

# COUNTRY LIFE

11th March 2013

Interior design:  
perfect, relaxed  
country chic

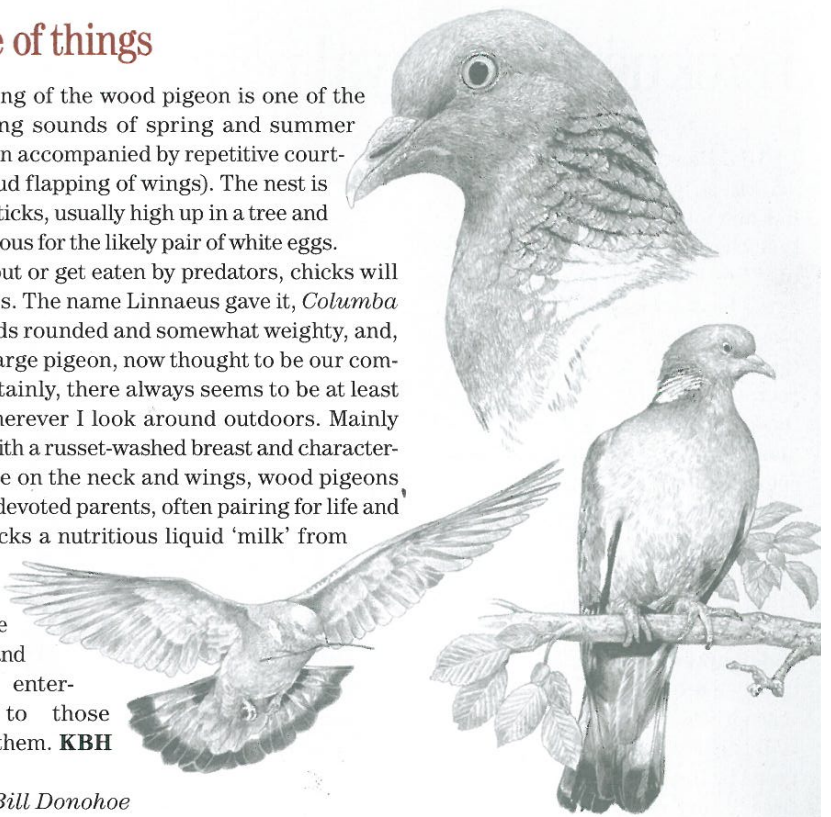
The return of the  
great masterpieces



## Nature of things

soft cooing of the wood pigeon is one of the most soothing sounds of spring and summer (it's often accompanied by repetitive courtship—much loud flapping of wings). The nest is a pile of sticks, usually high up in a tree and not particularly precarious for the likely pair of white eggs. If they don't fall out or get eaten by predators, chicks will hatch in 2½ weeks. The name Linnaeus gave it, *Columba palumbus*, sounds rounded and somewhat weighty, and the bird is a large pigeon, now thought to be our common pigeon. Certainly, there always seems to be at least one around here, wherever I look around outdoors. Mainly grey, with a russet-washed breast and characteristic white on the neck and wings, wood pigeons are famously devoted parents, often pairing for life and feeding their chicks a nutritious liquid 'milk' from their crop. Some-considered they have to fill and resting, enter-birds to those to like them. **KBH**

on by Bill Donohoe



### Week for

#### by Boulton

18th-century, Birmingham-born textile manufacturing is memorial in Westminster erected in his honour

British island's residents are 24-hour power for the in history—before, they rely on diesel generators

#### fieldfares and jays

of these birds in gardens 85%, according to the probably due to food shortages in the harsh weather

### Week for

g  
ces will be on the rise after devastated the lambing season; North-West; some farmers 100 young animals

#### ies

ink hairstreak was nearly t in the *Lepidoptera* Arma- of 2012 and some 50% ge whites disappeared

#### s and sparrows

rd Listed birds (of highest ion concern) have declined s by 16% and 17%

## Interiors

### Hand-painted floors by Decorum Est

Replacing the floors in a country house can be tricky, especially when trying to match a building's decorative style. That's where specialists such as Decorum Est come in handy. The company, founded by artistic stone decorator Steve Charles and decorative expert David Abrams, sources materials around the world, including rare marbles and precious metals. What gives Decorum Est an edge is the skill of the company's network of craftsmen, who use contemporary technology and traditional techniques to create unusual

**Tudor floor, inspired by 15th-century embroidery. £440 per sq m**

floorings. For example, the handpainted limestone collection uses a method that allows the pigments to sink deep into the tiles, lengthening the designs' lifespan. Decorum Est, 568, King's Road, London SW6 (020-7731 5556; decorumest.co.uk).

