

◀ Judging success

I am amused when ornithologists, desperate to avoid any whiff of anthropomorphism in their interpretations of birdsong, fall foul of just this when they attempt to 'calibrate' song. In *The Big Question* (May), Jonathan Elphick writes that "an impressive bout of singing conveys the message that a fit male still has it in him to perform well". Impressive to whom – the human listener or other birds?

Length of song, loudness, inventive riffs – which is what I suspect he has in mind by "impressive" – are all human-value templates. We cannot have any idea what counts as impressive in a bird's ear. 'Successful' singers may have acoustic nuances that are imperceptible or incomprehensible to human listeners. Recent German research has shown that the most impressive nightingale singers – those with the longest, loudest and most varied songs – are those that have failed to find a mate.

Richard Mabey
Norfolk

Seeing eye to high

On a recent visit to Chobe National Park, Botswana, I was amazed to wake up every morning and find zebras grazing on the lawn. After passing them on a pre-breakfast stroll down the hotel drive, a pair of giraffes then ambled across the dirt road in front of me.

The smaller of the two giraffes crossed the track and vanished into the scrub, but the larger male paused to look at me. I stared

back, craning my neck to meet the most beautiful pair of eyes I had ever seen. We gazed at each other for a few seconds – a wonderful experience I'll remember forever. Eventually, he decided I was not to be feared, and followed the female into the trees.

Kate Barrett
Via email

Media on trial

Following the uproar over phone hacking, perhaps the media (with the exception of *BBC Wildlife*, of course) should also look at how it reports wildlife issues.

I recently found an article in a national newspaper highlighting the conservation of tigers in a park in China. If the journalist had dug a bit deeper, the truth might have been revealed: the park is a tiger farm that has nothing to do with conservation.

Visitors pay to tour the enclosures in which tigers are kept in unnatural groups, with some even sharing space with lions. These parks are run for profit, whether derived through tourism or from the sale of body parts. That journalist should be reporting on effective conservation projects supported by European zoos.

Simon Marsh
Via email

CROSSWORD COMEBACK

Over the past few months we have been inundated with requests for the return of our wildlife crossword – so from next month you'll once again be able to test your natural-history knowledge against the grid.

NEXT ISSUE

ON SALE 5 JUNE

COYOTE VS WOLF

How the decline and recovery of the wolf has changed coyote society



Alex Bandy/renishphotos.com

- * **GANNETS** Stunning photos above and below water
- * **ZOOS: GOOD FOR WILDLIFE?** The pros and cons
- * **BUMBLEBEES** Dozy insects or intellectual giants?
- * **RUFF & TUMBLE** The wader's acrobatic lek displays

PLUS A month in the life of an Isle of May ranger

IMMEDIATE MEDIA CO

BBC Wildlife Magazine is published by Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited under licence from BBC Worldwide.

HEARING-IMPAIRED CALLERS
01795 418688

EDITORIAL
Editor Sophie Stafford
Features Editor Ben Hoare
Environment Editor James Fair
Section Editor Sarah McPherson
Production Editor Seth Burgess
Art Editor Richard Eccleston
Deputy Art Editor Gary Nickolls
Picture Researcher Wanda Sowry
Editorial Assistant Jo Price
Contributors Paul Bloomfield, Chris Jones, Tina Smith

ADVERTISING
Ad Director Caroline Herbert
Senior Ad Manager Laura Gibbs 0117 314 8760

Brand Sales Executive Ashley Wheeler
0117 933 8012
Classified Sales Executive Joe Pirret
0117 314 7426

INSERTS
Laurence Robertson 00353 876 902208

MARKETING
Acting Subscriptions Director Julie Sewell
Digital Marketing Manager Mark Summertorn
Marketing Executive Gemma Burns
Press and PR Manager Carolyn Wray

LICENSING & SYNDICATION
Syndication Manager Simon Goodman
020 8433 1277; simon.goodman@bbc.co.uk
Head of Licensing & Syndication
Joanna Marshall

PRODUCTION
Ad Co-ordinator Mark Mulcahy
Ad Designer Nathaniel Brain
Production Director Sarah Powell
Production Co-ordinator Emily Mounter

IMMEDIATE MEDIA COMPANY BRISTOL LTD
Publisher Jemima Ransome
Managing Director Andy Marshall
Chairman Stephen Alexander
Deputy Chairman Peter Phippen
CEO Tom Bureau

BBC WORLDWIDE MAGAZINES UNIT

Managing Director Nick Brett
Publishing Director James Hewes
Editorial Director Jenny Potter
Unit Co-ordinator Eva Abramik

PRICES
Subscriptions UK £51.87; Republic of Ireland £43.45; Europe £43.35; Rest of World £45

BBC Wildlife champions ethical wildlife photography that prioritises the welfare of animals and the environment. It is committed to the faithful representation of nature, free from excessive digital manipulation, and complete honesty in captioning. Photographers, please support us by disclosing all information – including, but not restricted to, use of bait, captive or habituated animals – about the circumstances under which your pictures were taken. *BBC Wildlife* provides trusted, independent travel advice and information that has been gathered without fear or favour. We aim to provide options that cover a range of budgets and will reveal the positive and negative points of all the locations we visit.

The views expressed in *BBC Wildlife* are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the magazine or its publisher. The publisher, editor and authors accept no responsibility in respect of any products, goods or services that may be advertised or referred to in this issue or for any errors, omissions, mis-statements or mistakes in any such advertisements or references.

© Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited 2013. All rights reserved. No part of *BBC Wildlife* may be reproduced

in any form or by any means either wholly or in part, without prior written permission of the publisher. Not to be resold, lent, hired out or otherwise disposed of by way of trade at more than the recommended retail price (subject to VAT in the Republic of Ireland) or in mutilated condition.
Printed by William Gibbons Ltd.



Immediate Media Company Bristol is working to ensure that all of its paper is sourced from well-managed forests. This magazine is printed on Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified paper.

This magazine can be recycled, for use in newspapers and packaging. Please remove any gifts, samples or wrapping and dispose of it at your local collection point.



ABC Jul–Dec 12
40,963

NRS Apr 11–Mar 12
270,973