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...And Another Thing!

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Posted: Friday 26th June 2015 by [30DaysWild2015](#)



A walk allowed me to reminisce about more of my inspirations for interest in the natural world.

...And Another Thing!

I went for a walk today. I started out thinking about the blog I might write and returned with another idea altogether. I find walking in natural places does that sort of thing.

As I rounded the side of the house and set off down the road I heard the singing of a skylark above the farmer's field across the road; it's one of those sounds that I always find thrilling and if I have the privilege of hearing it from the house then it's a double thrill. The sound of the lark stirred memories of when I first remember recognising it. My Uncle Jack retired to what was, 50 years ago, a new build bungalow on the South Downs. When we visited him there was really very little for an early teenage boy to do but the bungalow did have a huge panoramic window in the lounge which looked out over fields which rose to the downs. At the top of the slope was Cissbury Ring, the largest Iron Age fort in Sussex. The area



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Ring. A couple of blogs ago I wrote about a meadow being an inspiration for my interest in wildlife, I guess there were really lots of inspirations at different stages. Indeed, Uncle Jack only had two books of any interest to me: one was the AA book of motoring, is it really true you can replace a fan belt with a pair of ladies tights? The other was the AA Book of British Birds, fabulous paintings of birds; I've nearly seen them all now, I don't think the quail in our school biology lab counted!

Halfway round my walk I saw a kestrel hunting over a field. This bird has been absent for several years now and so its a joy to see one back. It also provides a better heading picture for today's blog! I don't have a photo of a singing skylark! The kestrel shares with the lark that ability to hover high above a field seeming to defy gravity. I thought I'd add Gerard Manley Hopkins's poem: *The Windhover* to finish the blog but when I got back home and read it I realised that I don't really understand it all, so to avoid being too pretentious I've found this one:

K is for Kestrel

Still hangs the Kestrel there
High in the still air
When the sky is fair.

So still he seems to stay
He might in the fair day
Be fixed there far away.

But presently he will
Swoop from his airy hill
And make some small bird still

Eleanor Farjeon

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