

Making walks sensory

Working with British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) towards their 'Birds in Greenspaces' project.

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This document has been made in collaboration with the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO)

Walk planning timeline (example)

This is a guidance timeline for planning a walk however, we understand that all walks will look a little different. If you would like further guidance, please reach out to your Active Lifestyles Regional Lead.

1 month before

- Map your route, walk your route and check where you might include any sensory highlights. Check the accessibility eg. If the surface underfoot appropriate. Is there an accessible toilet? Is the parking accessible?
- Create a risk assessment for the walk and the route.
- Advertise you walk, you can do this via our sense website if you reach out to your Active Lifestyles Regional Lead.

Walk planning timeline (example)

1 week before

- Plan your walk activities (with the support of the people attending if possible).
- Buy the equipment you might need.

The day of the walk

- Before the participants arrive do a quick walk to check the path is clear and safe, make any adjustments if necessary.
- Meet the participants at the meeting point. Introduce yourself and check the information you have on everyone. Take a register.
- Head on the walk and have fun completing what ever activity you have chosen.

Walk planning timeline (example)

After the walk

- Please send the register over to your Active Lifestyles Regional Lead.
- Fill out the post walk feedback form.
- If you have taken part in the bird spotting activity, please share your count details [here](#).
- Start planning your next walk!



Bird spotting

Outcomes: Exploration, Communication, Choice

- On your walk can you spot many different birds?
- What colours are they?
- What noises are they making?
- Can you make a similar noise?
- Can you count how many birds you see on your walk? – record your count to submit to the survey for BTO.

Equipment

- Binoculars
- Bird pictures (later in the document)
- Craft feathers
- Notebook
- Pen

Engagement methods:

- Sight
- Sound
- Touch

Nature paintbrushes

Outcomes: Fine motor skills, Exploration, Choice, Independence, Communication.

- Find a small stick perfect for a paintbrush handle.
- Then find material for the 'brush' this might be grass, leaves or flowers.
- Using an elastic band attach the 'brush' item to the stick.
- Using your nature paint brush paint your bird image.



Equipment:

- Elastic band
- Print out of bird image
- Paint



Engagement

methods:

- Sight
- Smell
- Touch

Tactile bird picture

Outcomes: Exploration, Communication, Independence, Choice

- While on the walk collect pieces along the way to decorate your bird image. This might be fallen leaves, sticks, flowers. (Be mindful not to pick up feathers as these can be unhygienic).
- At a break or at the end of the walk using glue stick the pieces you have collected along the walk to your bird.
- Keep sticking collected items until you are happy with your bird picture.

Equipment

- Print out of bird image (at end of document)
- Glue
- Craft feathers

Engagement methods:

- Sight
- Touch

Create the habitat

Outcomes: Exploration, Choice, Communication.

- Feel the different trees, what textures are they, do they smell different? Are the leaves different colours?
- Take a mixture of crayons, pastels, pencils or pens and some small sheets of paper.
- Put the paper onto the bark of the tree and colour over the top with the crayons, pastels, pencils or pens. You could try this on leaves or any other surface too.
- When someone has finished, you could support them to bind them together or make a collage of their rubbings.

Equipment:

- Paper
- Crayons, pastels, pencils, pens.

Engagement

methods:

- Sight
- Smell
- Touch

Birds picnic

Outcomes: Exploration, Communication, Choice

- Explore some of the foods birds might eat. Important! Make sure all food consumed is safe for everyone.
- Try seeds, berries, fruits you can bring your own and enjoy when on a break. Or eat at different parts of the walk, eg. Eat blackberries next to a blackberry bush. (Please be mindful of the participants attending understanding of eating)

Equipment

- Blueberries, blackberries
- Seeds: sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds
- Fruits: Apples

Engagement methods:

- Smell
- Touch
- Taste

Resources

The next few pages include print out bird information cards, bird image outlines to be painted, coloured or made tactile.

If you would like to share any photos of the artwork you have created to be included in this document, please reach out to your Active Lifestyles Regional Lead.

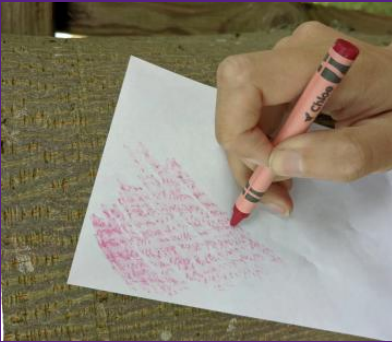




Image: Blackbird, BTO by Edmund Fellowes

Blackbird

Image description

The side profile of a small black bird with small black wings and a long thin tail. The bird has an orange beak, and an orange eye stands, and its thin brown legs grip on top of a wooden fence panel.

| | |
|------------------------|--------------|
| Number of eggs | 3-4 |
| Life expectancy | 3 years |
| Status | Common |
| Numbers from 1967-2023 | 20% decrease |

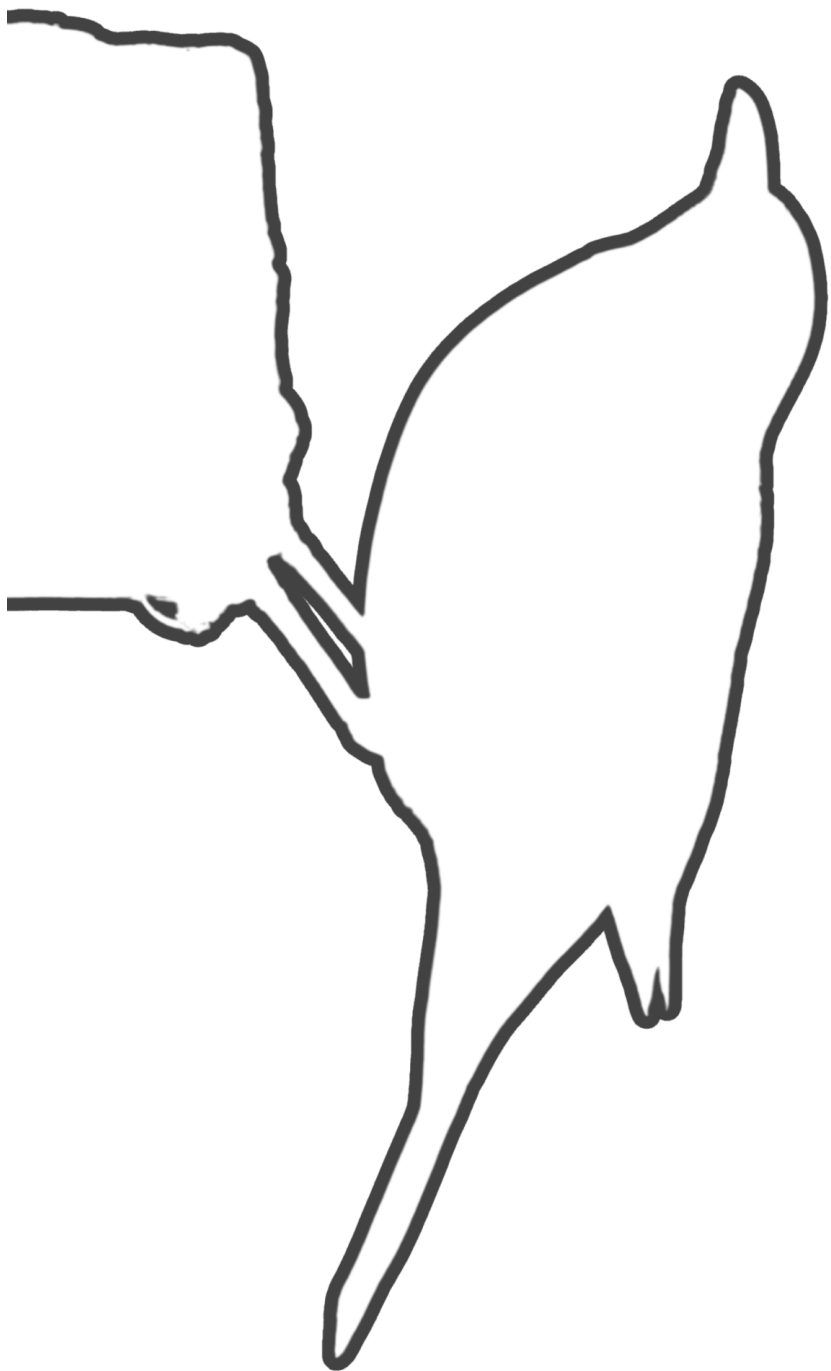




Image: Magpie, BTO by Phillip Croft

Magpie

Image description

The side profile of a small black and white bird with small black wings and a long thin tail. The bird has a black beak, and black eye a white feather belly. And stands its thin black legs on gravel ground.

| | |
|------------------------|---------------|
| Number of eggs | 5–6 |
| Life expectancy | 5 years |
| Status | Common |
| Numbers from 1967-2023 | 106% increase |

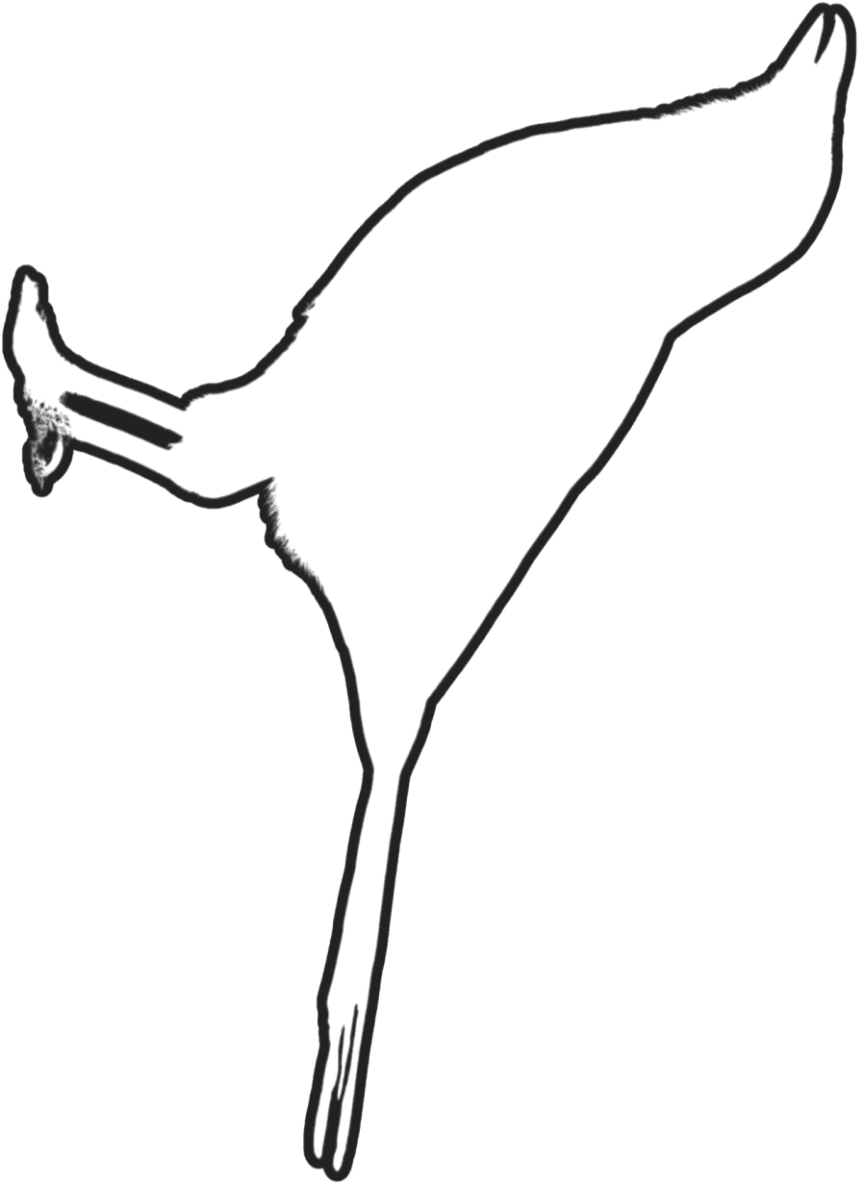




Image: Woodpigeon, BTO
by Edmund Fellowes

Woodpigeon

Image description

The side profile of a large grey bird with large grey wings and a dark long thick tail. The bird has an orange beak, and an orange eye. It stands its short legs on the grass.

| | |
|------------------------|---------------|
| Number of eggs | 2 |
| Life expectancy | 3 years |
| Status | Common |
| Numbers from 1967-2023 | 158% increase |





Image: Great Spotted Woodpecker, BTO by Edmund Fellowes

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Image description

The side profile of a small white and black bird gripping onto a tree. The bird has small black spotted wings and a small tail. The bird has a red area under the tail and at the back of the head.

| | |
|------------------------|---------------|
| Number of eggs | 4–6 |
| Life expectancy | 1 years |
| Status | Common |
| Numbers from 1967-2023 | 378% increase |





Image: Robin, BTO
by Philip Croft

Robin

Image description

A small bird standing on a branch with the top of the head and wings are a light brown. The face and chest of the bird is red and the belly is white. With a small black beak and eye.

| | |
|------------------------|--------------|
| Number of eggs | 4–5 |
| Life expectancy | 2 years |
| Status | Common |
| Numbers from 1967-2023 | 55% increase |



Bird spotting

A list of different birds commonly found in greenspaces; in the boxes below can you mark how many of each bird you see?



Woodpigeon by Edmund Fellowes



Magpie by Phillip Croft



Great Spotted Woodpecker by Edmund Fellowes

Bird spotting

A list of different birds commonly found in greenspaces; in the boxes below can you mark how many of each bird you see?



Starling by Edmund Fellowes



House Sparrow by Gary Haigh



Carrion Crow by Liz Cutting

Bird spotting

A list of different birds commonly found in greenspaces; in the boxes below can you mark how many of each bird you see?



Blue Tit by Tom Streeter



Great Tit by Edmund Fellowes



Blackbird by Amy Lewis

Bird spotting bingo

A list of different birds commonly found in greenspaces.



Explore your greenspace

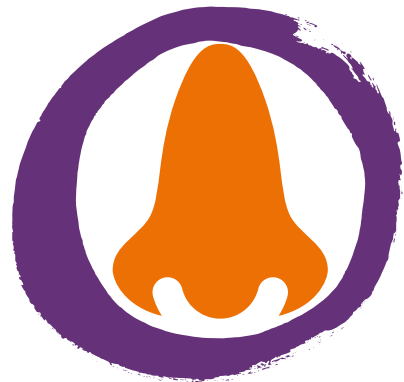
Use the below points to help you identify the sensory highlights in your greenspace.

What can you see? Can you describe what you see?



What can hear? Can you make a bird noise?

What can you smell?



Evaluation

It's important to reflect on the tasks and the walk. Here are some questions that might support information gathering for future walks.



Sensory Walks makes me feel...



Encountering birds in this outdoor space makes me feel...



The number of birds in this outdoor space makes me feel...

Evaluation

It's important to reflect on the tasks and the walk. Here are some questions that might support information gathering for future walks.



The behaviour of birds in this outdoor space makes me feel...



The distinctiveness of bird shapes in this outdoor space makes me feel...



The variety of bird sounds in this outdoor space makes me feel...

About Sense

Sense is a national disability charity that supports people with complex communication needs to be understood, connected and valued. We are here for every person who faces communication barriers in a world that relies on being able to see and hear well to be connected.

Our flexible and personalised services empower people to communicate and express themselves – be it through speech or sign, touch or movement, gesture or sound, art or dance. Together, we connect differently and campaign passionately for the right to lead connected and fulfilled lives.

Sense

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Registered with
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sense

connecting sight, sound and life

www.sense.org

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