



## APRIL '26 NEWSLETTER

### Greetings to all Come Singing friends

Dear everyone,

April is a very wonderful time in spring as it heralds new birth, especially for animals. Few people can resist a newborn baby, whether it be human or animal!

Evolution has programmed us to care for the new born largely by their appearance. The human babies' proportionately large eyes, high foreheads and rounded chubby cheeks are universally appealing according to Konrad Lorenz, and stimulate affectionate and caring behaviour. This holds true for new born animals too.



In the natural world, perhaps, the baby animals we most readily associate with spring are



lambs. As daylight and temperatures increase, grass grows and becomes more nutritious. This makes spring the best time for ewes to produce milk and of course for lambs to be born. The effect of global warming and financial pressures on farmers mean that lambs can be born earlier in the year.

There are about 80 different species of sheep in the United Kingdom. The oldest breed is the Welsh Mountain sheep. Their small size and thick fleeces make them very hardy. Sheep are sociable animals and naturally flock together. The Blackface sheep is thought to be the most common breed in the UK.

*"Sheep may safely graze"* by J S Bach

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIUCRXMM4pE>



Herdwick



Norfolk



Lincoln Longwool



Blackface

Dolly the sheep made history by being the first cloned mammal in 1996. She had six lambs and lived for six years. Although she was named after Dolly Parton here is a music link to "Hello Dolly" with Louis Armstrong <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7N2wssse14>

Can you match the babies with the adult animals? Answers at the end.

### Baby names

1. Joey
2. Hoglet
3. Cub
4. Hatchling
5. Spat
6. Chick
7. Kit
8. Poult



Baby platypus

9. Pup
10. Puggle
11. Leveret
12. Fry
13. Calf
14. Squab
15. Farrow

### Adult names

|          |          |        |          |         |
|----------|----------|--------|----------|---------|
| Turtle   | Hare     | Pigeon | Hedgehog | Giraffe |
| Fish     | Platypus | Shark  | Oyster   | Sheep   |
| Squirrel | Kangaroo | Turkey | Penguin  | Bear    |

*Tie my kangaroo down* (Rolf Harris)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zsH5eg6o9cs>

*A four legged friend* (Roy Rogers)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6SU-MvR8\\_M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6SU-MvR8_M)

*Three Little Fishes* (Kay Kaiser)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wQxjDbCazs>

*Talk to the animals* (Rex Harrison)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YpBPavEDQck>

*Feed the birds* (Julie Andrews)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQPJvzhqr4U>

**Music quiz** All these popular songs have the word "baby" in their title.

1. A big hit for The Supremes in the 60s. "Oh how I need your love"
2. In the Rubber Soul album "Yes I'm gonna be a star"
3. It was a lovely time but really she can't stay because of the temperature outside!
4. Sonny and Cher were confident of their love. "They say we're young and we don't know"
5. Fred Astaire sang of a "bright shine on my shoes and on my nails" Where is he going?
6. Eartha Kitt sang a seasonal song about a visitor coming down the chimney!
7. Another old favourite, with a man singing about his girlfriend who "everybody loves".
8. "Gee it's great after being out late....."
9. A big success in 1925 - "No Sir, I don't mean maybe"
10. In the 60s the Ronettes sang "The night we met I knew I needed you. So be...."

## The River Wensum – a chalk stream

The famous river Wensum flows through Norwich city centre and is familiar to us. It gets its name from the old English word “wendsum”, aptly meaning ‘wandering’. About 30 miles long, it has its source near the village of Colkirk and wanders through Fakenham and then Norwich, near Carrow Road, before merging with the river Yare at Whitlingham. It is a very special river because it is the biggest chalk stream in Norfolk.

The Babingley, Gadder, Glaven, Ingol, Hun, Tiffey, Tas and Wissey are also some of the chalk streams with charming names in Norfolk. We are very privileged here as there are only 200 identified chalk streams in the world! Chalk streams in Norfolk are of global importance.

They arise from underground water bubbling to the surface through chalk. The water that arises is clear and rich in minerals, very valuable to both plants and animals, and supports a diverse and unique ecosystem.



A reflection taken by Heather

The Bishop of Norwich, Graham Usher, has a real interest in nature and the ecosystem. Using his position in the House of Lords, he has proposed measures to enhance and protect chalk streams like the Wensum.

At Sweet Briar Marshes Nature Reserve near the centre of Norwich, ([Norfolkwildlife.org](http://Norfolkwildlife.org)), you can see the crystal clear chalk waters of the Wensum and its associated wildlife. This, depending on the season, includes water voles, kingfishers, crayfish, brown trout, Norfolk Hawker dragonflies as well as chalk-tolerant wild flowers such as birds-foot trefoil, ox-eye daisy, devils bit scabious, fleabane, meadowsweet, tufted hairgrass and meadow foxtail.

Chalk streams have yet another important role as they provide corridors enabling otters, birds and bats to move through the landscape. So we are very fortunate to have such a number of these special and rare chalk streams in our county.

## Bananas

Perhaps you hadn't noticed that it is World Banana Day on 17<sup>th</sup> April!?(!!!) Bananas make excellent snacks as they are very nutritious, don't need any preparation and come in their own hygienic pack! Did you know that the fruit of the banana plant is actually an elongated berry and that the strings you pull off the banana before eating it are called phloems?

Why not try this easy banana treat as a dessert?

### Butterscotch Bananas

1 banana for each person

A scoop of vanilla ice cream per person

Quantities of ingredients for two:

1 oz butter    2 oz soft brown sugar    2 tablespoons golden syrup    2 tablespoons cream

1. Put butter, cream and syrup in a saucepan and melt slowly over a low heat.
2. Check there is no grittiness and sugar has completely dissolved (a few minutes)
3. Take off heat and add cream.
4. Slice banana into a dish with the ice cream and pour over the hot sauce.

*Banana boat song* (Harry Belafonte)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qKqOwWwOHKc>



## Weather forecasting



Do you know this old rhyme?

*If oak comes out before the ash  
We will surely have a splash.  
If ash comes out before the oak  
We will surely have a soak.*



Some may say "Either way you'll still get wet!!"

This old adage tells us that if oak trees come into bud before ash trees, then we can look forward to a drier and warmer summer than if the ash trees had budded first. Many people thought this was just superstitious nonsense. Scientists today think it may be true after all. Oak trees store a lot of water, and this makes them sensitive to frost in a cold spring and therefore they take longer to bud. Whereas the ash tree is more reliable and produces buds at the same time every year, regardless of the weather.

However, climate change now means our springs are slightly warmer. As a result oak trees nearly always bud before ash. In the past it was usually the other way round!

*The oak and the ash* (Traditional)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-dRHmWwrbk>

## Answers to the Baby Animals Quiz

- |                       |                       |                    |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Joey – kangaroo    | 6. Chick – penguin    | 11. Leveret – hare |
| 2. Hoglet – hedgehog  | 7. Kit – squirrel     | 12. Fry – fish     |
| 3. Cub – bear         | 8. Poult – turkey     | 13. Calf – giraffe |
| 4. Hatchling – turtle | 9. Pup – shark        | 14. Squab – pigeon |
| 5. Spat – oyster      | 10. Puggle – platypus | 15. Farrow – pig   |

## Answers to the Music Quiz

1. *Baby Love* (The Supremes)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8GFP1n9gNjc>
2. *Baby you can drive my car* (The Beatles)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Ts2U1mkfz4>
3. *Baby it's cold outside* (Bing Crosby, Doris Day)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=009kRJKf9rg>
4. *I got you babe* (Sonny and Cher)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BERd61bDY7k>
5. *Stepping out with my baby* (Fred Astaire, Ginger Rodgers)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5g742gWRA8E>
6. *Santa Baby* (Eartha Kitt)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UDS5RAaCl3U>
7. *Everybody loves my baby* (The Boswell Sisters)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltUzHJJ3aAo>
8. *Walking my baby back home* (Nat King Cole)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ib6ak2Dmq\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ib6ak2Dmq_4)
9. *Yes sir, that's my baby* (originally Gene Austin. Here: The Boneshaker)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LFWlQeaf0Qc>
10. *Be my baby* (The Ronettes)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-dr1PZZMds>