



of breach of the peace or, indeed, any of his silver-tongued relatives to have an ASBO slapped on them, curtailing their night-time auditions for the avian X-factor.



Local birdwatcher, Stuart Gibson, explained: 'I'm sure that if local Robins knew that they were biting the hand that feeds them through the cold, dark days of winter, then they would tone-down their after-hours community singing.

'However, they are only doing what comes naturally to them, after all!

'Robins have large eyes, compared to other small, garden birds. This enables them to search for food earlier in the morning and later in a

winter's afternoon than other birds. Indeed, the Robin is usually the first bird to visit bird tables in the morning and can be seen still gleaning a few titbits in the twilight when other garden visitors have long gone to roost'.

Robins have officially been Britain's favourite bird since 1960, and are viewed with great affection across the land (except in those places where their singing keeps everyone awake!) Robins are one of only a few birds that continue to sing during the winter.

Indeed, it is said that their autumn song is different from that which is heard in spring.

Song is very much a male thing, but female Robins hold separate territories in winter and also sing to defend these established feeding areas at this time of year.

Energy

This is a competitive advantage that the Robin uses to the full, as small birds expend a huge amount of heat energy during a winter's night; energy that has to be made up during the following day.

A large percentage of a Robin's day will be spent feeding in winter.

The Dalintart Robins are by no means unique in their anti-social behaviour and may be receiving assistance from the extra street lighting from new housing developments in the area.

Mr Gibson continued: 'The warmth and extra light generated allows Robins to prolong their daytime activities into the night.

'Oban High School is also a busy place, with out-of-school hours human activity not uncommon. Like other songsters, Robins will react to noise disturbance, often by alarm calling (a characteristic 'tic, tic, tic') or even bursting into song.'

The fact that residents in Oban haven't been aware of these nocturnal mutterings before now is somewhat strange and may, indeed, suggest that a new generation of local Robins may be showing a disrespectful tendency towards hyperactivity!