varieties of our night flyers.

## Let's go Bug Hunting!

Searching for "bugs" is a fascinating activity and at this time of year there should be plenty to discover. You may already be familiar with some creatures, more than others? In any event why not join RSPB experts to find out more about the strange and amazing world of our British insect life. Come along to find out more and to examine and identify beetles and other "creepy crawlies"—if you dare!

There is a small charge for these sessions. This and other RSPB activities start at the RSPB Information tent located in The Glade.

## ILLUSTRATED TALKS PROGRAMME

Over the weekend 15th-16th May, top wildlife photographers as listed below will be at The Birdwatchers Spring Fair and Wildlife Digital Photo Show 2010. They will be part of a programme of illustrated talks describing and demonstrating how they get their incredible wildlife pictures. Here is an opportunity not to be missed to learn how the experts do it and also to sit back and enjoy their artistry and talents.

Select the talk(s) of your choice and make your booking at the Organiser's stand located at the far end of the main marquee. To ensure you get a seat or place (a these are limited) it is advisable to book immediately on arrival. The talks will be held in the Lecture Room of the Hall (look for directional signs). There is a charge of £1 per person and 50p for children. Each talk lasts approximately 50 minutes with a 10 minute question time.

### Saturday 15th May

- 11.00am Ashley Grove**  
"Shetland to Scilly — Birds of the British Isles"
- 12.00 noon Nick Martin**  
"Getting Started in Wildlife Photography"
- 1.00pm Ellen Walford, BTO**  
"Out of Africa" project
- 2.00pm Oliver Smart**  
"A Bird Photographer at Large"
- 3.00pm Steve Cale**  
"Birding Northern Cyprus"

### Sunday 16th May

- 11.00am Oliver Smart**  
"A Bird Photographer at Large"
- 12.00 noon Nick Martin**  
"Getting Started in Wildlife Photography"
- 1.00pm Steve Cale**  
"Birding Northern Cyprus"
- 2.00pm Ellen Walford, BTO**  
"Out of Africa" project
- 3.00pm Ashley Grove**  
"Shetland to Scilly — Birds of the British Isles"

Sponsored by  
***Bird Art and Photography***  
***magazine***

## Speakers

### Ashley Grove

Brought up in the Warwickshire countryside, Ashley developed an interest in wildlife, especially birds, at an early age. His formative years were to give him a real advantage when he turned to wildlife photography in 2005. Ashley believes one needs to know the subject in order to get the right shot, that not only results in a good crisp image but one that also shows the subject in its environment, behaving naturally. Ashley's talk "Shetland to Scilly—Birds of the British Isles", will take you around Britain as he shares with you the wonderful images of birds he has captured along the way, starting with Puffins in Shetland and finishing up with some of the rarities he found on the Isles of Scilly. By the end of his talk you will have clocked up a fair few miles from the comfort of your seat and seen well over 100 species of birds. A musical montage rounds off this not-to-be-missed talk!

*[Photo of Ashley Grove]*

### Steve Cale

Born and bred in the Black Country, Steve moved to Norfolk several years back to pursue his career as a full time bird artist. Steve has since gained a reputation for producing bird paintings of the highest order. As well as providing illustrations for books (including "The New Birds of the West Midlands"), the many visitors to Titchwell will have seen and admired his mural in the reserve's tea room. An accomplished birder, he leads tours to Turkey and Northern Cyprus. He has visited the latter country many times in recent years, resulting in his "Guide to Birding in Northern Cyprus". Steve's talk reflects his passion for the birds of Cyprus and, not surprisingly, is entitled "Birding Northern Cyprus". As well as being an artist, Steve wields a camera to great effect and his talk will be illustrated with many top quality images of the birds to be seen there. Steve has a stand in the marquee on which there will be examples of his work, which are for sale.

*[Photo of Steve Cale]*

## Nick Martin

Nick Martin is the RSPB Project Manger for the Middleton Lakes Reserve, which has an office at Middleton Hall. He and his dedicated team have been hard at work over the past three years creating a more suitable habitat for wetland birds from what was once sand and gravel workings. The first phase of the project is nearly complete and it is hoped that the reserve will soon be open to the public. When his RSPB work allows, Nick spends all his free time photographing the birds he cares so passionately about. As well as photographing those species to be found on his "doorstep", he travels widely in order to add to his portfolio of top quality images. Nick is a great communicator and is able to convey his skills in understandable terms to those new to wildlife photography.

In his talk entitled "Getting Started in Wildlife Photography", Nick explains the effects of different types of equipment, whilst describing many of his secrets he employs to obtain a pleasing and natural image. From hide work to stalking, to *f* stops to camouflage, he will squeeze it all into his 50 minute talk (with ten minutes question time) at the 12 noon spot each day of the show.

*[Photo of Nick Martin]*

## Oliver Smart

Recognised as one of Britain's leading professional wildlife photographers, specialising in birds, Oliver's images regularly appear in books and magazines. He writes for "Bird Art and Photography" and "Mammals UK" magazines. Oliver uses the Alamy agency as the main outlet for his work, examples of which can be viewed on his website. His involvement in wildlife matters is wide and varied, regularly undertaking voluntary work for the RSPB, BTO and Avon Wildlife Trust. Knowledgeable and skilled in fieldcraft he also knows his birds having studied Ornithology at the University of Birmingham.

Oliver is widely travelled in his quest for great bird pictures and at the time of the Birdwatchers Spring Fair he will have not long returned from his most recent trip abroad, to Cuba.

His talk "A Bird Photographer at Large" may or may not contain shots from his Cuban visit, but in any event you will certainly be entertained and enthralled by a feast of stunning bird images.

Oliver has a stand in the marquee where a selection of his mounted prints will be on view and for sale.

*[Photo of Oliver Smart]*

## Ellen Walford

Ellen will be the first to admit she is not a wildlife photographer, but is no less concerned about the welfare and protection of all birdlife than any of our other speakers. This is reflected in her work with the British Trust for Ornithology at their offices in Thetford, where she is mainly responsible for Membership Promotion. However, she is also currently involved in an exciting BTO "Out of Africa" project, which is looking into why there have been such dramatic decreases in the numbers of our summer migrants which winter there. Now in the second year of this fieldwork, Ellen gives an overview of the project so far, which promises to be an intriguing and thought-provoking part of this year's talks programme.

The BTO have a stand in the marquee where you can talk to Ellen and enrol as a member, before or after you have listened to her talk!

*[Photo of Ellen Walford]*

## See Herons at the Nest!

Over many years Grey Herons have fished Middleton Hall's "Great Pool", while in more recent times the creation of lakes and many smaller stretches of water along the nearby Tame valley (much of which forms part of the new RSPB reserve) have provided them with even greater opportunities to obtain food. This further supply of their staple diet of fish has undoubtedly led to the recent establishment of a heronry in woodland near to The Hall and is en route to the Middleton Lakes Reserve. Before the trees are fully in leaf it is possible to see the Herons at their nests without disturbing them. To this end the RSPB have created an observation point from where visitors to The Birdwatchers Spring Fair can see the comings and goings of these interesting and entertaining birds.

We are indebted to Swarovski Optik for the loan of one of their top of the range spotting scopes and to Manfrotto for providing one of their carbon fibre tripods, providing unrivalled viewing facilities.

The observation point will be manned both days of the show with RSPB staff in attendance. Follow the signs starting from the main entrance to the Hall.

*[Photo of Heron at nest]*

# Exhibitors 2010

## *Marquee*

### **Ashley Grove Wild Images**

16 Lint Meadow, Truemans Heath Lane,  
Wythall, Worcs. B47 5PH  
email: birdergrove@gmail.com

## *Hall*

### **Bardsey Bird and Field Observatory**

Mike West  
6 Woodend Road, Walsall,  
West Midlands WS5 3BG  
Tel: 01922 639931  
email: m.west@sky.com

## *Marquee*

### **Bird Guides Ltd**

#### **DVD's, software, mobile devices, internet, books for birders**

P.O. Box 4104  
Sheffield S25 9BS  
Tel: 01909 560992  
email: andy.hirst@birdguides.com

## *Marquee*

### **Birdwatch magazine/Bird Art and Photography The home of birding**

The Chocolate Factory, 5 Clarendon Road,  
London N22 6XJ  
Tel: 020 8881 0550 Fax: 020 8881 0990  
email: editorial@birdwatch.co.uk

## *Marquee*

### **Birdwatching Magazine**

#### **Britain's top selling bird magazine**

Media House, Lynchwood,  
Peterborough, PE2 6EA  
Tel: 01733 468 419  
email: birdwatching@bauermedia.co.uk

## *Marquee*

### **Birdwatching and Wildlife Club**

#### **Holidays and weekend breaks in Scotland based at the Grant Arms Hotel**

Grant Arms Hotel, Granton-on-Spey PH26 3HF  
Tel: 01479 872526  
email: director@bwwc.co.uk

## *Hall*

### **BlueBird Technology**

#### **Birding Software**

28 Grebe Court  
Cambridge CB5 8FR  
Tel: 07790 774790  
email: mail@bluebirdtechnology.com

## *Marquee*

### **British Trust for Ornithology**

#### **Promoting scientific studies of birds and the sale of BTO goods**

The Nunnery, Thetford,  
Norfolk IP24 2PU  
Tel: 01842 750050  
email: ellen.walford@bto.org

## *The Glade*

### **Butterfly Conservation Society (Warwickshire Branch)**

**Butterfly and Moth displays: books, leaflets, live moths**  
c/o Keith Warmington, 30 New Street,  
Baddesley Ensor, Atherstone, Warwickshire CV9 2DW  
Tel: 01827 715873  
email: keith@warmies.co.uk

## *Marquee*

### **Country Innovation**

#### **Outdoor clothing for all country pursuits**

No.1 Broad Street, Congesbury,  
North Somerset BS49 5DG  
Tel: 01934 877333 Fax 019348 77999  
email: sales@countryinnovation.com

## *Marquee*

### **Focus Optics**

#### **Quality binoculars and spotting scopes**

Church Lane, Corley, Coventry CV7 8BA  
Tel: 01676 540501 and 01676 542476  
Fax 01676 540930  
email: enquiries@focusoptics.eu

## *Hall*

### **Just Books**

#### **Secondhand antiquarian natural history books**

16, Wordsworth Drive, Kenilworth, CV8 2TB  
Tel: 01926 850389  
email: justjohnshaw@aol.com

## *Marquee*

### **Manfrotto Distribution Ltd**

#### **Photographic Accessories**

4 The Enterprise Centre, Kelvin Lane,  
Crawley, West Sussex RH10 9PE  
Tel: 01293 583300  
email: andy.bennett@uk.bogenimaging.com

## *Marquee*

### **Marchwood**

#### **Binoculars and spotting scopes**

Unit 406, Cannock Chase Enterprise Centre,  
Hednesford, Staffordshire WS12 0QU  
Tel: 01543 424255  
email: sales@marchwooduk.co.uk

## *Hall*

### **Mark Green**

#### **Photo prints and cards of birds**

2 Lancaster Avenue  
Market Bosworth CV13 0LZ  
Tel: 01455 290644  
email: mark@naturepixels.co.uk

## *Demonstration Site*

### **(see Map, Location 12)**

#### **Mercian Ringing Group**

c/o Rob Skeates, "Carduelis",  
Endwood Drive,  
Sutton Coldfield, B28 3AJ  
Tel: 0121 353 4471

## *Marquee*

### **Mike Warren — Bird Artist**

#### **Original paintings, prints and books**

The Laurels, The Green, Winthorpe,  
Newark, Notts. NG24 2NR  
Tel: 01636 673554  
email: mike.warren@tiscali.co.uk

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for Cafe and Craft shops

**Marquee**

**Minox GB**

**Sport optics and cameras**

960 Capability Green,  
Luton, Bedfordshire LU1 3PE  
Tel: 01582 635544  
email: sales@minox.co.uk

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**Newart**

**"Clipmate", stops binocular swing**

12 Verwood Drive,  
Barnet, Herts. EN4 9TP  
Tel: 020 8275 0018

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**Nick Martin Wildlife Photographer**

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Knowle, Solihull  
email: nick@martinimages.co.uk  
Website: www.martinimages.co.uk

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**Oliver Smart**

**Prints, Cards, Beanbags, Workshops**

78 Aspen Park Road, Weston-super-Mare,  
Somerset BS22 8ER  
Tel: 07802 417810  
email: oliver@smartimages.co.uk

**Marquee**

**Optical Distribution Services Ltd**

**Bresser, Vanguard and Eschenbach binoculars**

Units 9/10, Brickfield Trading Estate, Brickfield Lane,  
Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh SO53 4DP  
Tel: 02380 266300 Fax: 02380 266400  
email: mac@odsoptics.com

**Marquee**

**Opticron**

**Binoculars, spottingscopes, monoculars,  
digiscoping equipment**

Unit 21, Titan Court, Laporte Way, Luton, LU4 8EF  
Tel: 01582 726522  
email: sales@opticron.co.uk

**The Glade**

**RSPB Local Groups**

**Birmingham**

John Bailey,  
52, Gresham Road, Hall Green, B28 0HY  
Tel: 0121 777 4389

**Coventry & Warwickshire**

Ron Spedding, 48 Montrose Avenue,  
Leamington Spa, CV32 7DY

**Lichfield & District**

Bob Russon, 108 Walsall Road  
Lichfield WS13 7RA  
email: bob@russon.co.uk

**Solihull**

John Roberts, 115 Dovehouse Lane,  
West Midlands, B91 2EQ  
Tel: 0121 707 3101

**South West Staffordshire**

Mrs Teresa Dorrance, 39 Wilkes Road,  
Codsall, WV8 1RZ  
Tel: 01902 847 041  
email: dorancesteve@fsmail.net

**Sutton Coldfield**

Martin Fisher, 43 Butlers Lane,  
Sutton Coldfield, B74 4SB  
Tel: 0121 308 4400  
email: martinfisher@care-4-free.net

**Hall**

**Staffordshire Wildlife Trust**

**Display about Trust's conservation work**

The Wolseley Centre,  
Wolseley Bridge, Stafford ST17 0WL  
Tel: 01889 880100 Fax: 01889 880101  
email: staffs-wildlife.org.uk

**Marquee**

**Steve Cale**

**Arwork, bird prints and cards**

10 Fairview Drive, Colkirk,  
Norfolk NR21 7NT  
Tel: 01328 862265  
email: steveshrike@aol.com

**Marquee**

**Swarovski (UK) Ltd**

**Quality binoculars & Telescopes**

Perrywood Business Park,  
Salfords, Surrey RH1 5JQ  
Tel: 01737 856812 Fax 01737 856885  
email: info@swarovskioptik.co.uk

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**West Midland Bird Club**

**UK's leading provincial bird club**

147 Worlds End,  
Quinton,  
Birmingham B32 1JX  
Tel: 0121 421 3096  
email: secretary@westmidlandbirdclub.com

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Videos**

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Norfolk NR25 7XH  
Tel: 01263 741100 Fax 01263 741100  
email sales@wildsounds.com

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go to the Glade**

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*[Picture of David Lindo]*

Come and say "Hello" to David Lindo (on the left), the "Urban Bird Man", writer and broadcaster. He will be found mostly on the "Birdwatching" magazine stand or just joining in the fun of the day's activities **on the Sunday only**.

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## **THANKS to ...**

The Organiser would like to thank the Middleton Hall Trustees for the use of the Hall and its grounds on the occasion of the sixteenth Bird-watchers Spring Fair. Thanks also to the many volunteers from both the West Midland Bird Club and RSPB for giving of their time over the weekend to ensure that things run smoothly and efficiently. Thanks also to Bob and Fen, the Hall Caretaker and his wife for their patience and understanding during the time of the show. Additionally, I must record my special thanks to my brother Paul and Nick Martin for their unstinting support and assistance during the build-up and over the weekend of the show. I could not have managed without them.

## **SUPPLIERS**

**Tentage:** Pitstop (Hire) Services  
Hurley Lane, Hurley, Atherstone  
Warwickshire CV9 2JJ  
Tel: 01827 872280

**Catering:** Perrys of Lichfield  
11 Tamworth Street, Lichfield WS13 6JP  
Tel: 01543 262882

**Typesetting:** Helpful Systems  
49 Alcester Road, Studley,  
Warwickshire B80 7NJ  
Tel: 01527 853990

**Printing:** Newtown Printers,  
Newtown Mews, Brickyard Lane, Studley  
Warwickshire B80 7EE  
Tel: 01527 857000

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## **ALL VISITORS PLEASE NOTE:**

The Organiser cannot accept liability for any personal injury, however caused, during their time at the Birdwatchers Spring Fair 2010, nor can they accept liability for any damage caused to any vehicle, or for the loss of any property from a vehicle, whilst parked in the Hall grounds.

**Smoking is prohibited in all of the Hall buildings and in the Marquee.  
Dogs must be kept on a short leash at all times.**