

Big Garden Birdwatch Challenge



Last year more than 600,000 people took part...Will you?

We've teamed up with the RSPB to bring you the Big Garden Birdwatch challenge and support the world's largest garden wildlife survey.

For even more programme ideas check out our 'Birdwatching' board over on www.Pinterest.com/PawprintFamily

#AdventureForAll
www.PawprintFamily.com

Meet the FAMILY

Hi there! We're Charlotte & Jamie, the husband and wife team behind the Pawprint Family and we believe in #AdventureForAll.

It's our mission to help leaders, teachers and parents save time by providing ideas and opportunities to help them deliver everyday adventure and skills for life. We do this through our family of brands; find out more below and head to the website for your next adventure!



PAWPRINT BADGES

Pawprint Badges provides thousands of free activity ideas and resources to help leaders, teachers and parents deliver fun and adventure.

Every activity helps you share skills for life and is linked to one of our pawesome embroidered badges. Build your collection and celebrate adventures, new skills and knowledge gained.

PAWPRINT TRAILS

Pawprint Trails are treasure-hunt style walks around locations in the UK. Solve puzzles, track down the answers and explore everything our great country has to offer.

From historical sights to popular culture discover something new or rediscover a love for where you live then collect the badge to remember your adventures!

Whether you're looking for the perfect addition to your next family holiday or a few hours of fun with friends; each trail can be completed in a few hours or extended with our activity suggestions in to a weekend or a week's worth of fun!

PAWPRINT TALES

Pawprint Tales are fully illustrated stories that can be enjoyed by the whole family. Join Alfie (our fox-red Labrador) on his adventures around the UK – solving puzzles, turning detective and making new friends. With twists and turns, every tale is an opportunity to discover new places, people and history without needing to leave the comfort of your own home.

Enjoy Pawprint Tales alongside your Pawprint Trails or as a standalone adventure!

PAWPRINT TRUST

Every brand in the Pawprint Family supports the Pawprint Trust with a percentage of profits from every sale providing grants to young people. We're passionate about enabling young people to access life changing adventures.

Share your adventures and join us over on our social channels for even more adventures and a nosy behind the scenes at Pawprint HQ!



@pawprintfamily



@pawprint_family



Big Garden Birdwatch

23–25 January 2026



Andrew Howe/Stock

Welcome to Big Garden Birdwatch 2026

What is it?

Big Garden Birdwatch is the largest garden wildlife survey in the world! Each year we ask people to spend an hour watching the birds in their garden, local park or from their balcony and then let us know what they've seen.

By taking part you can play a really important role in helping us to understand which birds are doing well and which need our help. It's an easy and fun way to get to know your feathered neighbours too!

With many of our best-loved birds under threat, it's more important than ever to get involved.

Together, let's make it count.

How to do it

Taking part in Big Garden Birdwatch is easy!

- 1 Choose one hour between Friday 23 and Sunday 25 January. You can take part at any time during those days, but you're likely to see more birds if you do your Big Garden Birdwatch in the morning.
- 2 Find a comfy spot to sit and watch, and then record the birds you see. You can use the counting sheet on the next page to help you.
- 3 Remember to only record birds that land, not the ones that fly past. We'd like to know the maximum number of each species you see at one time. So, if you see four Starlings in a group, and then two later on, your count would be four Starlings, not six.

Once your hour is up, head to www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch to send us your results. Even if you didn't see anything in your hour, that's still really useful information, so please let us know! You have until **23rd February 2026** to tell us what you saw.

And that's it! Thank you so much for taking part. You're now officially a Big Garden Birdwatcher!

What did you see?

These are some of the birds you might spot during your Big Garden Birdwatch. You can use the tally for each bird to help you keep count.

For tips and advice on identifying birds, head to www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch.

Starling

++++ +++++



Blue Tit

++++ +++++



Robin

++++ +++++



Goldfinch

++++ +++++



Woodpigeon

++++ +++++



Greenfinch

++++ +++++



Male



Female



Chaffinch

++++ +++++

Collared Dove

++++ +++++



Coal Tit

++++ +++++



Great Tit

++++ +++++



Male



Female

Blackbird

++++ +++++

Dunnock

++++ +++++



Male



House Sparrow

++++ +++++

Long-tailed Tit

++++ +++++



Magpie

++++ +++++



Illustrations by Mike Langman (rspb-images.com)

We're the largest wildlife conservation charity in the UK and we've been running the Big Garden Birdwatch since 1979. Together with our members, supporters and partners, we're working hard to create a world where nature and people can thrive.

To find out more and get involved visit rspb.org.uk



HOW TO: Use Your Challenge Pack

**PAWPRINT
BADGES**

This Challenge Pack has been created in partnership with the RSPB. Divided into 4 sections: Craft, Food, Games and Other, it's been designed to help you provide a balanced and varied programme for your young adventurers. We recommend that the following number of activities are completed by each age group:

Age 3 - 5									
Age 5 - 7									
Age 7 - 11		+							
Age 11 - 14		+							
Age 14 - 18		+							
Age 18+		+							


Craft


Food


Games


Other


PICK

Leaders, Teachers & Parents

Award yourselves a badge for supporting your young adventurers in their activities!

TOP TIPS

-  Adapt activities as necessary to meet your needs.
-  Add your own activity ideas or develop them into projects.
-  Use what you have; don't buy in lots of new materials/equipment.
-  No need to send us evidence, responsible grown-ups decide when the badge has been earned.
-  One challenge badge can take as long as you like; from a few hours to days or even a full term!

Terms of Use

By downloading or purchasing this resource you agree to our terms of use as outlined below. As a husband and wife team we work hard to keep all of our resources and activity ideas available free of charge; we can only do this with your help.

Please Do	You May Not
Use this resource with your young adventurers.	Redistribute or sell this resource in any way, shape or form.
Direct people to this resource online by sharing our website links.	Upload this resource to a website for download.
Tell your friends/family/colleagues about us!	Copy or modify any part of this resource to share with others either for free or for sale.
Share photos of you enjoying your adventures with us on social media.	Use any text, graphics, content or fonts without our written permission.

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Craft

**PAWPRINT
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- ✂ Create your own bird identification chart for the top 5 birds from 2025's Big Garden Birdwatch: House Sparrow, Blue Tit, Starling, Woodpigeon and Blackbird.
- ✂ Design a garden that's bird friendly using our free 'Garden Design' resource to help you.

What?

Birds need food, water, shelter and a place to nest. Putting out food will attract birds, and how about planting flowers and trees to help insects, as well as birds? Including a bird bath or pond is a great addition and don't forget a nest box or two.

- ✂ Make a poster or leaflet about the use of insecticides and slug pellets and their impact on our garden birds. Discuss the impact with members of your community.
- ✂ Build a bird box using the RSPB nest box plans ([rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/build-a-birdbox](https://www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/build-a-birdbox)) or make a paper birdhouse using our free resource.
- ✂ Create your own bird feeder.

How?

There are so many different ideas for DIY bird feeders, from recycled plastic bottles to toilet rolls and pine cones. You can find them on the RSPB website: [rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/feed-the-birds](https://www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/feed-the-birds)

- ✂ Have a go at setting up a bird bath. Why not create one from recycled or reclaimed materials? Remember to try and keep your bird bath ice free in the winter too.
- ✂ Weave your own bird's nest. Create a natural bowl by weaving together twigs and sticks, just like a bird. Help nesting birds in spring by leaving out natural materials such as grass cuttings, straw, moss and plant cuttings.
- ✂ Make your own felt or clay bird decoration. Why not model it on your favourite garden bird? See how many real ones you can spot during the Big Garden Birdwatch.
- ✂ Put up a nest box or roosting pocket for birds to roost in during winter. Many smaller birds including Blue Tits will use boxes in the winter as well as during nesting season in the spring.



Food

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BADGES

- ✚ Investigate the different seeds and nuts in bird food. Can you find out where they come from or how they grow?
- ✚ Why not make some bird biscuits or cakes? You could decorate them to look like your favourite garden birds.
- ✚ Make some bird food cakes and help feed the birds in your garden all year round. Remember! It's important to use shop bought, unused lard for this activity. You can find some instructions here: rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/feed-the-birds
- ✚ Use an apple or an orange to make a fruity bird feeder for the garden.

How?

Slice your apple or orange in half. For apples remove the core and make a small hollow in each half of your apple. For oranges, remove the segments until you are left with the peel. Push wooden kebab skewers through the fruit, from side to side, around 1cm from the cut edge to make a cross. Tie string to the ends of the skewers for hanging and fill your fruit with seeds. Hang in the garden and watch for feathered visitors.

- ✚ Discover what to feed birds and when. You can find some great information on the RSPB website, here: rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/helping-birds-and-wildlife
- ✚ Find out what a food web is and how our most common garden birds fit in. Why not create your own food web diagram?
- ✚ Many of our garden birds enjoy eating worms and caterpillars. Have a go at making some edible jelly worms for you to enjoy.
- ✚ Mix up your own chocolate bird's nest crispy cakes.
- ✚ A Robin's parental instincts are highly developed and they are often reported to feed the chicks of other species. Make some food and share it with friends or another family.
- ✚ The House Sparrow (the number 1 bird in the Birdwatch 2025) has a short beak, ideal for cracking seeds. Use nut crackers and crack open some nuts (the type you get at Christmas) to see how the Sparrow's beak works.
- ✚ In the spring and summer soft apples, pears, bananas and grapes are great foods to leave out for our feathered friends. Use these fruits to mix up your own fruit salad.



Games

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BADGES**

- ✚ Use our Garden Birds Trump Cards resource to compare size, weight, wingspan and population size of different garden birds. Check out the RSPB A-Z list of birds, here: rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/a-z
- ✚ Identify birds from their songs. You can find recordings of each bird via the link above.
- ✚ Have your own caterpillar relay. In spring Blue Tit chicks can eat up to 100 caterpillars per day so to feed a brood of 10, adults need to find as many as 1,000 caterpillars per day!

How?

Hide 'caterpillars' (short lengths of string/yarn) around your space. Race to gather the caterpillars and bring them back to your nest (base). You could race to fill a jam jar or compete to see who can collect the most in a set amount of time. Add another level of challenge by wearing a sock on your hand as a beak and use different colours of yarn.

- ✚ Play a game of Garden Bird Bingo using our free resource. You could make your own bingo cards and see which birds you can spot in order to tick them off OR you can have a traditional game of bingo using bird species names instead of numbers.
- ✚ Create and play a game of garden bird pairs. The population of our garden birds is measured by the number of breeding pairs. You can discover the populations of all our native birds on the RSPB's A-Z list (link above).
- ✚ Guess the weights of the garden birds using money.

How?

£1 weighs 8.75g, 50p = 8g, 20p = 5g and 5p = 3.25g. A Blue Tit weighs just 11g so just less than £1.05!! See if you can accurately guess how heavy some of our other garden birds are using money.

- ✚ Starlings are marvellous mimics and can incorporate other animal and even human and mechanical noises into their songs! Have a go at a copy cat game and see how accurately you can copy someone else's whistle, song or noise.
- ✚ In winter, small garden birds often huddle together overnight for warmth; 63 Wrens were once found together in one nest box. Take part in a game of sardines and see how many people you can fit into the hiding space.
- ✚ Have a game of Duck, Duck, Goose using common garden birds, i.e. Robin, Robin, Blackbird.



Other

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BADGES

- ✚ Take part in the world's largest garden wildlife survey, Big Garden Birdwatch. Go to: www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch to find out more. You can also do the Birdwatch at school or in a youth group: go to www.rspb.org.uk/schoolswatch
- ✚ Raise funds to support the work of the RSPB.
- ✚ Visit your local/nearest RSPB nature reserve. You can find them all on the RSPB website here: rspb.org.uk/days-out/reserves
- ✚ Attend or take part in an event at your local RSPB nature reserve. Find out what's on at: events.rspb.org.uk
- ✚ Discover more about how we can protect endangered bird species. See rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-we-do/protecting-species-and-habitats/protecting-species-under-threat for more information.
- ✚ Build a natural shelter or hide in your garden or green space.
- ✚ Visit your local garden centre and discover some native shrubs and trees that you could grow to help birds.
- ✚ Set up a bird box web cam or garden web cam to watch your feathered visitors.
- ✚ Discover more fun facts about some of our most common garden birds. Why not have a go at creating your own rhymes or poems about your feathered friends to help you identify the different species?
- ✚ Choose somewhere to sit and do some birdwatching. For example, this could be at your bedroom window, in your garden or on a local park bench. Find more information on the RSPB website here: rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/go-birdwatching for more information
- ✚ Have a go at identifying the feathered visitors visiting your garden/green space. Use the rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/a-z to help.
- ✚ Become a member of the RSPB. You'll find out more about wildlife, receive magazines and get free entry to nature reserves. Go to: rspb.org.uk/join to find out more.
- ✚ The Robin sings all year around. Have a go at writing a song about your Big Garden Birdwatch adventures. Why not record your song and share it with us on social media? Use #BigGardenBirdWatch

Adventure Complete?

Reward your young adventurers with their Big Garden Birdwatch Challenge badge to mark their achievements! Head to the website to bag yours, download certificates and discover even more adventures!



Create a Keepsake!

Experienced adventure? Made memories? Then it's time to create a keepsake! Our Pawprint Family camp blankets are the perfect place to sew your badges and look back on them for years to come.



Personalise it!

Got your camp blanket? Then it's time to make it yours! Our alphabet badges are **big, bright and bold**...the perfect addition to your camp blanket, hoodies, bags and more. What will you personalise first?



Even More Rewards!

We're all about added value here at Pawprint Family. In addition to the 1000s of **free activity ideas** and resources you'll find **loyalty stickers** in every order and you can claim Children's University learning hours too!



Subscribe to the **Tribe News** for all the latest adventures direct to your inbox!

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