

## NATURE NOTES 45

Brian Davis



How many of you, I wonder, did your Big Garden Bird Watch last weekend for the RSPB? The Nixons 'bagged' the roving Long-tailed tit family that sometimes comes to our nuts but I still managed nine 'regular' species. Jays, which are normally very shy woodland birds, have been seen in several gardens recently, and Melissa had a wonderful view of a perched Sparrow hawk, but these rare visitors never choose the Big Day. Having not seen a single Hedgehog last year I phoned around and was relieved to hear that they had been seen by the Gwen Tomline and by Val Ellis. This winter should be a good one for hibernating. The results of the UK Countryside Survey for 2007 are now out and comparisons can be made with the earlier surveys made in 1978, 1984, 1990 and 1998. In 2007, the survey teams from Monks Wood and Lancaster collected data from 591 squares of 1km in Great Britain, statistically distributed so as to cover all habitat types and draw reliable conclusions about change. For example, some of the largest changes between 1990 and 2007 were in hedgerows and other linear features (down 14.6%) and chalk and limestone grassland (down 27.2%). Between 1978 and 2007, there have been significant declines in total number of plant species, number of bird food species and number of butterfly food species, but since 1998 all three of these indicators have shown an upward trend in eastern England.

## ANNUAL PANTOMIME

This year *Melodramatics* are presenting 'Mother Goose' at the Mandeville Hall in Kimbolton from Wednesday Feb 25<sup>th</sup> to Feb 28<sup>th</sup> (three times on Saturday). Several members of the village are involved so to make sure of a decent seat contact Dave Watson's shop in Kimbolton or ask John Hill to reserve a place and get your tickets (896444). Tickets are the same price as last year - £6 and concessions at £4.



## CHURCH NEWS

Services during February will be:

1 <sup>st</sup> February	-	9.30 a.m.	Candlemas Service
8 <sup>th</sup> February	-	6.00 p.m.	Evensong
15 <sup>th</sup> February	-	9.30 a.m.	Eucharist
22 <sup>nd</sup> February	-	8.00 a.m.	Eucharist

Ash Wednesday falls on 25<sup>th</sup> February, marking the start of Lent and there will be a service at 10.00 a.m. in Alconbury Church.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

*Immobilise* is a nationwide secure database system that allows you to protect your property by registering on-line any valuables that have a unique serial number such as mobile phones, laptops, iPods, bicycles, and cameras. *Immobilise* is searchable by police forces all over the country and it will help to reduce property crime and also to reunite owners with their property. To protect and register your property visit [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com). There is no charge for this.

## ANNUAL QUIZ

Don't forget the Quiz which takes place at 7.30 p.m. on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February in Spaldwick School Hall. Tickets are now being sold at £5 per head and there will be a fish-and-chip supper available on the night. Please remember to bring your own drinks!