



WADDESDON

Gordon Lang has been volunteering at Waddesdon's Aviary for 14 years, here he describes his day.



Usually I arrive at the aviary 20 minutes before start time in order to observe the behaviour of the birds within the aviaries and to note any changes since previous work.

Normally my first task is to clean the drinking container from the internal flights and refill with clean water. I then collect all the food containers, empty out any old food and load into the dishwasher.

After the permanent staff have fed and checked the birds in the flights, I then wash and scrub down the aviary wiring, perches and ponds, refill ponds with water, and rake the soil.

After lunch – I visit the inside flights to replace trays that hold food dishes, check the mouse traps (mice love to sneak inside flights for warmth and some food). I then wash and dry the trays, ready for the next change over.

I can then be given various tasks, depending on time of the year. In summer I give "Meet the Keeper" talks, which depending on the audience can vary from 25 mins to an hour! In winter I might give assistance in pruning or moving plants.

Before leaving for the day my usual task is to give the afternoon food – normally meal worms.

When leaving, I am already looking forward to my next visit because I get a great deal of satisfaction from working at the aviary – I honestly feel part of a team all striving to maintain high standards of bird keeping which is respected across UK and European Zoos.