

Festive trimmings

Wrong time of year, wrong kind
of tree, come to that, but birds
decorate the naked oak branches,
like ornaments on a Christmas tree.

Their colours glitter and flash
in pale February sunshine, the
tip of a wing, flutter of feathers
as they cluster round the feeders.

Fat bluetits, with their impudent
clown faces, turn and twirl, lapis
lazuli one side, jade the other.
Greenfinches gleam like stars.

Then comes the heavy brigade,
crows like shining jet baubles,
magpies showing off piano key
spangles where angels should hang.

Sparrows and chaffinch shimmer
like tinsel trimmings and, as a
final Christmassy touch, robins
masquerade as scarlet ribbons.

Moira Andrew
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