

Leisure

Swimming

Bramcote named county's first 'Swim 21' Leisure Centre

BRAMCOTE Leisure Centre has become the first leisure centre in Nottinghamshire to receive the Amateur Swimming Association's Swim 21 award for excellence in swimming development.

The Swim 21 national quality standard acknowledges the Centre

for its Aquatics programme, which includes swimming lessons, instructor training and swimming development.

The leisure centre was the county's first to achieve premier status under the old Aquamark scheme in April 2009; now it has followed up last year's success by becoming the first to achieve

the new Swim 21 standard.

The new award requires the Centre to record and demonstrate continual development of its swimming school, instructors and general aquatics programme.

Bramcote Leisure Centre offers swimming lesson opportunities for people of all abilities, catering

for everyone from total beginners to offering sub aqua, synchronised swimming, rookie lifesaving, mini polo, diving, snorkelling and kayaking for more competent swimmers.

For more information, contact Bramcote Leisure Centre on (0115) 917 3000.

Wildlife Watching

Local news and views of the natural world

AS we go to press, the latest series of Springwatch will be ending. Now an established part of the BBC schedules, the latest programmes have been a technical *tour de force* with many of the live cameras showing nests and wildlife habitats available for viewing on the internet. Other film taken in association with the series, in particular that taken with the super slow-motion camera, has revealed aspects of animal behaviour that have never before been seen in detail, and the whole filming operation has become a research exercise that is open to mass involvement.

That Springwatch is turning towards the more serious study of wildlife is perhaps in no small part due to the presence of Chris Packham as one of the main presenters. Many will miss Bill Oddie, who was instrumental in getting the programme up and running and whose endearing and unpredictable style often made the programme an 'interesting' watch whilst still revealing his passion for wildlife and his expertise as an ornithologist. Chris Packham also brings with him a record of presenting wildlife programmes as well as experience as a professional

ecologist engaged in scientific study. He does not need a script or an autocue to deliver the wealth of detail on the species that feature in the programme – he knows all this stuff!

His introduction also means a balance has been struck between the 'heavyweight' naturalists (Packham and Simon King) and the more 'lightweight' presenters, and the introduction of the sort of dedicated researchers whose work is vital to increasing the understanding of our wildlife is always welcome – even if they do end up being presented with the 'Order of the Geek'!

Despite having lost a comedian, the programme has not lost its sense of fun or its desire to be entertaining yet, within this, it manages to impart a great deal of knowledge that will help wildlife watchers understand more about what they see. This is quite a trick to pull off and makes the programme compelling viewing for the enthusiast.

There has been occasional criticism that programmes like Springwatch create 'armchair naturalists' who watch them avidly but seldom, if ever, experience nature in the flesh

and that, when they do get out to watch wildlife, some might find that the reality is a disappointment after the images that they have seen on TV.

Both of these comments are wide of the mark. Many will be inspired to get out of their armchair to watch wildlife. Some of those that do not may not be able to get access to the places where they can do so, but would still be passionate supporters of its conservation. Rather than disappointment that looking for wildlife 'in the wild' does not live up to the TV coverage, others may find that knowledge of what, for example a bird, is doing when they cannot see it increases their appreciation of it when they can.

The locations used for Springwatch are, understandably, ones rich in wildlife – but this carries with it the danger of giving the impression that all in the world of wildlife conservation is rosy. It is important that wildlife exists and thrives outside the reserves such as those used in Springwatch, and it would be a useful contrast for the programme to include a feature on how wildlife is doing in habitats that are degraded or threatened with destruction, particularly those near centres of population.

The BBC's coverage of wildlife, particularly our native wildlife, has shown a marked improvement over the last few years. As well as programmes such as Springwatch, Autumnwatch, Nature's Calendar and

others, radio coverage has recently been enhanced with the introduction of 'Saving Species'. This is effectively a replacement for the now long-since axed Natural History programme and will allow for up-to-the-minute news and features. Other radio programmes which feature wildlife issues include Costing the Earth and Home Planet.

Add to this the BBC's presence on the internet and it becomes clear that it is now an important resource for those wishing to learn more about wildlife. It is also worth remembering that it is probably the only organisation in the world that could offer such a breadth and depth of coverage.

Despite its faults and critics, the BBC is something in which we can still have some pride.

We undervalue it at our peril!

Jack Smith
Local ecologist

Beeston and Chilwell Garden Trail

Saturday, June 19 - Sunday, June 20
2pm – 5pm

THE Beeston and Chilwell Garden Trail returns for summer 2010, a wonderful opportunity to have a look at other people's gardens and raise money for various charities at the same time.

The devoted gardeners of Beeston and Chilwell really do pull out all the stops for this event, adding a plethora of extras for their visitors' entertainment and distraction.

In addition to plant sales, the extras include refreshments that might be cream teas taken in the garden or a fruit kebab, wood turning demonstrations, children's activities, or even the Beeston band Moose Malloy stepping out to entertain with live music.

Visitors start at any garden (see below) where they buy the £3 ticket that covers admission to all gardens on the trail for the two days.

A map showing the location of the gardens can be found on the Garden Trail website (www.beestonandchilwellgardentrail.org.uk).

33 Park Road, Chilwell, NG9 4DA
Refreshments, Tombola and Plant Sales

78 Park Road Chilwell, NG9 4DE
Tea and Cakes

87 Grove Avenue, Chilwell, NG9 4DX
Woodturning, Crafts, Cream Teas and Plants

60 Bramcote Avenue, Beeston, NG9 4DT
Book Sales

30 Highgrove Avenue, Chilwell, NG9 4DN
Plant Sales

87 Denison Street, Beeston, NG9 1DQ
(Sunday only)
Cream Teas

6 Hope Street, Beeston, NG9 1DR
Plants and Craft Items

18 Louis Avenue, Beeston, NG9 1DX
Model Railway

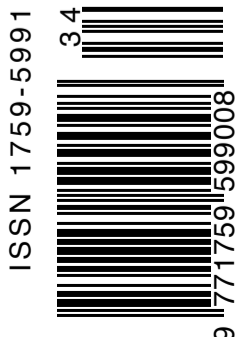
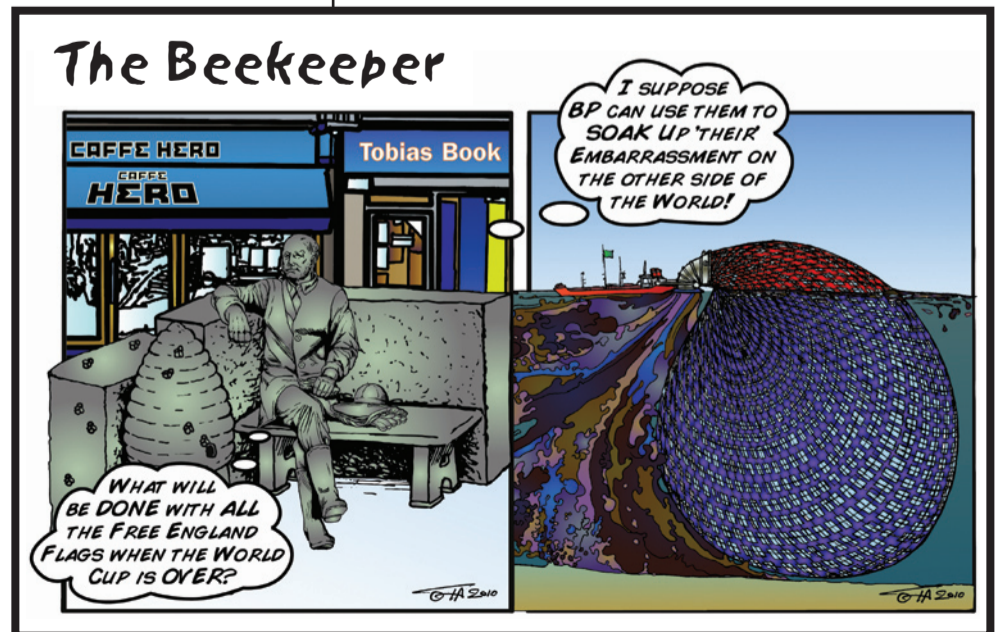
21a Grasmere Road, Beeston, NG9 3AQ
Refreshments and Plants

16 Devonshire Avenue, Beeston, NG9 1BS
Children's Activities, Refreshments
Sunday, 4pm – Live Music by Moose Malloy

60 Audon Avenue (The 'B' Garden), Chilwell, NG9 4AW
Refreshments, Family Activities and Plant Sales

2 Manor Avenue, Beeston, NG9 1HS
Juices and Fruit Kebabs

3 Station Villas, Beeston, NG9 1JH
Cream Teas and Plants



Thought for the Fortnight

He uses statistics as a drunken man uses a lamp post – more for support than illumination.

Andrew Long