

Get your eyes peeled for the Big Garden Birdwatch 2018

Between 27 and 29 January the RSPB ask that you keep a record for just an hour on any one of these days of the birds in your garden or green space.

This is the 39th year that the wildlife survey has taken place with just under 500,000 people taking part last year. They counted 8 million birds providing useful information to the bird protection charity.



RSPB bird care product. Buggy nibbles food in peanut feeder Long-tailed Tit, *Aegithalos caudatus*

The house sparrow was most common with starlings and chaffinches also in the top three.

Last year the surprise was the increased number of people who spotted waxwings. These attractive looking birds flock to UK gardens in winter once every 7-8 years when the berry crop fails in their native Scandinavia. Known as an 'irruption', results showed that waxwings were seen in around nine times more Scottish gardens in 2017 compared to previous years.

Daniel Hayhow, RSPB Conservation Scientist said: "The birds we see in our garden are often the first experience we have with nature – whether it's a flock of starlings at the feeder, a robin perched on the fence or some house sparrows splashing in the bird bath. But it may come as a surprise to know that some of our most-loved species are in desperate need of our help as their numbers have dropped dramatically.

"The Big Garden Birdwatch is a great opportunity to get involved with helping our garden wildlife. By counting the

birds that visit your outdoor space, you'll be joining a team of over half-a-million people across the UK who are making a difference for nature. It only takes an hour so grab a cuppa, sit back and see who makes a flying visit to your garden.

“With over half a million people now regularly taking part, coupled with nearly 40 years' worth of data, Big Garden Birdwatch allows us to monitor trends and helps us understand how birds are doing. With results from so many gardens, we are able to create a 'snapshot' of the birds visiting at this time of year across the UK. Even if you see nothing during your Big Garden Birdwatch hour, that's important information too, so please let us know.”



RSPB bird care product. Medium Premium seed feeder and feeder mix extra Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

To take part in the Big Garden Birdwatch 2018, all you need to do is watch the birds in your garden or local park for one hour at some point during January 27-29. Count the birds that land, not ones flying over, and tell us the highest number of each bird species you see at any one time – not the total you see in the hour. Results can then be submitted at www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch.