



Big Garden Birdwatch: Can't wait until next year?

The RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch is over for another year and, once again, thousands of people took part in this great event. If you enjoyed doing it and don't want to wait another year for the next one then why not take part in the BTO/CJ Garden BirdWatch survey.

Each January hundreds of thousands of people take part in the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch and this year was no different. This is a really great scheme for people to get involved in and to discover more about the birds around them. Participation often ignites an interest that has lain dormant, especially in children, and it is important to encourage that interest. So instead of waiting a whole year to do it again, why not take part in the BTO/CJ Garden BirdWatch survey and make regular records of the birds that you see in your garden.

"Each January we get a lot of enquiries from people who have thoroughly enjoyed the RSPB's Big Garden BirdWatch and who are looking to continue watching their garden birds while still contributing to a national survey. The year-round BTO/CJ Garden BirdWatch survey provides exactly this," says Martin Fowlie from the Garden BirdWatch team.

But it's not just counting birds that people are interested in.

"Many people also want information about feeding birds and how best to encourage larger numbers and different species to their gardens. We provide this along with other information such as our new Hygiene leaflet which gives advice on how to make your feeding area a cleaner and healthier place for birds to eat," Martin adds. (see Notes for Editors).

So if you enjoyed Big Garden Birdwatch and would like to do more or if you just want information about making your garden more bird friendly then the Garden BirdWatch team are happy to help.

For a free information pack and leaflets about "Foods and feeding" and "Garden Bird Hygiene and Disease" phone on 01842 750050, write to GBW, Room 6, British Trust for Ornithology, The Nunnery, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 2PU or email gbw@bto.org

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The BTO is the UK's leading bird research organisation. Over thirty thousand birdwatchers contribute to the BTO's surveys. They collect information that forms the basis of conservation action in the UK. The BTO maintains a staff of 80 at its HQ in Norfolk, who analyse and publicise the results of project work. The BTO's investigations are funded by government, industry and conservation organisations.

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Notes for Editors

- 1) The BTO/CJ Garden BirdWatch is the only nationwide survey of garden birds to run weekly throughout the year, providing important information on how birds use gardens, and how this use changes over time. Currently, some 16,500 people take part in the project across the British Isles. The BTO/CJ Garden BirdWatch is funded by participants' contributions and supported by CJ WildBird Foods Ltd and is the largest year round survey of garden birds anywhere in the world. For more information see www.bto.org/gbw
- 2) CJ WildBird Foods is Europe's leading supplier of bird food and bird feeding products. CJ WildBird Foods has been responsible for a number of significant developments within the bird food and feeding industry, including the introduction of black sunflower seeds to the UK as a major new bird food and the development of specialist seed mixes for use in tubular feeders. The company has also been supporting research into the changing fortunes of garden bird populations, most notably through the BTO/CJ Garden BirdWatch.
- 3) Feeding area hygiene and disease prevention is especially important at this time of year as birds get ready for the breeding season.
- 4) Images of garden birds are available for use alongside this article from images@bto.org
- 5) The BTO has an ISDN line available for radio interviews.

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