

Flaxton Environment Group

Big Garden Birdwatch: Report on results for Flaxton 2025

Introduction

The Big Garden Birdwatch is a national survey run once a year by the RSPB. It involves individuals or families recording the maximum number of birds of each species seen at one time in their garden over a period of one hour. The hour-long recording period can be at any time during the day within the period of the survey. In 2025 the survey ran from the 24th to the 26th of January.

People taking part in the survey within Flaxton were asked to send their results to the Flaxton Environmental Group so that a summary could be produced of what had been seen, as a record for the village, and for comparison in future years.

Results

Records were received from only six gardens this year, compared to 8 in 2024. Only two of these gardens also reported in 2024, so care must be taken when drawing comparisons between the years, as the location and habitats within the gardens will affect the types of birds living in them.

In total, 191 birds of 23 species (compared to 20 in 2024) were counted. Of these, 11 species were seen in less than half of the gardens monitored, and only eight were seen in more than half of the gardens. Five species were seen in all six gardens: Blackbird, House Sparrow, Blue Tit, Chaffinch and Great Tit. Eight species were seen in only one garden (see table below). The average number of bird species counted per garden was 12.5. The table shows that the species most commonly seen was Blackbird (up from third in 2024) followed by House Sparrow (first in 2024), Blue Tit (second in 2024), Chaffinch (up from 7th in 2025) and Goldfinch (up from 9th in 2024). Blackbirds do seem to have been particularly numerous in late winter this year, probably due to an influx of migrants from Europe. Two recorders just noted 'sparrow', and it was assumed these were House Sparrows as they are the commoner species, but it's possible that they could have been Tree Sparrows, which were seen in one garden.

Five species seen this year were not seen in 2024: Great Spotted Woodpecker, Moorhen, Nuthatch, Redwing, Rook and Sparrow Hawk. Three species seen in 2024 were not spotted in 2025: Marsh Tit, Siskin and Wren. It is perhaps surprising that no wrens were seen as they are common birds, but as noted in last year's report, they are often difficult to see because of their habit of hiding in bushes and other dense vegetation. Siskins and Marsh Tits are not commonly seen in gardens, though Siskins often appear later in spring when food supplies in the wider countryside may be getting low.

The RSPB was still collecting results at the time of writing (12 February), but according to their website, the three top species North Yorkshire in order were the same as in Flaxton i.e. Blackbird, House Sparrow, and Blue Tit. In the country as a whole the order was House Sparrow, Blue Tit, Woodpigeon, Starling, Blackbird and Robin. In Flaxton, far fewer Woodpigeons were seen this year than last, as they slipped down the rankings from fourth in 2024 to 14th in 2025. This may be because supplies of food in the wider countryside are greater this year, so fewer Woodpigeons are using gardens. Starlings ranked 12th in Flaxton in both years, and appear to be less common than other species compared to the country as a whole.

Although House Sparrow was the second commonest species, nationally they have declined greatly along with Tree Sparrow, Starling and Greenfinch. It's good to see that these are all still present in Flaxton, though Starlings were thin on the ground compared to elsewhere.

Species	Total birds seen	Number of Gardens (out of 6)	Rank 2025	Rank 2024
Blackbird	31	6	1	3
House Sparrow	28	6	2	1
Bue tit	17	6	3	2
Chaffinch	16	6	4	7
Goldfinch	13	4	5	9
Great tit	11	6	6	5
Tree Sparrow	10	1	7	14
Long-tailed tit	10	4	8	12
Dunnock	10	5	9	10
Robin	9	5	10	8
Greenfinch	8	5	11	16
Starling	6	2	12	12
Coal tit	5	4	13	14
Woodpigeon	4	4	14	4
Collared dove	3	2	15	11
Great Spotted Woodpecker	3	2	15	-
Bullfinch	1	1	17	19
Jackdaw	1	1	17	6
Moorhen	1	1	19	-
Nuthatch	1	1	19	-
Redwing	1	1	19	-
Rook	1	1	19	-
Sparrow Hawk	1	1	19	-
Siskin			-	17
Wren			-	18
Marsh Tit			-	20

A big thank you once again to all those who took part and submitted their records. I hope you enjoyed it and may be tempted to have another go next year.

Nigel Boatman, Flaxton Environment Group

February 2025