

# Little Ouse Headwaters Project

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## **Birdswing: how Garboldisham Primary School Children became birds!**

**Garboldisham Primary School, Years 3, 4, 5 & 6  
and the Goldfinch Foundation (formerly Opera Unlimited)**



**The Goldfinch  
Foundation**



*The children are going to have a direct experience of nature but with a new slant*

*They are going to use listening and singing skills along with technology to create extraordinary performances of birdsong*

The Birdswing team worked with Garboldisham Primary for three days in June 2013.





*On Broomscot Common we recorded all the bird noises we could. We used a massive dome-like thing with a huge microphone in the middle. It was amazing.*

*We used so much hi-tech equipment - including Smartphones, iPods and cameras.*





*The most extrovert chiffchaff in the world sang from a hawthorn near the pond. All the children got a really good look at him.*

*We took pictures and made notes of where we made our recordings. One group heard a yellow hammer and a woodpecker and saw them fly away.*





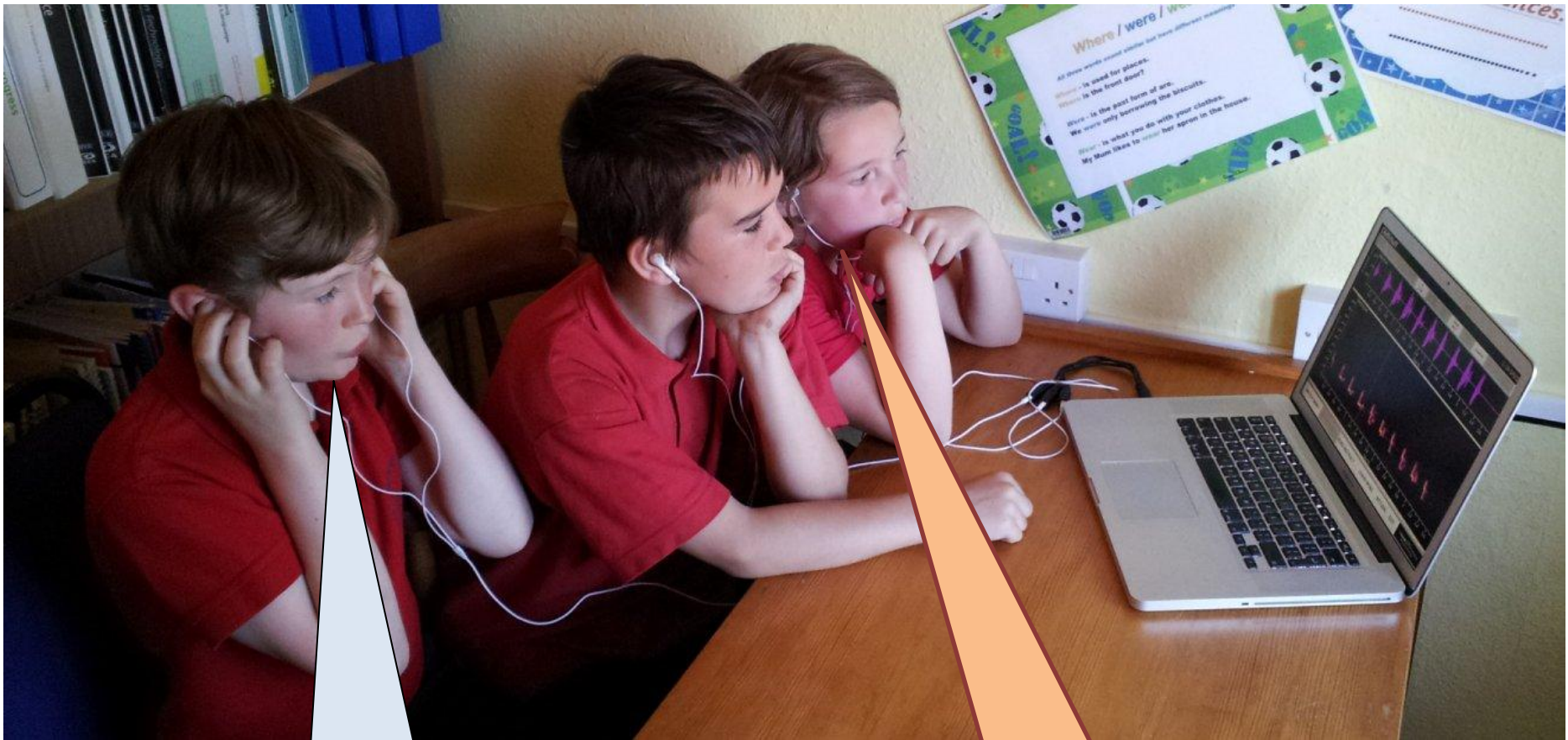
*Software made the bird song recordings into visible patterns – ‘spectrographs’ – so the children could hear and see the sounds.*



*The songs were slowed right down and we imitated them. The Birdswing team recorded our singing.*



*It was really fun trying to sing like the birds. It made us laugh.*



*It was good to be using recordings we had made ourselves.*

*When they speeded us up - it turned our voices into very beautiful yet realistic birdsong.*



*It went brilliantly! It captured the imagination of everyone. Even children not directly involved were very interested and it is a real talking point. It was very inclusive and enjoyable for all.*

*The Birdswing people go round to different schools and communities to demonstrate how amazing birds can be.*

*The project uses the fascination of technology to make children want to go out and find wildlife to record and observe.*

*There was a near-riot of laughter when the speeded-up videos were played to the whole school on the final afternoon.*

*We were very struck by the children's knowledge of the Common, their pride in the work they've done there and their sense of ownership.*

*Rosie Johnston, Birdswing's artistic director*





**Want to hear  
how well they did  
my song?**

Hear me and  
the children's version  
at

[http://www.digitalglue.org/2013/06/  
slow-sweet-and-low-down.html](http://www.digitalglue.org/2013/06/slow-sweet-and-low-down.html)

Greenfinch