

## PRESS RELEASE



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### **Campaign Calls on BBC To Help Save Nightingales**

A campaign to help save the nightingale from extinction, says the magical bird is in such decline in Britain, that there are now more people with the surname than the bird itself.

Over two thousand people have joined 'Nightingale Nights', calling on the BBC to help by restarting the 90 year old tradition of live broadcasting a singing nightingale. Campaign organiser Chris Rose said "On present trends in Britain the Nightingale could be extinct within 20 years if action isn't taken. So few people hear them now that they may finally fall silent before anyone realises what is happening. The BBC could help increase awareness with a single broadcast."

In 1924, Lord Reith began a tradition of holding an annual live broadcast of a singing nightingale. Interrupted only by the Second World War, the broadcast continued until 1942. Last year the BBC agreed to broadcast an old recording but the campaign argues that it is the direct connection through a live moment that inspires people to engage.

Since Anglo Saxon times when its name meant 'Night Singer', the Nightingale has enchanted people on its annual migration to Britain. Peak singing time is traditionally the first full moon in May (4<sup>th</sup> May 2015) and the campaign proposes a live broadcast between 2-9 May.

Nightingales migrate here to breed from Africa and males sing to attract females flying overhead at night. There are now less than 6000 singers left, in comparison with around 10,000 people called Nightingale. Probable causes of decline in Britain include introduced muntjac deer eating the dense woodland vegetation Nightingales need to nest in, loss of homes to development, loss of woodland 'coppicing', climate change, and destruction of their wintering forests in Africa

The 38 Degrees petition, started last year, has 2380 (28 4 15) signatories and is at <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/p/nightingales> .

The campaign website is at [www.nightingalenights.org.uk](http://www.nightingalenights.org.uk) and includes events to join to listen to our remaining Nightingales), listings of places they still survive, and recent recordings of songs about Nightingales (eg from a Suffolk pub) and by singer Ziazan, who can sing with the 'birdlike' Bel Canto technique popular in early opera. The campaign is appealing for more reports of places to hear Nightingales, and invites people to upload their own recordings of the birds, for instance using a mobile phone.

Ends

Chris Rose is a former campaigner with Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, WWF and the London Wildlife Trust

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[www.nightingalenights.org.uk](http://www.nightingalenights.org.uk) <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/p/nightingales>

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SoundCloud <https://soundcloud.com/groups/nightingale-nights> [open group for uploads]

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Nightingale-Nights/448120478680858>

