WILDERNESS TRACKS - EPISODE 4
PHILL JUPITUS

SPEAKERS
Phill Jupitus, Geoff Bird

Geoff Bird 00:09
Welcome to Wilderness Tracks recorded at the Timber Festival in the National Forest. And each edition a writer, artist or musician tells me Jeff bird about six songs that somehow connect them with nature. Today is the turn of one of Britain's best loved comedians, sometimes artists and of course, veteran of 28 series of the music show. Never Mind the Buzzcocks, Phill Jupitus.

Phill Jupitus 00:32
Hello, nice.This is the first ever half timbered tent I've played. Don't normally do half timbered tents. I've done a half timbered pubs, and I've been a friend of mine used to have a Morris traveller. This is what this is like. This is this is like a stone age Morris traveller, isn't it really? But imagine if Morris travellers we used to go to the new world. And we were all in one going across the Atlantic. Sorry, festival. I get whimsical.

Geoff Bird 01:10
Keep going. we'll forget this.

Phill Jupitus 01:13
Geoff was just backstage. And he went to want to come with me, shall I just because he sounds a bit like John Chatworth, or shall I just introduce you. And I went, I went your shout, mate, what do you want to? I'll tell you what, I'll introduce you. Alright, brilliant, brilliant. He went, I don't want to see you walking by. I don't want to see you walking by while I'm introducing you. And it reminded me of that - there's a Peter O'Toole story where Peter O'Toole goes out drinking with a fellow actor. And they go out in the afternoon. They get absolutely leathered. And Peter O'Toole goes, 'Shall we you and see a play. Let's go and see a play'. And so Peter O'Toole, and these may go into see this play. And they're sat there in the stalls completely smashed. And then the plays going on. And there's this bit. And then Peter O'Toole leans across to his mate.

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As the play starts. He goes, this is a very good bit. It's this is where I come on. And he's so drunk, he didn't go to his own play, but he went to see it so. So shall we, shall we?

Geoff Bird 02:17
Is it Is that true? Is your primary motivation and doing all the many, many things that you've done? Is it to get as rich as creases? Or is it to keep your life interesting?

Phill Jupitus 02:27
It's not to get rich, trust me. It's a short attention span. It's because I grew up with Tex Avery and Warner Brothers cartoons, it's because I'm quite used to the pace of life that the coyote and Roadrunner live. So it's like Bang, bang, bang, bang, do the next thing. My life has been sponsored by the Acme Corporation. No, I think it's been a very drifty kind of life of what comes along. Let's have a go at that. That has been a very reactive, ill thought through career that has worked quite well. You know, I've not planned any of it seriously. And quite honestly, I've said this to people, they never believe me when I say if they'd said to me, oh, right here's a telly job and you can be on this show for 18 years. I go, I don't want to do that. It just happened that way. And it happened naturally. And every year I thought it would be cancelled. And it wasn't, and they went do you want to do it next year. I went well, I've got nothing else on, alright. So that was just what it was. Geoff exaggerated. He said 476 series, that would have been a stretch, because there are only 286 episodes. So that's - math doesn't work there. But yeah, I was on all but one of the Buzzcocks and I have got the record for most guest appearances on QI. Yes. So do not applaud. It's television, it is the worst of media. Apart from Twitter.

Geoff Bird 03:51
I think of you as an urban man, an urbane man, certainly. And that's a misconception probably. And I'm wondering, well you live by the sea, you've lived by the sea for years. Where does nature fit into your life? And in to your worldview and you know, how does it sit?

Phill Jupitus 04:12
I was born on the Isle of Wight so that there's that straightaway there's that kind of island mentality - that's the fact that you're born - so you're on the Isle of Wight so the sea is like your moat from the rest of the world. And that very much is the mindset of the people on the Isle of Wight. It's them against the world and it very much is. They kind of look at - they look at you know the the mainlanders with a real kind of... when

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they go over there and and when they give me that look, I just say I was born in Newport hospital - shut up. So it's a very strange outlook that they have but so I was near the sea. I was in boats from a very, very young age with my stepdad around the island. I used to fish and given to understand when I was three years old, I caught a one and three quarter pound dab. Hey. So I used to do sea fishing when I was a kid. And then I went on to do course fishing, when, from the age of 12. To about till girls arrived.

Geoff Bird 05:21
Sweary fishing.

Phill Jupitus 05:25
It was the way I did it. Yeah, so course fishing is just that - it's pointless because it's getting them out and go, Oh, that's nice and then put it back in. And so why not just not ruin the fish's day and know that they're in there without actually yanking them out by their throat. So I stopped doing that. Honestly the loveliest fish, a Tench is a lake fish is absolutely beautiful. It's an orange green colour. It was known in folklore as the doctor fish. Not for any healing reason. It's just because they have a big silver thing about there on their head. And "they will see you now". Yeah, and so I used to catch them and go oh he's beautiful. And then one day I suddenly thought I've ruined your day. So I stopped fishing when I was 16 because I got a girlfriend, and she was vegetarian. And she changed a lot of things about me. That took me a good three years to change back. It was a long and tiresome process. She'll never forget my first Findus lasagna. After five years of pressured vegetarianism.

Geoff Bird 06:35
In the days when vegetarianism was rubbish.

Phill Jupitus 06:37
Oh, in the days when vegetarianism was cheese, cheese, cheese sandwiches, or the phrase or the phrase from friend's mums, "would you like some quiche", I'm like it's got it's got there's ham in it - "it's only a bit of ham, you can pick it out, there's just a bit of ham, pick it out". And tartex as well, does anyone from the old days remember tartex vegetarian pate. And let me tell you, if push comes to shove at Glastonbury in the late 1970s, you will brush your teeth with it. So mushroomy,

Geoff Bird 07:15

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I follow you on Instagram, and you do take some beautiful shots of the landscape. So I'm wondering whether you have learned a love for the landscape, for the environment around you, in visual sense, or have your always felt like that? A methodist version of the phone.

Phill Jupitus 07:31
I think yeah, it's the more - as you travel more and you get older, in the end, it's just that kind of the the breathtaking and lyrical nature of scenery, you know. When I went to Australia for the first time, and I got taken out of Melbourne, and was walking around the sort of what they call the bush and there's no bushes. But the fact that the dirt in Australia, the soil, the general colour of soil in Australia is red. So you've got, so the sun is on the other side of the planet bouncing off Earth, that's a different colour. So the colour of the air, the colour of the landscape, the light being reflected off the ground is different on the landscape that it is hitting. And so your whole palette is different. And that was reflected by the work of Australian artists. If you go to any of the national galleries in Australia, and you can see the arc of Australian art because what happens is the first artists that go over there a Europeans and they're trying to use a European palate to describe southern hemisphere light, which is all wrong. And then there's just a point where the first, you know, the first immigrants artists to Australia, you know, the the occupiers, when they kind of start getting their hand on it. And they go 'Oh, it looks like this'. And then you look at Aboriginal art, which is all those earth tones and browns and colours and yellows, the browns, the reds, the blacks of the world that they'd grown up in and so they start reflecting that and it's an extraordinary arc of progress, you know, anywhere you go in the world. You look at the indigenous art, and you look at the art of the people that came in, and eventually the one is subsumed by the other in terms of its, its grammar. And so yeah, and so I, I tend to see landscapes in nature through the prism of how they're represented by others initially, but obviously, when you go and you stand in it, I mean at the Grand Canyon, and that was - when you stand on the edge of that and you look at it, and you just you know, I'm not a religious man, but then you start to get a bit Wow and then you shake that off and go, nobody made this. This just happened which is makes it even more brilliant to me is that it just happened. That river down there, did this, when you're looking at it. It's absolutely the most brilliant thing. I really like physical geography. When I was a kid, it being described to me, you know. Oxbow lakes, oxbow lakes, what a brilliant thing is a river becomes so claggy, that it forms these bendy lakes that are just next to each other. Oh man, I love that. Glacial erratics, which is massive rocks of one particular type carried 1000s of miles by glacier and then dumped in the middle of Yorkshire. And it's the wrong sort of rock

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because it's come from Iceland. Absolutely fantastic. Things like that, you know, the physicality of geography, you know, and how it happened and how it's ended up there. And then you're looking at it. And then you got the sun and clouds doing a light show on a physically brilliant thing. And where I live now I'm on the north shore of the fourth estuary in Fife. And I took - you can see them on my Instagram, which is Philip Jupitus 5276, you have to go back a few months, I took four photographs in the space of half an hour of the sun going down. And it's four completely different skies in the space of 30 minutes. I mean, totally different from black to almost no cloud to weird to red. Amazing, you know, and that's it. You can't not be affected by the beauty around you. And I just think we're so - there's so much of you know, there's so much of this crap going on. We see so much of the world through these things. We need to look up there. What was it that I said, there's that it's terrible to quote this, but there's a film called Ready Player One. And at the end of it, plot spoiler. There's a bit where they switch off the internet for one day a week. And I think that'll be brilliant. Switch it off, all of it, all over the world. no internet, no internet Thursday. And then we just have to get on like we used.

Phill Jupitus 11:56
I like I like the idea of Amish Twitter, which is post-it pads and a biro. You just write your thoughts and you leave them.

Geoff Bird 12:06
"You're a bastard".

Phill Jupitus 12:12
"Raised a barn".

Geoff Bird 12:17
You mentioned clouds a minute ago. Yeah. And I'm gonna use that as a crowbar into what we're meant to be doing. Which is music and your first choice of tracks.

Phill Jupitus 12:29
Which we opening with this? You're mad bird. You're insane.

Geoff Bird 12:35
Let's do it.

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Phill Jupitus 12:37
We're gunna get thumpy. And you're going to be want to phone a bloke back at home and a phone call you wish you've made before this festival. Once you start hearing this.

Geoff Bird 13:02
They want to hear you talk, they know the bloody song.

Phill Jupitus 13:42
They know this is just as well. He didn't get thumpy because people would have been Oh, yeah, I remember that. Yeah. Oh dear. There's my 1990s before I became an accountant.

Geoff Bird 13:52
what I love about this song it marries up Ricky Lee Jones, Sergio Leone, Ennio Moriccone. Yeah. And you and yours. The great John Waithe is the person who opened that and it's just brilliant. Yeah. Why did you pick it?

Phill Jupitus 14:11
I'm a huge, huge You and Yours. I love You and Yours. Me and mine when I'm listening to it? Yeah, it's just it's it's very just um, clouds. It's just like clouds. I wanted a clouds song in their hand to have a cloud song and it was the this one that springs to mind. My mum is a member there is somewhere and she showed me the badge there is a Cloud Appreciation Society. I don't know if we've got any members in but I mean if we have I'll be surprised because apparently is only about 30 of them. And but my mom is one of them. And it is you there if you got your badge on, but then you're just you're a lightweight You know, my mom would slap the back of your leg son. Yes. I remember as a kid. I actually remember that kind of lying on your back - so what used to do in the game he used to play - this is good fun. You're young, you should do this. When the sun's out. And there's good wind and there's clouds. You lay on your back and you look up. And you pretend that the earth is driving. So the clouds aren't moving the earth is moving - freaks you out. Yeah, so I used to do that when I was kid. And then of course, the other game is what does the clouds look like - shapes? The shapes game, which is terrific, fun. But anyway, not to be an environment you know, but I think clouds are different from when I was a kid. I certainly see now lots more rare clouds. And things like horsehair Cirrus, very, very rare when I was a boy. I've got a book on on clouds that I used to read. And it said, Oh, yeah, horsetail Cirrus, you very, very rarely see that. Cirrostratus. It also very rare. All the time now. You see them all the time now. And so

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that that, to me is the fact that skies look different from when I was a kid is always. I've had a certainly in the last 10 years - that sky looks wrong to me. But anyway, you know, they're still pretty at the end of the day. Thank you global warming.

Geoff Bird 16:20
I've not heard of this as a marker of climate change. Does anybody know? Is there any research on this?

Phill Jupitus 16:28
Geoff is a journalist. And so whenever I make outlandish claims, he will try to substantiate them.

Geoff Bird 16:34
Now I will try and make a programme about them.

Phill Jupitus 16:37
Yeah, but no. Yeah, clouds are just - What's the brilliant thing about being on the north shore of the fourth is seeing different weather 11 miles away, I mean, completely different weather. There was one time when I was sat, in bright sunshine on a warm day, and the South southern shore of the fourth - snow. I mean, literally and they had three foot of snow. And I'm like, that's the power of geography and the fact that you know, the rising moisture will hold weather back on that shore. I mean, that as those of you that know, that the North Shore, the prevailing weather in the UK, Northern shores of East Coast, estuaries are quite dry, because the nature of the way that moisture and clouds work. So Shewburyness is statistically one of the driest places in the UK, and the East Nuke of Fife, where I live also has a microclimate. So I have driven from the fourth bridge east through Fife and you're looking at like a hole in the cloud. You know, very often you'll see this extraordinary thing and so that's, that's what I love is the actual physical beauty and the quirks of climate and weather and geography.

Geoff Bird 17:45
I'm not a religious man either. But you know, encountering nature not even the big stuff, doesn't have to be at Grand Canyon to give you a sense or awe sometimes and I wondered, do you the moments where I kind of start not doubting my doubt but having a bit of a waiver or wobble yeah is usually in encountering trees or whatever it might be landscape or clouds. Your framing this very much in geographic terms. Do you kind of believe into a spiritual sense of yourself and the world and your place in it?

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Phill Jupitus 18:21
Not so much about that as we're here to observe. You know, there was a comedian called Bill Hicks and said 'Our job is to name things' - that's our only job on the planet because we got language. That was only job is to name things rather than to violate and exploit things but you know, apparently we got that wrong. Yeah, I like that. I just like looking at stuff. I've got a lot of trees in my garden. I don't know what they're called. And I've made a set myself a task to find out what sort of trees there are in my garden. I'm not good on plants. I used to be good on birds in the 1970s when I was a lightweight birdwatcher, and I did bird watching mostly for the sandwiches. Nothing I enjoyed more than the prep for a bird watching expedition with Antony Lester. When we go down the Warren and my sandwiches were superb.

Geoff Bird 19:19
What did you have on them?

Phill Jupitus 19:22
Cheese and pickle. The 70s. Classic. No. panion. Yeah. Yeah, memory lane. Not as good as sandwich bread and yen pickle. Yeah, absolutely loved it. And coops and morphants is to look at a lot of coops and more hens, and swans. And then there was what was that myth that a swan once made its beak stiff and went through a bloke like a javelin. In Essex, we were more brutal than that. Oh, that could break your arm with a wing. No, in Essex, they can make their neck stiff, fly at you and go through you. And yet, only the Queen can eat them? That seems unfair. I think she has them for breakfast. When do you have swan? Does she have it once a year? "Where's me nuggets?" Do you think she has Swan nuggets?

Geoff Bird 20:27
Swan Vesta curry.

Phill Jupitus 20:28
Ladies and gentlemen, Geoff Bird, Radio Four, You and Yours. Ad hoc basis. Now you know why?

Geoff Bird 20:38
It's true. You mentioned naming. Yeah. I can't name a lot of things in nature, I sometimes feeling embarrassed. And there's a strain in kind of nature writing - a kind of

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blokey thing I'm pretty sure where everyone is so determined to show off how many rare species they know. Just because I don't know, beyond oak and Sycamore I feel like I'm I'm meant to feel insecure about that.

Phill Jupitus 21:06
It's like collecting, it's like anything, the enthusiasts are the people and the obsessives who get in. It's like there's something about the joy of discovery I think that we need to kind of embrace as we get older and as we move through life there's no shame in not knowing all the - there's no shame in not knowing - there's nothing but fun to be had in finding out and if you want to know the name of something then then go find it out but you know that doesn't - the fact that you don't know what it is doesn't in any way you know, blemish you're enjoying of it.

Geoff Bird 21:35
Here we are championing ignorance.

Phill Jupitus 21:38
It's not ignorance. It's it's ignorance is only the potential for learning and I think that's a good thing. It's people going I don't want to know what the name of that is - that proper ignorane, you know. I went to I went to the Isle of Mull. I highly recommend a visit, I don't recommend gigging there. Died on my arse. Obviously, they were not ready for my cheeky stylings. Or in fact, it's not that, it's so much that there is so excited that I was there, they drank so much of their local whiskey they were just not playable to. Alot of very, very drunk people go "Yeah!" - that's not a gig. That's, that's a ceilidh without a dance beat. So, but I did meet a lovely man called Dave who works for the RSPB who took me to see the sea eagles on Mull and that was unbelievable and that's the first time I've ever been shown by a proper RSPB birdwatcher how you watch them. And it requires a lot of patience, standing around and being very, very still. But it pays off in the end because I saw a sea eagle defending its nest from vandal crows, and the lady sea eagle feeding a chick. But it was like 200 metres away, and it was on a tiny scope thing. And one of the most amazing things I've seen in my life and a sea eagle. The wingspan is the size of that screen. They're like a surfboard. They're absolutely huge, bigger than Golden Eagles - third biggest eagle in the world. Absolutely extraordinary. And there's three of them on mobile. So if you ever go up there, make sure you got the golf course to look at the Eagles. Not those eagles, the flying ones, because it is on the golf course. So you know, there's a lot of confusion if you're an ornithologist on a golf course.

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Geoff Bird 23:34
Should we move on?

Phill Jupitus 23:35
I think so.

Geoff Bird 23:37
We're gonna go from eagles to fish. Track number two, yeah.

Phill Jupitus 24:33
Is that song number two, so don't worry. It's not all techno nature songs. I find them very restful, I like aquariums. What I like even more is seeing them out in the wild. I was lucky enough when touring Scotland two years ago to actually see trout jumping up a waterfall, salmon apologise. Salmon jumping a waterfall which is which is mad to see it in real life. Because thing is you're so used to seeing it on telly, right? That you just kind of you're just like that can't be real. Oh, I've never seen that in my life. And I'm on a bridge in the middle of the highlands watching salmon, jumping up a waterfall and the most amazing things. The first time you see one it's just like, that can't have been, and then they're in the air swimming up the waterfall, and I was just thinking is this is why and I nearly wrote a letter to Nicola Sturgeon after that visit, going, I think they should introduce bears to Scotland. I think that's the only thing that would make salmon jumping up waterfalls better is bears. Bears with - trained bears with harpoons.

Geoff Bird 25:47
Or swans.

Phill Jupitus 25:48
Oh, bears with swans. Oh, pardon me for laughing, I've not heard that before either. Oh, marvellous.

Geoff Bird 25:59
I'm gonna take a left turn. Mr. scruff? Who's the person behind?

Phill Jupitus 26:05
Yes. And then Brian Kent was on that as well. Brian can of a Playschool was one of the voices.

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Geoff Bird 26:10
You've had John Wait. Brian Kennedy with all the luminaries of the BBC TV. Mr. Scruff is a cartoonist. Did you know that? All of his visual stuff is his. You yourself are, one of the 1000 things that Phil does and has done, is draw cartoons. And you take it very seriously. You've done it years and years and years. Yeah. And you told me earlier on you are about to embark, is this private? You're going to do a four year degree?

Phill Jupitus 26:46
Yeah. In going back to university.

Geoff Bird 26:48
Going to do art.

Phill Jupitus 26:52
Don't applaud that. Please applaud. Oh, no, no, right. No, it's I just think, I think he's quite important that, you know, because I've been doing I've had a lovely time doing doing this job, which is just being an idiot for money. And, but it's always niggled me at the back of my mind that I never went to university. And so I thought, well, why not go. And so I've decided to have my years of poverty at the end of my career, rather than at the beginning. So I decided to have the struggle at the end. What was so gorgeous was that the university two days ago sent me an email offering me student accommodation. I've been on telly for 20 years. Yeah. Okay. I'll take a room in halls. Phoning my wife asking her to send me money. Phoning my mum.

Geoff Bird 27:42
Taking your washing home.

Phill Jupitus 27:44
Oh, yeah, I might do that. I might fly down to my mum. Hiya mum. She's 80 imagine her face. Do me laundry. What?

Geoff Bird 27:55
Is it? Actually your true love? In fact?

Phill Jupitus 28:01

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Yeah. There's something about whenever I've been away from it, and I come back to doing art. I did my first exhibition, this year of new work. I mean that they had an exhibition of all my old cartoons in Lee-on-Sea, about 10 years ago. And this year, Cooper Arts Festival had 24 of my pieces up there and that was fun. I do collage work now. I do cartoons as well still. I did one for the List, which is a magazine in Scotland. Robin Enscombe. You do one the lovely Eggs punk band got me to do one. It's the cartooning I quite like because it's immediate and quick and fun to do.

Geoff Bird 28:44
Yeah. Okay. hard hitting in journalistic question here. Yeah, a world without music or a world without art - which would you take?

Phill Jupitus 28:57
That's a tough one, isn't it? I think art, right now frame of mind. I'll take silence. I'll take silence and looking at stuff. Am I allowed to hum?

Geoff Bird 29:08
Off-beat maybe? Yeah.

Phill Jupitus 29:11
Imagine me now in an art gallery. Right. I change my mind music. So no, yeah, no. I find art just fascinating. The progress of it, the way that it goes, its progression. It's so brilliant. I'm big into the Dadaists. And there's a very, very good book by an artist and author called Hans Richter, called 'Dada, art and anti-art'. I recommend you reading it, because if you read it, it'll explain how punk happened. It'll explain how Isambard Kingdom Brunel happened, and explain how the industrial revolution happened. That kind of explosion of ideas among a group of people that spreads out straightaway. And it's just remarkable. And they were bats. They were absolutely mad. And you find out things, you know, like Marcel Duchamp really didn't do the urinal. It was a female artist instead, wasn't it? Someone else? So, you know, it's like, yeah, it was indeed. So yeah, I like I just love the, the, the progress of it and their creativity, you know that what they do, how they do it, their method, what inspires them, and you see some works of art, and it just breaks you inside. It's just marvellous. And so creating art is a next thing for me, you know?

Geoff Bird 30:48

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If you were to name one, visual artists working today that we should all go out and find that we might not already know about, who would you champion?

30:58
Sidney Nolan, he's an Australia - oh he's not living today he's dead. But really check out Sidney Nolan's work. Absolutely brilliant and it kind of impressionistic, bold, wild, slightly mad and very Australian, really Australian. He did some great mad bits about Ned Kelly, that are really, really worth looking at. And it's very, very vibrant work as a starting point, look up his self portrait of himself. And look at that face. Look in those eyes. And tell me you don't want to see the rest of his work. absolutely wonderful. Sidney Nolan, the Australian artist. And as for working today, Louise Bourgeois, I think is wonderful. Is she I thought she gone yet, as Bourgeois gone anyone know? I thought she was still around. She's gone. Oh, no, I didn't realise. So Kusama, then Japanese girl, she I love her stuff, those dots and things, I find that really, really compelling. And yeah, I like Grayson, he makes me laugh. always makes me laugh. I love that standing in front of a big posh looking pot. And then seeing dirty words on them.

Geoff Bird 32:12
Makes you think as well.

Phill Jupitus 32:15
Those shows he did on Channel Four were brilliant. He really upsets them and when they actually see the work. They're like, you can't say that. Well, because you said it. Brilliant, fabulous fun.

Geoff Bird 32:28
We need to move on to the next track. Should we just play it?

Phill Jupitus 33:29
Anyone know what that was? Oh, boom, there is straightaway, XTC - Summers cauldron. If If someone abroad said to me, I'd like you to send me three things that are England to you. Three sounds I would send them Test match special. Right just a recording a test match special but while Brian Johnson was still alive, I would send them Jerusalem by blank, and anything by XTC. I think XTC sound like England. I think they sound like the English countryside. I think the location - them coming from Swindon, which is on the M4, is on the main Great Western Railway. So they were they were this town in the middle of constant motion. And around them is all this beauty. And

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not only that history, they're not that far from Stonehenge. There's chalk, you know, horses on the side of hills, it's rolling hills, its fields. It's pastoral, it's beautiful, it's really really hot because it's really lovely because it's the best country and I just think Andy Partridge is the most underrated English songwriter ever. I just think his work is beyond parallel, is absolutely magnificent. And I know Andy and he is mad as a bottle of chips. He properly is, really. I remember him once coming to a gig. "I don't like sitting in crowds. So can I come and watch you from the side of the stage" and I had to do a whole gig where I'm there to the audience and the bloke who wrote 'senses working overtime' is in the wing laughing is crabs off, it's just like, it's a really weird room to play. So, you know, yeah, a marvellous man and they're a wonderful band and it really, whenever I hear them, obviously I live in Scotland now and because I know England very well, and um, it's about time I went somewhere new. But it does make me go "Yeah, England was great". Great. And it is fun. It's brilliant. It is trees. It is grass. It is heat. It is picnics. It is wasps on your sandwiches. It is all those things, it is falling in the pond when your four and your family pulling you out and laughing - as they did used to you. I mean, you could have drowned But no, they're like get out of their.

Geoff Bird 35:51
He talks about the summer as having a sound. Yeah, the drone.

Phill Jupitus 36:00
I was in Glastonbury last weekend and there is a you know, aside from the thudding for 24 hours a day there is that- the hot English countryside does have that kind of there's a noise to the heat isn't there, there is it's perfectly captured, isn't it? It's absolutely lovely. Yeah.

Geoff Bird 36:17
Yeah. In a little bit of prep I did do for this - Andy Partridge said pastoral to me being means being more in touch with the country than the city, which I think we are. London gives me the willies. You know, it's easy to be down on cities and towns spaces. And most of us live there. Do you feel that kind of split as you've kind of moved?

Phill Jupitus 36:42
I find London more pleasant now I'm not there so much. So to visit. Oh, it's lovely. But also I find it much busier than it used to be. I mean, properly mad. The tube all day is now like the rush hour. That that is a truism for me certainly, I don't know if I'm going the wrong bits. But it's really busy. There used to be quiet patches during the Tube

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because I know because I brought my daughter up in East London when she was born. And I used to take her out for day trips and there was - after 10am, there's no bugger on the tubes. It's great. We just used to sit there and it's brilliant. You know, there's nothing more fun when you're a stay at home dad than the Circle Line. "So daddy long are we on this train?" "Till daddy's woken up?"

Geoff Bird 37:25
And we are running out of time, we could talk about that for a long time. It's a fantastic song, but we're gonna move on to track four. Which is going to be talking about seaside. 10 points for anyone who can - who Sorry?

Phill Jupitus 38:30
No, no. Okay, and now the link between that record and Stiff Records. Jone Lewie, thank you very much, sir. We've got some proper nerds in tonight. Well done. Yeah. Jona Lewie, Terry Dactyl and the Dinosaurs. Well done, sir. You win a Zob stick, which is that thing which was a broomstick that you use the nail bottle tops too. And so a few bands had chopsticks. I had a chat with Danny Baker about this. And we were trying to remember all of the singles that had Zob sticks on them. We had that one straight away and apparently there is one one other we can remember that. It just makes that rattling noise. Great fun. Great fun. Yeah, yeah. Just the seaside, the British seaside. What a colossal disappointment the British seaside is. But how irresistible it is, you know? I mean, living living as I did on the north shore of the Thames for many years in Leigh-on-Sea, the fact that you know, there is beach, there's 18 inches of beach, and then there's two miles a mud and the tide comes in an awful long way and then goes down even further every time. And there's something about that slow rhythm of the tide coming in and out that I've always, always been drawn to. But you know, pier, kiss me quick hats, rock. This year at Glastonbury, they did a Glastonbury-on-sea with a pier and the beach, which I didn't get to sadly, but a mate said they're selling rock with Glastonbury-on-sea. They had an entire seafront, which I thought was genius. Yeah, I just, there's something about - when you go to there's a uniform look of British seaside towns because so many of them came in the Victorian era, you know? And it was like the uniform look of spa towns when you go to Tunbridge Wells and Harrogate. You think of these that really similar and it's because they, they sprouted up at the same time. It's a lot of big Victorian hotels. There's a band called The Delays, they had a brilliant album called faded seaside glamour and I think that a lot of the UK coast has that you know, and it's only, when you think that cheap flights are what kind of did for the British seaside holiday, working class people in cities used to go out to British

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seaside towns to spend their holidays there. I know for a fact that Southend-on-sea used to have a colossal influx of people from the northwest, so people from Liverpool and Manchester would go to bloody South End for their holidays as a treat when they got Blackpool up the road you know even closer but oh no, let's go to Southend.

Geoff Bird 41:01
Costa Brava

Phill Jupitus 41:03
Yeah, there's something about - I mean Southend on sea if you do go there, the longest I love the fact that call it pleasure pier in the world. I'd watch that describing word I really would, but it's got a train on it. And that's fun to go on, particularly if you're a train spotter. And also, the Rossi's ice cream parlour was built in the 1950s and is exactly the same as it was in the 50s. And Rossi's ice cream is pretty good.

Geoff Bird 41:38
Gingers Emporium.

Phill Jupitus 41:41
Ask her for the Chilton crack. Seriously, Gingers ice cream van, I'm not joking. Once you start, you will not stop. It's like the Pringles of ice cream. It's absolutely lovely stuff.

Geoff Bird 41:55
You mentioned Mungo Jerry, but it seems to me - You're a great champion of a certain kind of offbeat, quirky might be the wrong word. But certainly storytelling tradition in music is kind of sniffed out by a lot of music journalists and so on. And there's that sniffines that presumably gets right on your wick, or do you just not care?

Phill Jupitus 42:28
The thing is, is there's so much, especially now we're in a sort of post internet world where everyone comments and everything. And so I now kind of ignore the comments really, what people say about things if they're like, Well, here's why that's a bad thing. I enjoy it. And so you have to kind of just take your simple pleasures and not focus too much on what people reckon of something you like - here's why you liking Ian Dury is wrong. And I can't be done with that, you know, life's too short. So, and I like songs that make me laugh and smile. And it's interesting that you know, there's never been an outright comedy film has ever won the Oscar for Best Movie. Comedy films are

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amazing. What's up doc? Good grief. Why didn't Blazing Saddles, not gest best movie Blazing Saddles - plenty of examples there. There'll be you know, there'll be you know, Chaplin movies, things like that. You know, but I think humour is something that really speaks to me. I love Jake Thackery when I was growing up, you know, Victoria Woods songs. Storytelling songs, you inhabit someone else's world. It's beautiful. Yeah.

Geoff Bird 43:40
The seaside thing I think is really interesting. We often think of - we're in a wood, in the green countryside, we often think of the countryside, the environment when we talk about nature as a green rolling thing and the coast doesn't really get look-in often.

Phill Jupitus 44:00
The thing is, is now I'm in Scotland, there's a lot more - the woods go right up to the water. I saw it a lot less being down south and in Essex and everything where there seems that all the woods and everything seemed to thin out but in Scotland, quite often. There's an amazing beach if you ever get the chance. So we've got some Andrews, you go to Tentsmuir beach in Fife, which is I am not joking - that was one of the most beautiful beaches you'll ever visit in the UK, Tentsmuir beach, absolutely extraordinary. So you park your car in the middle of the woods and then you go over a set of dunes and the beach is about four miles long. And the tide just goes - just beach it's just just you never seen such big sky in your life. The sky is huge and you're just on this thing. And then you turn around and there's a pine forest right behind you and which has also got another sea eagle in it. But I'm given to understand by Dave from the RSPB then not breeding in Fife this year, which is a great shame. But there are two sea eagle at Tentsmuir beach. So there you go - giving you tips as I go along for places to visit.

Geoff Bird 45:09
I heard there was one eagle in Wales that lived alone for about 20. Don Henley lives in Cardiff. We've got two more songs. And we've only got 15 minutes. And I really want to get to the last one particularly. But that's not to understate the second to last which is this. He's smiling over there. He knows the answer already. Rezillos - Destination Venus.

Phill Jupitus 46:34
Why did I pick it? And we're done. That's quite right, sir, not why I picked it. But thank you. The sky, the stars the night. I so. So I always like it. What a lot where I am now, in five years, there's not a lot of light pollution, it's quite properly dark. If you're somewhere

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where there's no light pollution. And it's a clear night, on an average clear night, you'll see the outer arm of the Milky Way, which looks like a dusty cloud running right down the sky. And it's one of the most extraordinary things. First time I ever saw it and had it pointed out to me properly was when I was 20 years old. I was in Greece on holiday. And we were sleeping on the roof of a mate's house in Leona. And, and someone said, 'Oh, yeah, that's that's the Milky Way'. And it's not a spiral. Yeah, we're in the spiral. So we're in that bit of a spiral, and we're looking out, and that is the outer arm of it. And it's just space dust. Not the fun sort. And I just love that late last year. Venus was incredibly bright in the morning. I mean, insanely bright, and very, very low in the southern sky. But about four in the morning. And this is the only time I've been grateful for having a 57 year old bladder that gets me up in the middle of the night. Is that you get up and you're standing there, you know, and my bathroom? What can I say in a very ill considered window location. But while I'm standing there, I can see out the window. Don't worry, I've got rising blinds so people can't see in. But I'm there and I'm like What is that? I thought it was like a plane coming in to land. Or a helicopter? No, it's bloody Venus set. And there was a point I think it was - might have been spring this year, might have been autumn last year, Jupiter was really, really visible. And I've got a telescope now. So I can be ready for these occasions when they happen. That's probably never again, because this thing is these marvellous, you know, astronomical things happen. And they are great. Brilliant are what's that when it happens next year, and then you read the paper and it says, This is the only time this will be seen for the next 4000 years. And they don't make a big deal of it before. They tell you afterwards and you're like, Whoa, well, I can't wait that long. So yeah, so I'm braced for looking at things now. I used to love that the lunar eclipse we had a couple of months ago was dynamite, your blood moon. Fantastic.

Geoff Bird 47:52
I bought my wife, Sarah, some astronomical binoculars so we could look at Venue for her birthday this year. It was brilliant, but we can't pick them up they're so big, huge. So by the time we've lifted up, it's morning,

Phill Jupitus 49:36
Yeah, so I got an RSPB scope that I got bought for my birthday this year. And if you look at planets with it, it says that it's not a bird. So it's very judgy binocular - monocular. What are they called? I don't know whatever, one of them.

Geoff Bird 49:50

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Yeah. You mentioned you would take silence earlier on. You did it with some relish. And you're talking about looking out at the arm of the Milky Way. Compared to the hustle and bustle of your early life when you were doing 1000 things and now you're kind of moving into this phase of concentrating on art - how far is it true to say that there's a settling in your life now?

Phill Jupitus 50:25
I don't know, I suppose with having such a fake life. That's what showbiz is. It's an artificial status. It's an artificial - it's a weird job, entertainments not real job. You know, I've found it difficult to view that although, recently, you know, some friends said no, you weren't - Oh, don't worry, don't panic. You were good at it, don't worry. But you kind of it's you want to - I've certainly been aware of, I'm quite looking forward to the down slopes of the career one, which I'm definitely in now. When Buzzcocks got cancelled, I was delighted my bank manager less so. It was great because it's kind of - I'm slowly fading. Nice. Like a favourite picture left in the sun. Which is just the ticket you know, that will do me perfectly well.

Geoff Bird 51:10
But it's making that bit interesting that counts.

Phill Jupitus 51:12
Yeah, I think so. And then when you're on the downslope it's like, you know, all I need now is a bowl of porridge in the morning and a bit of Haddock at tea time. And that I'd be happy with that and a set of some Pritt sticks and some scissors and a scalpel and a cutting mat and loads and loads of old magazines and that's me happy for the rest of my life. I can absolutely assure you of that.

Geoff Bird 51:38
We're gonna have our final track we could talk forever but last track. This is the fourth time we've done a Wilderness Track and my daughter's down here, my youngest daughter's, so excited. "Dad Dad we're finally recognise a song". It was like the old gag but there's somebody on the Muppets show we know, let's have it first.

Phill Jupitus 52:33
Oh, nice fade.

Geoff Bird 52:37

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Wake him up at this point. We made a programme about two turns ago, there was one of the high points of my career, most enjoyable experience.

Phill Jupitus 52:49
We got to talk to Rankin Roger - Neville from the Specials.

Geoff Bird 52:59
This song from Keep on Moving, which I think is really underrated. You wrote the liner notes?

Phill Jupitus 53:03
Yes, I did. I did do this. The sleeve notes are a couple of Madness reissues. Yeah, because I just - keep moving - this came out this this some of the rain is not on keep moving, but it came he came out around the same time and it's on the reissue because it was the single that came out when keep moving. Some of them it came out just after keep moving. Because it's Yeah, yeah, I'm right. Yeah, because Michael Caine's on keep moving. So yeah, I just Madness is sort of a band I've grown up with properly right from the get go. It's their 40th anniversary this year, 40 years, since Suggs was on Top of the Pops, singing the prince. Think about that next time. He's 40 years for the love of God. And yeah, so it's their anniversary. It's that Englishness that Madness typify, you know, as, as much of their work and the fact that they they use so many different genres collide with Madness' work and although they were very urban band, they've always got a kind of weather eye on on the world in which we live. And I just think that it's I couldn't not have the sun and the rain at a festival because that's literally all you ultimately what it comes down to. When you tell your mates and you get back home. You know, if you don't know your here, I imagine you didn't tell them up front. When you get home and you're at a dinner party. Oh yeah, we're up at the Timber Festival. And then we'll go What was the weather? Like? That's their first question. They want to know, were you like some kind of bizarre refugee from the elements? Huddling, waiting for Jon Snow to come along and ask you how horrible it is? Or was it sunny and delightful? And then - are you sunburn? Or are you wet? They're the options that we have in the UK? Are you in severe pain or are you damp and miserable? They seem to be what the options are for us as a people not that we are glass half empty. But the full bit of our half empty glass is tramp's urine. That's the way the British think. So the sun and the rain are quite light and why don't you just realise now? I follow the Christmas lights downtown. So it's sun and the rain in December sucks. Living in Scotland as I do now. Almost I mean, Scotland. Wow. The weather is like a strobe light in Scotland. It's

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absolutely wait. Oh, wait, oh, wait. Oh, Sunny, now snow. You don't know what's coming. So it's brilliant. It's like rolling the dice at the beginning of every day all volcanoes.

Geoff Bird 55:50
Bringing it back to the kind of nature thing, it's again that notion that nature doesn't stop where the city begins. And as you say they got the weather 'One better day'. Very similar time is that on Keep moving.

Phill Jupitus 56:04
One better day. Keep moving. Yeah.

Geoff Bird 56:07
Walking around. Do some time here. The sunshine beating down in time with the rhythm of your shoe. Yeah, kind of marriage of nature with the street, with a pavement the smell of it.

Phill Jupitus 56:16
I think the thing is about cities is because there's not a lot of that out there. trees and stuff. You know, you have to go looking for them in cities. So you're left with what elements can we perceive around nothing, but human construction, and it's the temperature and the wetness. And so the sun and the rain is like that. That is what nature urban people really care about. Is it raining or is it bloody hot? And so yeah, so that's a that's Madness' nature song? I think definitely, you know, yeah, yeah. And that's why I popped it in there. Urban nature, which is the name of my jazz funk band.

Geoff Bird 56:52
They're on the Elemental stage

Phill Jupitus 56:53
8.45 - No, they're not. I'm very annoyed that because you know, the brass band cancelled today. I think that if ever that happens at a festival, there should be like conscription for a kazoo brass band to take their place. Someone can come to your tent and go, I'm afraid that brass band is cancelled. Here's your kazoo. You're on in 20 minutes. Bohemian Rhapsody in four.

Geoff Bird 57:25

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I love the idea, it may happen tomorrow.

Phill Jupitus 57:27
I'm not joking. Now. I absolutely want to hear 25 people doing Bohemian Rhapsody on kazoos. Sorry festival, I'm whimsical I told you right at the beginning.

Geoff Bird 57:40
Obviously this isn't Desert Island Discs. So if you had to pick one of these, I don't normally do this. But which if you would you pick?

Phill Jupitus 57:45
Pick one? I know why. Nearly there. XTS - Summers Cauldron. Yeah. For the nature of it for the fact that it feels like you're lying in a hot field. When you put that record on. I had it on headphones on the tube. And if you shut your eyes, you can imagine you're in a hot summery field covered in wasps.

Geoff Bird 58:15
You're a well travelled man if you were to pick one place to send people to, to enjoy nature of any form. What would it be?

Phill Jupitus 58:23
Tentsmuir beach - not joking Tentsmuir beach in Fife. Next time you're in Scotland and you're anywhere near St. Andrews, Tentsmuir beach. Avoid St Andrews itself. It's full of posh students and American golfers. Just go to the beach bit, don't go to St. Andrews, it's lovely St. Andrews, but the people the tourists and the students and that's the transit - Andrews people are bloody lovely. But the visitors and the students I'm not having it. The students wear their capes at the weekend. That's what I wanted to see 40,000 posh Batman.

Geoff Bird 59:04
If you had a swan harpoon, you could kebab them. You could get four of them.

Phill Jupitus 59:07
As you can see, Jeff is very excited about the swan harpoon idea. More is less, Jeff.

Geoff Bird 59:15
We've got archery this year.

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Phill Jupitus 59:17
Swan archery! No, still not having it? It's a law of diminishing returns with the swan jokes. I'm telling you right now.

Geoff Bird 59:29
We're done. Please give a huge round of applause for Phill.

Phill Jupitus 59:34
Thank you very much indeed. Please enjoy the rest of your weekend. Mic drop

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