



The 'Dawn Chorus' is like the biggest and best West End musical; with the male blackbird in the lead role as 'King of the hedgerow', ably supported by the song thrush and the robin.



It is debatable whether any aspect of animal behaviour has fascinated human beings as much as the songs sung by birds. These renditions, many which sound beautiful to the human ear, have prompted comments for centuries and have inspired the writing of great philosophers and poets alike. This human appreciation of bird song has given rise to all sorts of theories as to why birds sing. Even in the 21st century, there are people who would contend that birds sing for the sheer pleasure of doing so, if not for the delight of listening ornithologists!



Bird song is difficult and very expensive in terms of energy terms to produce. Some say it is as energy-consuming as flying, and can be extremely dangerous, often exposing the songster to predators. It is, therefore unlikely that a bird is going to make such an effort if there wasn't a valid reason for doing so.

Bird song may be a thing of romantic fascination and beauty to us but for birds it is all about love and war. Love: to attract and 'woo' a passing female and to encourage her to mate. War: to defend their territory



against would-be-rivals and predators.

Bird song is at its peak in Lorn during the early Spring months of April and May. This is a time when the populations of residential songbirds, such as blackbird, song thrush, robin and dunnock, are supplemented by the arrival of millions of summer migrants, who have overwintered in warmer, southerly

climes (e.g. willow warbler, blackcap, whitethroat and redstart. Nature's alarm clock, at this time, is referred to as 'The Dawn chorus' and is a cacophony of avian sound, with every male of each species competing for its own little bit of air space, in order to get its particular message across. With a wealth of local bird-rich habitats, Lorn boasts a particularly