

# GARDEN BIRD SURVEY REPORT for OCTOBER 1999 to MARCH 2000

Twenty six forms were distributed and nineteen returned, the same number as last year. The number of species increased by four from last year, forty six being recorded which is the same number as in 1997/8.

Species missing this year were the black backed gull and the feral pigeon. The redpoll and marsh/willow tit have not been recorded since 1997/8.

We have shown the species recorded, the number of gardens visited and the lowest and highest counts with the differences in numbers from 1998/9 shown as +, - or =.

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>MIN</u>	<u>MAX</u>	<u>GARDENS</u>
Blue tit	1	16 - 4	19
H. Sparrow	2	58 + 3	"
Blackbird	1	16 + 2	"
Robin	1	3 =	"
Collared dove	1	19 + 5	"
Magpie	1	4 =	"
Wood pigeon	1	11 =	"
Great tit	1	14 + 3	"
Chaffinch	1	21 - 7	"
Starling	1	65 - 15	18
Greenfinch	1	28 - 8	"
Wren	1	3 =	"
Dunnock	1	4 =	17
Coal tit	1	4 - 1	"
Pied wagtail	1	3 + 1	"
Song thrush	1	2 - 1	16
Goldfinch	1	22 - 2	14
Long tailed tit	1	16 - 5	"
Siskin	1	11 + 2	13
Crow	1	4 =	12
Sparrowhawk	1	1 - 1	10
Black headed gull	1	40 + 20	8
Goldcrest	1	2 =	7
Great spotted woodpecker	1	3 + 1	"
Mistle thrush	1	2 =	6
Bullfinch	1	2 - 1	"
Nuthatch	1	2 =	5
Reed bunting	1	2 - 3	"
Jackdaw	1	6 - 2	4
Brambling	1	2 =	3
Jay	1	1 - 1	"
Blackcap	1	1 =	"
Treecreeper	1	1 =	"
Redwing	1	8 - 4	2
Fieldfare	1	15	"
Herring gull	1	4	"
Yellowhammer	1	1	"
Tree sparrow	1	19 - 14	"
Kestrel	1	1 =	"
Grey wagtail	1	2 =	"
Rook	1	1 =	1
Chiffchaff	1	1 - 1	"
Common gull	1	1	"
Common snipe	1	1	"
Pheasant	1	6 + 5	"
House martin	1	2	"

OCTOBER 1999 - MARCH 2000 seen in all 19 gardens:-

House sparrow 378: Chaffinch 129: Collared dove 104: Blue tit 96: Blackbird 94: Great tit 75: Wood pigeon 68: Magpie 50: Robin 37.

WEATHER REPORT October 1999 - March 2000

Temperature in Fahrenheit. Weeks 1 - 26

1. Rain every day, total 2.75". Winds mainly S/W - N/W. Max. 67°F. Min. 40°F.
2. Rain on five days, total 0.87". Wind N/W light; varying amounts of sun. Max. 63°F. Min. 34°F.
3. Dry week. Winds starting N/W veering S/E in latter part of the week. Sunny spells. Fog early on 13th. Max. 69°F. Min. 37°F.
4. Rain on last three days, total 0.47". Winds mainly S/E - E. Sunny spells. Max. 59°F. Min. 35°F.
5. Rain recorded on five days, total 1.50". Sunday (24th) rain for most of the day, total 0.90". Winds S - N/W. Very little sun except 28th. Max. 58°F. Min. 37°F.
6. Rain on five days, total on Friday 5th 0.55". Winds S/W - N/W. Sunny intervals. Max. 58°F. Min. 37°F.
7. Very small amounts of rain on four days, total 0.04". Winds N/W - N/E, light. Very few sunny spells and fog on Tuesday. Max. 54°F. Min. 33°F.
8. Rain on six days, total 0.85". Light winds mainly N/W. More sun towards the end of the week. First cold snap with frost from Tuesday onwards. Max. 48°F. Min. 24°F.
9. One dry day, with almost 0.75" rain on Wednesday, which had the highest temperature of 53°F. Min. for the week 35°F. Wind mainly S/W strengthening on Friday. Mainly cloudy with very little sun.
10. Rain on six days, very little sun. Wind S/W - N/W, strong on Monday and Tuesday. Gales on Friday. Max. 52°F. Frosts on Friday and Saturday 32°F and 28°F.
11. Rain every day, total 0.91". Winds N/W - S/W - W., lightish, mostly dull and cloudy. Max. 51°F. Min. 36°F.
12. Rain on six days, total 0.94". Winds N/W - S/W, mainly light. Mostly cloudy and dull. Frost on five occasions. Max. 48°F. Min. 22°F.
13. Rain on five days, total 0.77", with nearly 0.50" on 24th. Wind mainly S/W increasing to gale force towards the weekend. Max. 49°F. Min. 17°F.
14. Rain every day, total 0.74". Wind mainly S/W. Few sunny intervals. Frost on four occasions. Max. 45°F. Min. 30°F.
15. Rain every day, total 0.23". Frost on two days. Wind S/W. Max. 48°F. Min. 28°F.
16. Rain every day, total 0.65". Frost on six days. Winds S/W - N, strengthening mid-week. Max. 48°F. Min. 25°F.
17. Some rain on three days, total 0.04". Wind N/W, freshening on Saturday. Max. 43°F. Min. 29°F.
18. Some rain on six days, total 0.15". Frost on five days. Wind mostly N. Max. 51°F.
19. Rain on six days, total 0.30". Winds between S/W - N/W. Mostly cloudy and dull. Max. 52°F. Min. 35°F.
20. Rain every day, total 0.76". Winds S/W - N/W, very strong with sleet on 8th. Mainly cloudy. Max. 53°F. Min. 31°F.
21. Rain on six days, total 0.75". Wind N/W, not much sun. Frost on five days. Max. 48°F. Min. 27°F.
22. Rain on four days, total 0.20". Winds N/W - S/W. Frost on four days. More sun than recently. Max. 50°F. Min. 26°F.
23. Six days rain, total 1.33". Strong winds S/W - N/W. Odd sunny spells. Max. 50°F. Min. 26°F.
24. Rain on five days, total 0.12". Wind N/W, light to moderate. Few sunny spells, mostly cloudy. Max. 60°F. Min. 30°F.
25. Rain one day, total 0.01". Wind N/W, cloudy and dull except Saturday which was sunny. Max. 60°F. Min. 31°F.
26. Rain for last three days, total 0.20". Wind N/W - S/W. Sunny intervals, wind - light. Frost on two days. Max. 59°F. Min. 31°F.

FEEDING STATIONS: Hanging 1 - 8: Table 1 - 3: Ground 1 - 2: Flat roof 1.

Food offered: coconut, niger seed, flour, white and wholemeal bread, peanuts, wild bird seed, meat scraps and bones, apple slices, sunflower hearts and striped sunflower seeds, fat balls / bells, uncooked sweet pastry, cake and scone crumbs, suet, baked potato skins and cheese.

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NOTES OF INTEREST

Bird behaviour seems to have been closely observed this year with the sparrowhawk displaying its killer instinct in several gardens. Reports of them chasing greenfinches, killing a sparrow and a greenfinch and feeding off a goldfinch, as well as being disturbed and releasing a collared dove, makes alarming reading. Coal tits were also aggressive and attacked a chaffinch in one garden.

Robins and great spotted woodpeckers appear to enjoy fat filled coconuts and fat balls respectively, while goldfinches love niger seed and sunflower hearts. A goldfinch and a chaffinch liked suspended nut hangers while long tailed tits ignored those and fed on breadcrumbs on the ground! In two gardens magpies collected and stored peanuts - in our case putting them in with the daffodil bulbs.

A common snipe and a yellowhammer were surprise visitors for two contributors, as was a herring gull with an injured foot for another person.

200 starlings roosted in a neighbour's garden - unfortunately we cannot count that. Nor can we count the birds which have visited others and us since the count ended. Feeding the birds all through the year has brought benefits in the way of the young of great spotted woodpeckers, nuthatches, starlings, wrens, robins, pied wagtails and the usual blue and great tits and sparrows. The young starlings seem reluctant to bathe even though the parents set a good example and we have to fill up the bird bath with three litres of water every day - if we don't have a cloudburst!

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Our thanks once again for all the reports and to John Barker for his detailed weather reports. Please fill in the B forms with as much detail as possible - it would make the yearly report more interesting to everyone.

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*Ron and Doreen Jones.*

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