

**Birds in your garden**

A well designed garden, or group of gardens, can support whole families of sparrows, treecreepers, robins, and thrushes, as well as visiting birds from nearby parks and woods. As well as a bird table, your perfect bird garden will provide shelter, natural food, nesting space and safe highways around the neighbourhood.

Birds in London

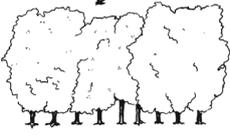
Different birds are found in many of London's habitats - watch for heron and teal on the Thames, great spotted woodpecker and nuthatch in woods and wooded parks, black redstart and linnet in scrubby wastelands, and robin and song thrush in your local park. You might find a flock of sand martins in the Lea Valley, hear a tawny owl out hunting along the Parkland Walk Local Nature Reserve or see a peregrine falcon soaring overhead almost anywhere.

Trees and shrubs for a bird garden

	Cover	Insects	Nectar	Fruit	Other specifics
Native Shrubs					
Spindle	*		*	***	
Dogwood	*		***	***	
Wild roses	**		**	**	
Wild privet	**	*	***	***	privet hawkmoth
Wayfaring tree	**	*	**	***	
Holly	***	*	*	***	
Hazel	**	*			squirrels!
Hawthorn	***	**	**	***	
Blackthorn	***	*	**	***	
Alder buckthorn	***	*	**	***	brimstone butterfly
Juniper	***	**		*	
Exotic shrubs					
Firethorn	***		*	***	red is best
Cotoneaster	***		*	***	
Berberis	***		*	***	
Climbing roses	***				
Lilac	*		***		
Currant	**	***			red is best
Mahonia	**	**			
Medium native trees					
Osier (basket willow)	*	***	**		
Goat willow	**	***	**		
Crab apple	**	***	***	***	
Field maple	**	**			
Wild cherry	*	*	**	***	
Silver birch	*	***			seed for finches
Fruit trees	*	*	**	***	
Large native trees					
Ash		*	**		
Oak		**	***		
Alder		**	***		seed for finches
Beech		**	***		seed for bulfinches
Hornbeam		**	***		

Safe havens

There is much concern in London about the impact of predation from magpies, squirrels, crows, cats and other nest-raiders on the small birds that we like to see and hear in our gardens. Most of these predators are particularly associated with areas with lots of tall open trees. Sparrows, blue-tits, robins, and other birds will be safe if you provide lots of dense thorny bushes for them to hide in. Magpies and cats cannot squeeze between blackthorn spikes where a wren can. Try to link shrubby areas in your garden, with bushes and small trees in the gardens of your neighbours, providing protection on both sides of the fence.

	Country style hedge	Tapestry hedge	Shrubbery or Copse	Mini woodland
				
	Deliberately dense and thorny to deter predators - also thieves	Autumn leaves retained for extra cover	Looser for people, or birds to settle, flowers and fruits encouraged	One or more small trees, with shrubs giving cover
creation	Dig a trench to plant shrubs at 30cm spacing. Or use a double row for extra density. Cut each plants stem and branches back halfway to encourage bushiness	As for traditional hedge. Single species used a lot, but tapestry is great for diversity	Plant at irregular intervals, at 1-2m spacing	Plant at irregular intervals, at 2 - 3m spacing. If against a fence, keep shrubs at front. Allow small pathways if large
trees & shrubs	80-90% Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Buckthorn, Crab apple, Roses 10-20% Hazel, Guelder rose, Maple, Wayfaring tree, Spindle, Privet, Plum	Oak, Hornbeam, Beech, Maple, Yew, Holly	Hazel, Buckthorn, Dogwood, Privet, Guelder Rose, Plum, Wayfaring tree, Ash, Osier, Field Maple	20 - 40 % small trees Silver birch, Whitebeam, Holly, Hawthorn, Cherry, Rowan, Crab apple, Goat willow, Maple 60-80% shrubs - as shrubbery or copse
maintenance	Full cut every two years in winter, Or cut half every year to leave cover. Leave 5% of trees to grow. Aim for a minimum height of 1.6m to encourage birds to nest. Lay or coppice after 10 years. To keep a thick dense hedge	Trim front and back to encourage sideways and upwards growth. Coppice alternate shrubs after 10 years	Coppice some shrubs every 2 - 10 years, by cutting back to max 20cm height in winter. Cut different shrubs in different years	Allow trees to grow to maximum height - cut any stray branches cleanly in winter. Coppice shrubs as shrubbery

- All trees and shrubs should be planted at least 30cm from any fence.
- Water in as soon as planted to help the soil settle, and continue to water if the first spring is dry.
- Mulching with wood chips, leaf mould, old carpet strips, or other mulch will help retard competition and allow the hedge to grow better.
- Never water lightly, as this encourages the roots to the surface – drench each tree with a bucketful of water.
- All these features may be underplanted with bulbs and woodland flowers the following year. For ferns, add lots of leaf mould to retain water.



In partnership with



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