

It comes as no surprise to hear that the British Trust for Ornithology have reported that 2012 was one of the worst years for birds breeding in the UK since records began.

The wet weather was of course the culprit – damp conditions meant fewer invertebrates and this had a knock on effect for young birds, who require insects as a source of protein whilst growing. Recent surveys indicate that 60% less young chaffinches fledged this year and that virtually all birds, whether native or migrant, suffered hugely in the summer washout. Species such as reed warbler and reed bunting were widely effected by flooding while birds of prey found a combination of persistent rain and scarce prey a lethal obstacle to bringing up young.

If bird numbers are to recover we need a much drier 2013. A good, productive breeding season next year is vital.... Let us hope that the extreme conditions are not a long term weather trend brought on by global warming!



Join Gwent Ornithological Society

If getting outside, doing a bit of walking, learning a new skill or doing something worthwhile are among your New Year Resolutions then joining GOS is exactly what you should do.

GOS are a friendly local bird club and wildlife charity run by local birders for local birders. They organise birdwatching walks and talks, produce reports, surveys and newsletters as well as working to help conserve the local environment.

Membership costs a paltry £15 (£18 for a family) and you won't make a better investment this side of next Christmas. For more details visit www.gwentbirds.org.uk or drop me a line.

Coming Up

GOS kick off their 2013 programme of talks on Saturday 19th January when Carl Downing will be present to tell us about '

Birdwatching

in Colombia'. This evolving nation is probably best known for coffee and cocaine, which is sad in a way as it also proudly boasts the richest variety of birds in the world! Come along and find out more - Argus readers are very welcome. The talk takes place at

Goytre

Village Hall (just off the

A4042

Newport to

Abergavenny

road) and starts at 7.30pm. Entry, including tea and biscuits, costs

£2

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For more details visit www.gwentbirds.org.uk

Keep in Touch

Thank you to all readers that have taken the time to get in touch.

I always enjoy hearing from you and can be contacted at smegstevens@gmail.com