

The Big Birdwatch



twinkl

Why Do Birds Matter?

We often think that birds are just something pretty to look at. However, they actually serve many vital uses in the environment.

Did you know that birds...

- contribute to the diversity of plant life through pollination and seed dispersal;
- control insect outbreaks and create important nesting areas for other species;
- help rid the world of disease through scavenger “clean-up” services, like carrion crows and magpies.

Birds provide important economic benefits, and serve as important indicators for scientists about the state of the environment.

The RSPB

The RSPB is a charity which was founded in 1889 to ensure birds were protected in England, Scotland and Wales.

RSPB stands for:

Royal

Society

for the

Protection

of

Birds



Photo courtesy of steveransome (@flickr.com) - granted under creative commons licence - attribution



The Big Birdwatch

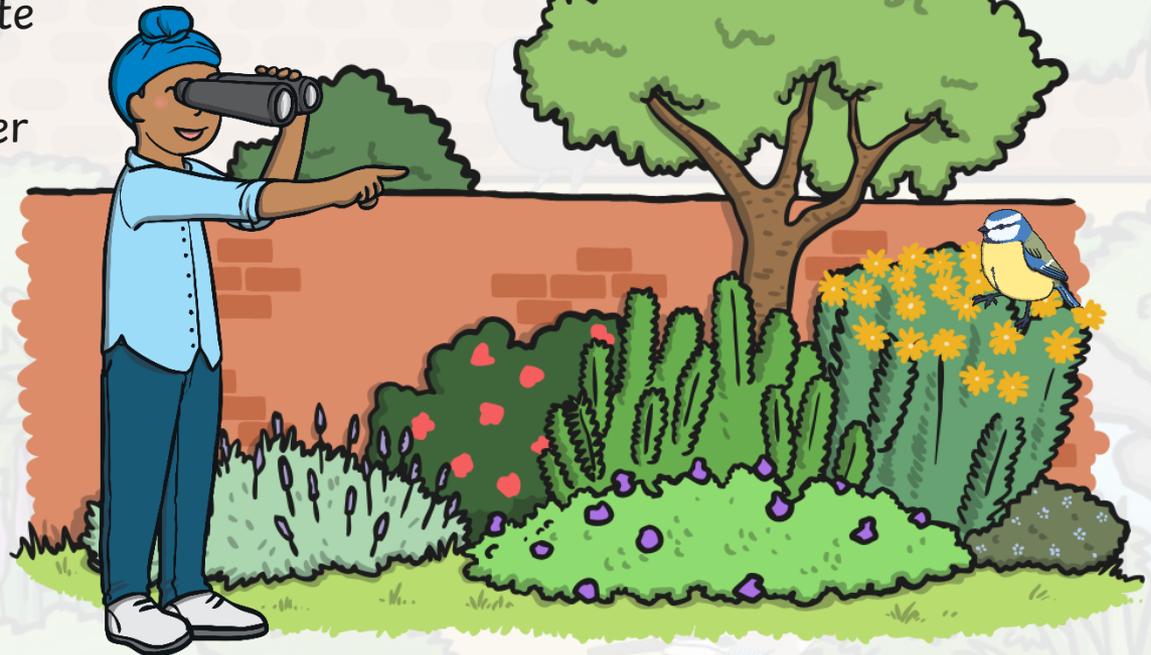
The Big Birdwatch is taking place from the beginning of January until the end of February.

So what's it
all about?

Why Have a Big Birdwatch?

The Big Birdwatch is a time to help children get closer to nature, learn about the birds in their environment and know how to identify common species of bird.

Observing birds in the area can also contribute to national data, cataloguing the number and type of birds.



What Can You Do?

Through the Big Birdwatch you can...

- count different types of birds;
- identify different birds through their sound and appearance;
- make bird feeders;
- write your own fact files about birds;
- collate data in different formats;
- draw different birds.



Counting Birds

Counting different types of birds is very important. Through counting birds, the bird population can be monitored, and if there is a dip in the number of certain birds, the RSPB can investigate why this might be.

Equally, the increasing number of birds needs monitoring too, as this has implications on food availability and breeding spaces.

Count the different types of birds you see in one place in an hour, and record your results in a table.

Did you know...?

in the last 35 years the number of blue tits recorded has risen by 20% and the number of wood pigeons has risen by 800%!



Identifying Birds

Identifying birds can be tricky. Here are some tips to help you:

- Many birds do not look like they do in books. They are sometimes a bit bigger or smaller in real life. Their feathers are replaced about twice a year, so they may look duller at different times in the year.
- In colder weather, birds often fluff out their feathers, which makes them look rounder and fluffier than usual.
- Use your ears as well as your eyes. You may think you know what birds sound like, but listen to some clips on the RSPB website and see if there are any you haven't heard before.



Make Bird Feeders

Birds need food all year round, and in the winter it can be harder for them to find it.

Make a bird feeder using pine cones and lard stuffed with seeds and nuts to make a tasty snack for those hungry birds.



Photo courtesy of domestic_meagan (@flickr.com) - granted under creative commons licence - attribution

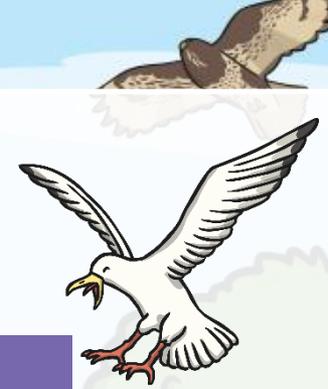
Get Creative!

Have a go at drawing birds. Look really closely, using binoculars, to observe their colouring, feathers and shape.



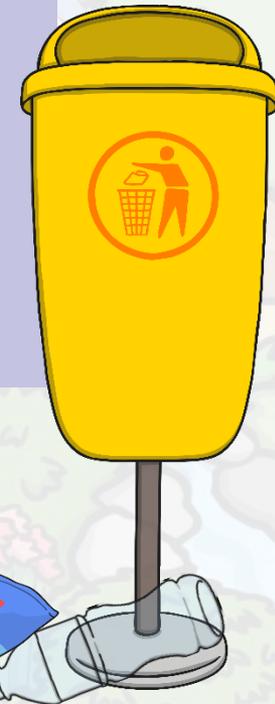
Photo courtesy of ianrees (@flickr.com) - granted under creative commons licence - attribution

Danger! Danger!



Design your own poster warning people about the dangers humans can pose to birds:

- Litter can poison or damage birds, especially if left in rivers or ponds.
- Leaving poisons down for vermin can also poison birds. It needs to be used very carefully.
- People who wander too close to ground nesting birds can unsettle them and cause distress.



Get Involved!

There are so many ways you can get closer to birds, and learn more about birds in your local area.



So what are
you going to
do first?



twinkl