



# What to look for in March

In **March**, signs of spring truly start appearing with many species emerging from hibernation or on the move as they look for nest sites. Migrant birds are returning to the UK from their winter homes in Europe and Africa. **Chiff-Chaffs** (*Phylloscopus collybita*) are usually one of the first migrant birds to appear, singing their names in a repetitive 'chiff chaff'



Chiff-Chaff



Early Bumblebee Queen

song from the tops of trees. Lower to the ground, you may see **Bumblebees** flying on warm days in March. These will be queen bumblebees that have successfully survived the winter and are now seeking pollen from spring flowers. The queens mate in the autumn before emerging in the spring to lay their eggs in a suitable nest site. Bumblebees are ground-nesting insects and will search for suitable spots such as old mouse holes and holes in compost heaps. There are twenty-five species of bumblebee in the UK. One of the most common species and the first to emerge is the **Early Bumblebee** (*Bombus pratorum*). Early spring flowers are visible in woodlands and hedgerows at this time

of year. **Wood Anemones** (*Anemone nemerosa*) and **Lesser**



Lt.: Blackthorn , Rt: Wood anemones

**Wood Anemones** (*Anemone nemerosa*) and **Lesser**



Lt.: Goat Willow catkins, Rt: Lesser Celandine



**Celandines** (*Ranunculus ficaria*) can be spotted in the woods and look out for **Blackthorn** flowers appearing in hedges. The bursting catkins of the **Goat Willow** (*Salix caprea*), or pussy willow, are also a familiar sight in hedgerows in early spring.