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Blue tits, starlings, wood pigeons and blackbirds were the next most-sighted birds by more than 600,000 participants in the world's largest wildlife garden survey.

The long-running citizen science project provides conservationists with invaluable data on how common species are faring. Although an average of four house sparrows were spotted in every garden when the survey was conducted in January, the number recorded has declined by nearly 60% since the survey began in 1979.

Top 20 bird sightings in the 2024 RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch

Rank 2024	Species	Count per garden	% change since 1979	Rank 2024	Species	Count per garden	% change since 1979	
1	House sparrow	4.0	-60	11	Chaffinch	0.8	-74	
2	Blue tit	3.0	+24	12	Collared dove	0.8	+181	
3	Starling	2.4	-84	13	Jackdaw	0.8	n/a	N
4	Wood pigeon	2.3	+1,059	14	Feral pigeon	0.8	n/a	
5	Blackbird	2.0	-51	15	Dunnock	0.7	-10	Q
6	Robin	1.5	-25	16	Carrion crow	0.7	n/a	
7	Great tit	1.5	+61	17	Coal tit	0.7	+248	
8	Goldfinch	1.3	+n/a	18	Greenfinch	0.3	-69	Į
9	Magpie	1.2	+210	19	Wren	0.3	+68	
10	Long-tailed tit	1.1	n/a	20	Great-spotted woodpecker	0.1	n/a	

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Guardian graphic. Source: RSPB

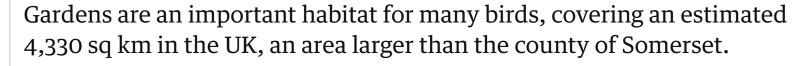
The starling, the third most seen bird this year, is on the UK red list of most threatened breeding bird species because of a sharp decline in its breeding population since the 1960s. It remains a popular visitor in winter, when birds arrive from northern Europe, but gardens and house roofs may be an increasingly important refuge for this declining species.



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Starlings were third on the most-sighted list this year. Photograph: Robert Bannister/Alamy

Beccy Speight, the chief executive of the RSPB, said: "Last year's State of Nature report laid out a grim picture, finding that there's been no let-up in the decline of our wildlife over recent decades, with one in six species at risk of being lost from Great Britain.

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Country diary: The sheer joy of	"However, with seven out of eight households lucky enough to have access to a garden, it is the place where many of us can make a positive difference to the ongoing nature crisis. Gardens and community green spaces can both give a crucial lifeline for struggling species by providing a huge patchwork of potential homes for nature."	
watching sparrows move in with us Read more	Other species in the top 20 included the great spotted woodpecker (20th), robin (6th) and jackdaw (13th).	
	• This article was amended on 12 April 2024 to correct errors supplied by the RSPB in the final column of the table, and to remove a paragraph that the previous data made unverifiable.	
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