

WILDLIFE WATCHING IN THE SLOW LANE

THE NATURE DIARY OF AN OCTOGENARIAN

Mary E. Gillham

This is the 2008 day-to-day journal of an ecologist in her late eighties with leisure to explore popular and lesser known corners of the South Wales countryside. Sites visited lie mostly within twenty miles of the capital. A few range as far away as South Pembrokeshire or South Devon.

The time span covered is the nine month "gestation period" of adjustment from life rich in world travel, based in a spacious country cottage at the foot of a mountain, to shorter rambles from a smaller, McCarthy and Stone Retirement Apartment on the edge of a more level, built-up area.

Changes during the post-industrial greening of coal-tips and factory sites and the creation of Country Parks and Nature Reserves, are offset against the advance of housing estates and loss of wildlife diversity with large scale farming and motorway construction.

Mixed with the wisdom of years, yet full of bright optimism and acute observation of the natural world, this book is an uplifting and informative look at wildlife through the eyes of a dedicated naturalist.

Also by Mary Gillham:

This Island Life: Discovering Britain's

Offshore Gems

A Naturalist On Lundy

Exploring The Inner Hebrides

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born in 1921 in Ealing, a few years in a London office, more in the war-time Women's Land Army and yet more gaining a doctorate in the University of Wales, prepared Mary Gillham for life as a University lecturer – in Exeter, New Zealand, Australia, Nigeria and, more permanently, in the Adult Education Department in Cardiff.

Research on sea-bird islands was undertaken around the coasts of New Zealand, Australia, Tasmania and South Africa, with spells on Macquarie Island in Antarctica, Aldabra Atoll in the Indian Ocean and in the Caribbean. More investigations were around Britain and Europe – often with parties of amateur naturalists.

Primarily a botanist, she aimed to link plant and animal life with geology and weather patterns, in an integrated whole. During twenty years of retirement, she has been writing natural history travel books. Now, in her eighty seventh year, she explores nearer at hand.

HALSGROVE CATALOGUE

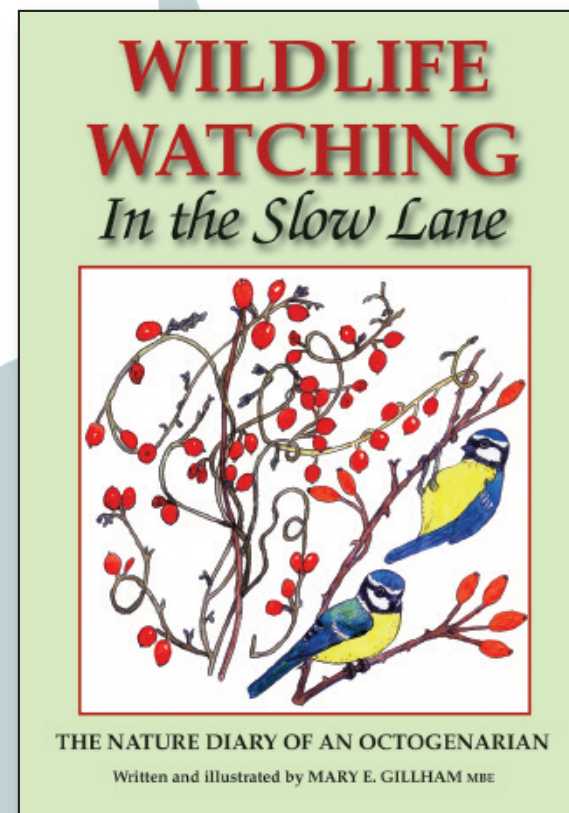
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