

What's happening in the news this week?



Baylis Media/Solent News/Shutterstock

Let's have a look at this week's poster!

6th - 12th January 2025



**Is it our responsibility to protect
local wildlife?**



Let's look at this week's story

Birdwatch is an annual UK-wide citizen science project held every January, inviting people to gather data to support the work of scientists. Both the Big Garden and the Big Schools' Birdwatch offer people the chance to count birds visiting gardens, playgrounds or school outdoor spaces. This simple activity helps identify bird populations and the most common species. The data collected then helps scientists monitor bird numbers and deduce whether any species are in decline.



Learn more about this week's story [here](#).
Watch this week's useful video [here](#).
This week's Virtual Picture News [here](#).



How does it make me feel?



sad

despondent
disconsolate
dismal
doleful
downhearted
forlorn
gloomy
melancholic
miserable
woeful
wretched

angry

aggrieved
annoyed
discontented
disgruntled
distressed
exasperated
frustrated
indignant
offended
outraged
resentful
vexed

happy

beaming
buoyant
cheery
contented
delighted
enraptured
gleeful
glowing
joyful

confused

addled
baffled
bemused
bewildered
disorientated
indistinct
muddled
mystified
perplexed
puzzled

excited

animated
elevated
enlivened
enthusiastic
exhilarated
exuberant
thrilled

worried

agitated
anxious
apprehensive
concerned
disquieted
distraught
distressed
disturbed
fretful
perturbed
troubled
uneasy

overwhelmed

engulfed
inundated
overburdened
overloaded
saturated
submerged
swamped

afraid

alarmed
apprehensive
daunted
fearful
frantic
horrified
petrified
terrified

guilty

ashamed
compunctious
contrite
culpable
penitent
responsible
rueful

jealous

bitter
covetous
desirous
envious
envying
resentful
wary

thankful

appreciative
grateful
gratified
indebted
obliged
relieved

shocked

astonished
astounded
disconcerted
distressed
dumbfounded
horrified
staggered
startled
stunned
surprised

disgusted

affronted
appalled
horrified
repelled
repulsed
revolted
sickened

inspired

activated
encouraged
exhilarated
galvanised
influenced
motivated

embarrassed

ashamed
awkward
chagrined
demeaned
discomposd
humiliated
self-conscious
uncomfortable
uneasy
unsettled

interested

absorbed
captivated
curious
engaged
enthralled
fascinated
gripped
intrigued
riveted

This week's story looks at events related to ...





Read through the information below about Birdwatch 2025. Talk about the impact it can have, both on local habitats and for the people who take part.

What is Birdwatch?

The Big Garden Birdwatch, and the Big School Birdwatch, are annual events organised by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), with the aim of using data collected by people at home and in schools to help scientists establish bird numbers and locations. The first Big Garden Birdwatch was 45 years ago. Last year, over half a million people looked out for birds, making Birdwatch the largest citizen wildlife survey in the UK. Birdwatch is a unique collective effort, which helps build a picture of how different birds are doing.

How does it work?

- 1 Register to take part in either the home or school challenges on the RSPB website.
- 2 Start counting. Using the available information and surveys, count the number of each type of bird you see in a fixed time period.
- 3 Submit your results and wait for the findings to learn about how bird numbers have changed.

What have previous Birdwatch events discovered?

In 2023, the top five birds spotted in the Big Schools' Birdwatch were blackbird, woodpigeon, house sparrow, starling and magpie.



Pictured above: A previous Big School Birdwatch form being completed.
Source: RSPB.



Look at the resource below, which shares some fun facts about some of the most common birds found in the UK.



Robin

Robins are known for their bright red chests.

They are very friendly and often come close to people in gardens.

Robins sing all year round, even in winter!



Blue Tit

Blue tits are very acrobatic and can hang upside down while eating!

They love peanuts and seeds, so they often visit bird feeders.

Top Tips for Bird Watching!

Birds can be shy and easily scared. Stay still and quiet to give them a chance to come closer.

Birds love seeds, nuts, and crumbs. Leave some food in a feeder or on the ground to attract them.

Bird watching takes time. Find a comfortable spot, stay still, and wait for the birds to come to you.

Keep a little notebook to draw pictures or write about the birds you spot!

House Sparrow

House sparrows love to live near people and sometimes build nests in roofs or walls.

They are very chatty and chirp a lot when they're together.



Blackbird

Male blackbirds are black with yellow beaks, but females are brown.

They love eating worms and can often be seen hopping on the ground.

Blackbirds are great singers and make beautiful, musical sounds.





Look at the resource below, which shares some statistics about UK wildlife numbers, and things we can do to support them.

According to the UK government, nearly half of UK bird species showed a decrease in numbers in the five years between 2015 and 2020.

The State of Britain's Hedgehogs report has found that rural hedgehog populations in the UK have declined by up to 75% since 2000, leading to their classification as 'near-threatened'.

In its annual October survey week, the Great Scottish Squirrel Survey reported an increase in red squirrel sightings of nearly 30% over the past year, attributed to conservation efforts.

How can we help our local wildlife?

- Hang a bird feeder
- Plant wildflowers
- Build a bug hotel
- Leave out fresh water
- Build a hedgehog house
- Install a birdhouse



Have you done any of these before?

What animals or insects do you think would benefit the most from these actions?

What other ideas can you think of to help wildlife near you?



How do you feel about the changes in numbers for these animals?

Were you surprised by any of the statistics?

How do these statistics show the impact people can have on nature?

Do you feel hopeful that we can protect wildlife? Why?





Picture
News

**Is it our responsibility to protect
local wildlife?**

Bay's Media/Smart News/Shutterstock

Reflection



Wherever you live, becoming more aware of local habitats can help you understand and support the wildlife within them.





**British
Values**



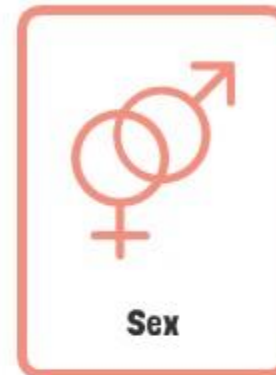
Rule of Law

There are rules and laws in place to protect and preserve wildlife and their habitats. It is our responsibility to uphold these rules and laws for the benefit of everyone.

Protected Characteristics



The beautiful diversity in birds and wildlife mirrors the diversity within our own communities. By celebrating our differences, we can treat everyone with fairness and respect.

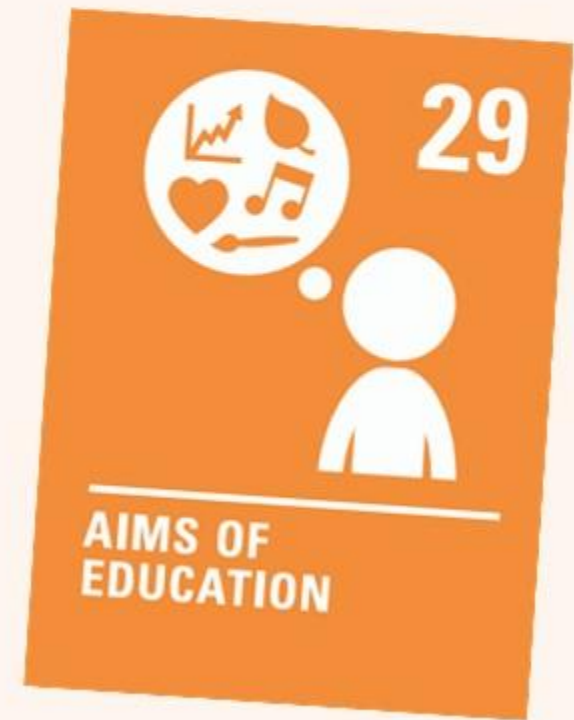




UN Rights of the Child



Our education should teach us about protecting the environment. Adults can embrace initiatives like the RSPB's Birdwatch, which are inspiring, helping us to see our role in taking care of the world we live in.



Useful Vocabulary



Citizen science project

A project where everyday people help scientists by collecting and sharing information.

Birdwatch is an annual UK-wide **citizen science project** held every January, inviting people to gather data to support the work of scientists.

Collective

Done by people acting as a group.

Birdwatch is a unique **collective** effort, which helps build a picture of how different birds are doing.

Deduce

To figure something out by using information or clues.

The data collected then helps scientists monitor bird numbers and **deduce** whether any species are in decline.

Habitat

The natural home where animals, birds, or plants live.

Talk about the impact it could have, both on local **habitats** and for the people who take part.

Monitor

To watch and check something carefully over time.

The data collected then helps scientists **monitor** bird numbers and deduce whether any species are in decline.

Species

A type or kind of animal, bird, or plant.

This simple activity helps identify bird populations and the most common **species**.

Can you use them in your writing this week?

Collective Worship



Bible Link: Job 12:7-10
Christian Value: Respect
Theme: Our Wonderful World



Pupil talk

- What birds or animals have you seen in your garden or playground?
- Why do you think it's important to take care of animals that live near us?
- What does it mean to be responsible for something?
- How can we show responsibility in the way we treat animals and their habitats?

Think

Birdwatch is an annual UK-wide citizen science project held every January, inviting people to gather data to support the work of scientists. Both the Big Garden and the Big Schools' Birdwatch offer people the chance to count birds visiting gardens, playgrounds or school outdoor spaces. This simple activity helps identify bird populations and the most common species. The data collected then helps scientists monitor bird numbers and deduce whether any species are in decline.

God teaches us to learn from His creation. We can take time to admire and appreciate the animals and birds around us. Each bird and creature is part of God's plan, and by helping to protect them, we show love and respect for His creation.

Invitation prayer

Dear God,
Thank you for the wonderful world you have created and for the beauty of the birds and wildlife around us. Thank you for people who work hard to study and protect wildlife and guide us to play our part as stewards of your creation.
Amen

Key stage 1 class discussion

- Why do you think God created so many different kinds of animals and birds? How do you feel when you see wildlife in your garden or playground?
- Why might some animals and birds need our help to survive?
- What small things could you do at school or home to help protect wildlife?

Key stage 2 class discussion

- What do you think it means to be a 'steward' of God's Creation?
- How does taking care of wildlife help us honour God?
- What can we do as stewards of Creation to protect the Earth and its creatures in our daily lives?
- Why do you think projects like the RSPB Birdwatch are important?

Worship song

Who put the colours in the rainbow?



God



Creation



Fall



People of God



Incarnation



Gospel



Salvation



Kingdom of God



Is it our responsibility to protect local wildlife?

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- Look at this week's poster and share your predictions about the story. What can you see?
- The poster shows people taking part in Birdwatch. Is this something you are aware of? Have you taken part before?
- Watch this week's useful video, which explains more about this year's Birdwatch, then read through the information found on the assembly resource. Talk about the impact it could have, both on local habitats and for the people who take part.
- Think about your local area, including your home and school. What wildlife can you find there?
- Do you feel it's important to protect wildlife, and what are some of the ways we can?
- Aside from our own actions, who else do you believe has a part to play in ensuring habitats and wildlife are protected?

Reflection

Wherever you live, becoming more aware of local habitats can help you understand and support the wildlife within them.



KS1 focus

What are some examples of birds found in the UK?



- Take another look at this week's poster. Where do you think these people could be? Does this look like a good place for birdwatching? Where else might be a good location for spotting birds?
- Can you name any birds you've seen in your garden, park, or near your school?
- What colours and patterns can you spot on birds?
- How do birds sound? Can you try imitating any bird calls?
- Look at resource 1, which shares some information about birds commonly found in the UK. Do you recognise any of these birds? Have you ever seen them before?
- What do you notice about the different birds? Are they all the same size or colour? Can you think of any reasons that could be behind the birds' similarities or differences?
- Read about each of the birds. Did you know any of these facts already? Which is your favourite? Are there any other birds you know that you could add onto this list?
- Why do you think some birds live in gardens and others live in forests or near water?
- Why are birds important in nature?
- Why not spend some time outside, either at home or school, and try to spot some birds and other wildlife? Use the top tips on resource 1 to make your session a success!

Reflection

Birds bring colour, song, and life to our world. By learning about them and taking time to observe, we can help protect their homes and enjoy their beauty.



KS2 focus

What everyday actions can we take to protect natural habitats near us?



- What do you think natural habitats are, and why are they important?
- How do humans impact the places where animals and birds live?
- Have you ever taken part in any activities or projects to help protect or preserve wildlife or the environment? Share more about your experience.
- Read and reflect on the statistics on resource 2. Do any of these facts surprise or worry you? Do you think they are indicative of how human activity can affect local wildlife? Do you feel hopeful that we can protect wildlife? Why?
- Look at resource 2 and consider the examples of things people can do to help nature. Which of these ideas do you think is most helpful? Which is least helpful? Why?
- Talk in small groups about changes you could make at home or school to support local wildlife.
- How do the actions in resource 2 help animals and plants survive? Do they have a big or small impact?
- Pick one action from the resource, or use one of your own ideas, and explain how it could help birds, insects, or plants in your area.
- Can you think of any benefits that protecting local wildlife might bring to your community (e.g., attracting visitors, improved mental health, bringing people together)?
- Who should be responsible for looking after nature? Adults, the government, everyone? Why?

Reflection

Protecting natural habitats is a shared responsibility. Small actions, like planting wildflowers or leaving out water, can make a big difference.

Picture News



KS2 follow-up ideas

Option 1

Design a map of your local area and mark places where you could add natural habitats or improve existing ones. To make a wildlife-friendly map, think about your local surroundings. Draw a map of where you live, showing places like parks, gardens, and streets. Then, mark spots where you could add things to help nature, like planting wildflowers, putting up a birdhouse, or making a bug hotel. Annotate and colour your map and share your ideas with others! Is there anything you could implement as a class?

Option 2

Plan and carry out an investigation to explore how different environments support different types of wildlife. Begin by choosing three local habitats, such as a garden, a wooded area, and a school field. Visit each habitat and observe the plants and animals that live there. Take notes or draw pictures of what you find.

Think about:

- How does each habitat provide the things animals and plants need to survive, such as food, water, and shelter?
- Why do you think certain animals or plants live in one habitat but not another?
- How are they adapted to their environment?

You could then create a poster or presentation to share your findings with others. You could also include ideas on how we can protect these habitats and support the animals that depend on them.

Picture News



KS1 follow-up ideas

Option 1

Making a bird feeder is easy and fun! Use a recycled container (e.g., milk carton or toilet roll tube) or a pinecone, and cover it with seeds using some lard to stick them on. Alternatively, you could melt down your lard, mix with seeds, shape it around a piece of string and leave to set.

Hang your feeder in a safe spot outside, like a tree or a garden, and watch the birds enjoy their treat.



Option 2

Imagine your very own bird species! Think about:

- What does it look like?
- How does it sound?
- Where does it live?

Then, draw a picture of your bird and give it a name. You could also think about what it likes to eat and what colours or patterns it might have on its feathers.

Picture News



This week's useful websites

This week's news story

www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/get-ready-for-big-schools-birdwatch

This week's useful video

Birdwatch 2025

<https://youtu.be/RvbJrMAEC4g>

This week's Virtual Picture News

www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss

This week's vocabulary

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Bring in the New Year with a BANG

Every year, cities around the world celebrate New Year's Eve with spectacular firework displays. People gather to say goodbye to the old year and welcome the new one with bright colours and sparkling lights. In Sydney, Australia, fireworks light up the famous Harbour Bridge and Opera House. In London, the sky over the River Thames glows with fireworks near Big Ben and the London Eye. In New York City, fireworks follow the famous ball drop in Times Square, where people count down together. Ella Brown, a firework organiser in London, said,



Pictured: Fireworks at Sydney Harbour Bridge, Australia. **Source:** Canva.

'Fireworks bring people together in a magical way. It's wonderful to see everyone smiling and cheering!' Some places also have special traditions, like eating lucky foods or banging pots and pans. However you celebrate, New Year's Eve is a time for joy and new beginnings!

Do you enjoy watching fireworks for New Year?

Carbon Catcher

Scientists in California have created a special new material to help the planet! It's called COF-999 and is a fluffy, yellow powder that can quickly remove carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the air. CO₂ comes from things like cars and factories. Too much of it makes the Earth hotter, which is bad for animals, plants, and people. This new material works faster than others and can be used again and again, making it extra useful. Dr Samantha Lee, one of the scientists, said, 'This material is an exciting step forward in slowing climate

change. It's like giving the planet a big helping hand!' The new material could play an important role in protecting the Earth and all the creatures that live on it. What a clever way to make the world a healthier place!



Pictured: Magical carbon catcher, COF-999. **Source:** Canva.

Should everyone have the opportunity to be a star?



I think everyone should have the opportunity to be a star and shine in their own way.

Shannay

Room with a View

Roswell Park Cancer Center in Buffalo, New York, USA, is being transformed one view at a time. Ten new window murals have been painted directly onto the walls of treatment rooms at the hospital, with the aim of assisting patients to use their imagination and escape into nature. Inspirational artist and cancer survivor, Colleen Wall, designed the window wall art creating views of sunny, peaceful places, with motivating ideas and words of encouragement.



Pictured: LandEscape window murals painted in Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center.
Source: Colleen Wall Arts on Facebook.

'Spending long periods of time in a hospital room can feel isolating,' said Colleen Wall. 'These window paintings are meant to help patients feel as though they are not confined to a sterile room but instead can take an imaginary journey outside into nature. It's my way of sharing the hope that helped me through my own challenges.'

Do you think this is a good way to cheer up a room with no windows?

What art would you enjoy on your wall?



Pictured: LandEscape window murals painted in Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center.
Source: Colleen Wall Arts on Facebook

Symbol of Peace!

We want to send a big thank you from all the team to everyone who took part in the Picture News Christmas Campaign for 2024. We challenged every school to create their own Origami Peace Doves, for children to express what peace means to them. Following a year of turbulent events around the world, this activity aimed to unite all children in their hope for peace. We have absolutely loved looking through all the pictures of your peace doves! It is not too late to share your Origami Peace Doves with us on social media, or by emailing:

help@picture-news.co.uk

Do you think this is a good way to spread messages of peace?

Can you think of any other ways?



Pictured: Origami Peace Doves.
Source: Picture News on Facebook.

Should everyone have the opportunity to be a star?



Yes, because everyone should get a chance to make their dreams come true.

Alyza

Let us know what you think about this week's news



picture-news.co.uk/discuss



help@picture-news.co.uk



[@HelpPicture](https://twitter.com/HelpPicture)

TAKEHOME

6th - 12th
January



**Is it our responsibility
to protect local wildlife?**

In the news this week

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Things to talk about at home ...

- Tell someone at home about Birdwatch 2025. Is it something your household would like to take part in?
- Discuss with someone at home about your local area and the wildlife found there.
- Do you know whether there are any schemes in place where you live to protect wildlife or nature?

Please note any interesting thoughts or comments

Share your thoughts and read the opinions of others

www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss

