

Secrets of the Night, Labanoras.

Contributed by Jos

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With the purchase of a trip cam in summer 2012, my eyes were opened to a whole new world, a privileged glimpse into the happenings of the night.

Placing the camera at carefully chosen localities on my land in Labanoras, the results have been little short of amazing - Wild Boars galore, Raccoon Dogs, Badgers, both Pine and Stone Martens, an unexpected Polecat ...the camera truly has begun to reveal the secrets of this otherwise secret nocturnal world.

Basically the camera is an invisible eye, triggered automatically by movement, programmable to take still images or video. During the day, it records in relatively poor quality colour, at night it switches to black-and-white, capturing the images via infra-red. All the videos available on my vimeo site, +++ [CLICK HERE](#) +++ Videos so far: (click on the video names to view) 1. Wild Boar Party My first video, a spectacular number of Wild Boars piling into to enjoy a feast of apples, plus assorted other mammals. 2. Night of the Omnivores A good mix of different mammals, again attracted to apples. Amongst Raccoon Dogs, some surprises! 3. Night Raider A master at work, to a backdrop of snow, a Pine Marten attacking food left as a bait. 4. A Night on the Ice Clearly short of food, a Beaver braving the icy conditions of mid-winter to venture out. Also, a completely unexpected Polecat! 5. Snow Storm Nights A few nights of heavy snow, but still plenty of nocturnal action - no less than three Pine Martens and two Stone Martens visiting, plus Red Fox and Roe Deer. 6. A Night at the Diner In the frozen and snowy nights of Labanoras, a surprise visitor! First noticed by tracks in the snow, a superb Otter arrived on about 10th January, remaining present into February. With all water frozen, how was the animal hunting? A simple answer, it was accessing the water through a disused Beaver lodge, burrowing through from the area above ice and presumably thereafter searching for hibernating frogs, etc, in the otherwise inaccessible water. This is the second record of Otter on my land, the other also being a mid-winter visitor in January 2014, maybe the same individual. Leaving the trip camera on the lodge, a brief snippet of video captured the majestic animal. Also on the film, Pine and Stone Martens, Raccoon Dogs and Roe Deer. 7. Visit of the Woodcock Something big trashed my grain feeder a few days earlier, probably a Moose or Wild Boar, so I had left a camera to catch the culprit. An unexpected wanderer however was a smart Woodcock, not a common bird on my land.