

Blackbirds in Gardens - a Vector-Borne RADAR project

Data Entry Guide

For more information, please visit www.bto.org/blackbirds

1. Sign up to the survey

Please visit www.bto.org/blackbirds to sign up for the survey. You will need to do this before you can enter any data.

2. Add a New Garden

To submit survey data you need to first tell us a few details about your garden.

Garden details

Filling out the garden details will help us understand how Blackbirds use different types of gardens and determine which garden features are the most important for them.

If you change your garden significantly, want to observe an additional garden or move house during the survey but want to continue the survey you can treat it as a new garden and add the updated/new garden details.

Existing BTO Garden BirdWatch participants

If you are already a BTO Garden BirdWatch participant you can directly import your existing garden details using the button in the top right of this page.

You can then update your garden details to reflect any changes you have made to your garden relevant to this survey, since registering those details with Garden BirdWatch.

Please note any changes you make will not automatically transfer over to Garden BirdWatch.

Garden location

As well as collecting data on your garden itself we are interested in the surrounding local area, which we can study using maps and satellite imagery.

If you are happy to provide a precise location for your garden and would like to take part, please pinpoint it on the map. You can switch between Satellite Map, OS Map and Road Map views.

This location will only be shared with our partners in this study at the 1 km Ordnance Survey grid square level and will be fully anonymised.

You do not have to share this information to take part in the survey.



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3. Add New Count

When you want to enter a new survey click on “Add new count”. Counts can happen at any time of day and you can either enter your data as you go along, or note it down to enter it afterwards - you may find this example recording sheet helpful.

1. Select or enter the count date
2. Select a count start time, the following survey segment times will follow on from this.
3. During each five minute survey segment record:
 - a. The peak counts of male, female, juvenile (of either sex) seen during the segment. This is the maximum number of individuals for each category you see at any one time during that period even if you think more birds are visiting. If you need help with these, please refer to the identification guide and if you can't assign some birds to a category, enter these as Unknown.
 - b. Tick the relevant boxes for any observed activities and behaviours. These behaviours are:
 - i. Foraging for natural food
 - ii. Using supplementary food (i.e. food or scraps put out by you)
 - iii. Feeding young/carrying food (i.e. either directly feeding young in sight or carrying food away to a nest or young out of sight)
 - iv. Using a man-made bird bath
 - v. Using a pond or puddle
 - vi. Territorial chasing (i.e. a Blackbird chasing another Blackbird)
 - vii. Carrying nesting material (i.e. carrying moss or other material likely to be used for nest building)
 - c. An overall peak count of Blackbirds seen during the segment. This is the maximum number of individuals you see at any one time during that period and may be lower than the sum of the age/sex counts. This count is separate to help us add context to other datasets such as Garden BirdWatch where only a single overall count is reported per week per site.
4. Submit the count.

You can also view your past count results and the identification guide if required.

Sick or dead garden birds

If you observe sick birds or find dead birds in your garden, either from Blackbirds or any other garden species, please consider [reporting them to Garden Wildlife Health](https://www.gardenwildlifehealth.org/) at <https://www.gardenwildlifehealth.org/>

If you have any further questions please see our FAQ sheet.

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