

BIRDS IN WINTER

Issue Date: 28.09.11



The Isle of Man Post Office is pleased to present this set of six stamps that feature the artwork of Island-based artist Jeremy Paul. The issue also encompasses the 2011 Europa theme “Forests” and the SEPAC theme of “Scenery”.

One of our most easily recognised birds, the **Robin** is almost synonymous with winter appearing on countless Christmas cards! Robins feed on a range of items, including kitchen scraps, commercial birdfood as well as earthworms and other invertebrates. At this time of year they can be very tolerant of each other, being too pre-occupied with the business of feeding and staying warm to be territorial. Come the spring, however, they will see off competing Robins to secure their own breeding ground.

Like the Waxwing, the **Redwing** is a winter visitor to the Island, though their nearest breeding grounds are a little closer, with small numbers breeding in Scotland. Come October large flocks of Redwing and their larger relative, the Fieldfare, arrive on the Island, settling on the many fruit and berry trees that line our hedges and roads, feeding voraciously until the trees are stripped bare and then move on. They often visit gardens, though usually in smaller numbers, feeding on fallen apples, etc. Similar in size to the familiar Song Thrush, the cream eye-stripe and red flank are distinctive.

In the last ten or so years the dainty, colourful **Goldfinch** has become a feature of many gardens during the winter- especially in those where Nyjer seed is provided. It is probable that their winter survival rate has increased, as they supplement their natural diet on food provided by the many people who derive pleasure from watching ‘their’ birds in the garden. The Goldfinch is surely one of the most colourful and engaging of winter visitors, often arriving in flocks of ten or more, creating a riot of red and yellow as they flit through the foliage.

Resident all year round the **Siskin**, one of our smallest finches, will readily visit gardens in the late summer through the winter, taking seed from feeders, often defending their place against larger species such as the Great Tit. Although young birds and females appear rather drab, the male is quite striking with strong yellow-green plumage and a black forehead and neat black bib. The mature conifer plantations of the Island provide many breeding sites, accounting for the increased numbers seen in gardens over the last decade.

The **Waxwing** is a true winter visitor to our Island, their breeding grounds covering north-eastern Scandinavia through to west Siberia. Following a good breeding season, when numbers are high or in years when berry supply is poor in their usual wintering areas, large numbers of this striking, Starling sized bird reach the British Isles. Often they are very tolerant of humans, allowing people to get within a few feet, as they feed on any soft fruit and berries they encounter, allowing you to see up-close the beauty of their plumage.

This is one of the firm favourites of the winter garden scene. A tiny bird that looks like a bundle of feathers with a tail stuck to it, the **Long-tailed Tit** relies upon a group effort to survive the winter. At night they roost in a tight bundle to conserve body heat, whilst by day they are constantly on the move, staying in contact with the rest of the group with a high-pitched contact call, all designed to minimise the risk of predators catching them. The more that survive the more there is the next night to huddle up with, a real group survival strategy!

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Jeremy Paul has been a professional wildlife artist for 20 years although he originally trained as a marine biologist.

The essence of his work is the accurate portrayal of wildlife in its environment and he has travelled extensively to obtain reference material for his paintings.

The inspiration for 'birds in winter' is closer to home, studying the 'local' birds during the heavy snowfall and extreme cold of recent winters

Jeremy was a BBC Wildlife Artist of the Year category winner in 2010 and Wildscape Magazine's artist of the year 2008.

www.jeremypaulwildlifeartist.co.uk



Local charity, **Manx BirdLife** (MBL) was established in 1997 as 'Manx Bird Atlas'. It undertakes important research; monitoring the status of the Island's bird populations.

We also work with the Manx Wildlife Trust to manage bird monitoring on the Calf of Man (an observatory since 1959) on behalf of Manx National Heritage.

MBL charity works closely with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) in developing plans for a wetland site in the north of the Island, creating a significant wintering and breeding site for a wide range of species, with the provision for public access.

The RSPB are also working very closely with the charity to develop this young but busy organisation into one that serves the Island and its birdlife into the future.

If you would like to know more about the charity and the work it undertakes visit our website:

www.manxbirdlife.im or email chris@manxbirdlife.im



PRODUCTS AVAILABLE

Mint/CTO Set - £4.77
Presentation Pack - £5.52
First Day Cover - £5.47
Self Adhesive Set - £0.75
Europa Sheetlet - (10 x 68p) £6.80
Europa First Day Cover - £2.25
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TECHNICAL DETAILS

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Text - Chris Sharpe
Printer - Lowe-Martin
Stamp Size - 32 x 26mm
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Process - Offset Lithography
Perforations - 13 per 2cm
Paper - 102gms PVA gummed
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Click to view our [Birds In Winter](#) stamps - for high resolution product images please visit our [Press](#) page
For press or commercial enquiries please contact Maxine or Dot for further information:

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