



The Twitch

Kevin Parr

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One year. One list. Five bodies. Edward J Banger is a man obsessed. The drudgery of a nine-to-five job, the pressures of maintaining a healthy marriage and raising teenage girls are unwelcome inconveniences. The real challenge is ticking boxes. He is determined to win the annual bird race, a competition steeped in history and glory. All he has to do is see more species of birds in the British Isles than anyone else, all within a single calendar year - and he is willing to do anything to win. Anything. The Twitch is a viciously funny black comedy with an obnoxious sod as its central character. After accidentally wiping out one element of the competition, Edward Banger begins to see opportunities to get ahead by using the most unlikely tactics. His steady descent into darkness may not be the ideal bedtime story, but you'll never look at a twitcher the same way again.

The Twitch Details

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Author : Kevin Parr

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From Reader Review The Twitch for online ebook

Dorothy says

This is supposed to be a humorous book. I may have laughed once, towards the end. Clearly, not my cup of tea. If you are very into birding then there may be enough to hold your interest (if the dated treatment of women isn't too off-putting).

Edward Higgins says

I'm not a bird watcher, but I am a murderer - so, I could immediately relate to the protagonist - Ted Banger - at that level.

Kevin Parr's book is a fast-paced and exceptionally funny read, that will make you laugh out loud.

Probably best, therefore, not to read 'The Twitch' in a public library, where laughing is generally frowned upon.

Instead, why not buy the book and then leaf through it in a provincial butcher shop? After all, butchers are generally apple-cheeked and fun-loving people – and being surrounded by dead animals is very comforting.

Alice Waterhouse says

so funny! lighthearted :)

Mark Avery says

This is one of two books I bought in Oxford the week before last. The first was in the shop window and caught my eye so I went inside and then this cover and title caught my eye so I bought it too. Both purchases were testaments to the power of advertising – or communication. If they hadn't promoted themselves I wouldn't have known that they existed and I wouldn't have bought them. I'm very glad that I bought The Twitch – it's a fun book.

It's also a rather 'laddish' book – there is plenty of illicit sex, drinking beer, driving too fast, chasing rare birds and killing people. How unlike the lives of the members of the 400 Club! Any of us who has combined at least a couple of these pursuits might well enjoy this book. It did make me wonder whether there is anyone in the UK birding scene who, like the anti-hero of this entertaining tale, has been 'involved' in all five of those activities.

It follows a man obsessed by the annual competition to see more birds in the UK than anyone else. It has pace and humour and suspense and twists – and it is all about birds and birders. It is an undemanding but enjoyable read.

The author left his job to write this book, which takes a lot of nerve and I wish him well with it. He is a fisherman who writes about angling but seems to have come across the strange world of twitching fairly recently. Rather than become a twitcher himself, he decided to write about it, and we should thank him for this fictional treatment which only exaggerates the truth a little.

The author gets the birdy and birding bits right most of the time. To my mind there are just a few phrases and bird records which could have been slightly tweaked to be even more authentic but that is really a minor quibble and an indication of how very convincing most of the book is to someone who knows a bit about birds and birding.

This book will appeal to the laddish, those who are reformed or active twitchers, many normal birders and it deserves to be read as a cracking tale by those who would never think of going on a twitch in their lives.

The Twitch by Kevin Parr is published by Unbound and is available on Amazon as is Mark Avery's Fighting for Birds, and A Message from Martha which will be published on 10 July. Unbound is a very interesting outfit which publishes books supported by the public – I might give it a go sometime.
