

Gardening for Birds



As well as putting out food for birds you can also attract them into your garden by planting suitable trees and shrubs. These can provide suitable nesting sites as well as offer a rich and abundant food source. Some of the more suitable of the commonly-grown garden plants are listed below.



Cotoneasters (*Cotoneaster spp.*)

These provide dense cover for nesting and an abundant supply of red/orange berries in the winter months. A particular favourite of Blackbirds.



Pyracantha (*Pyracantha crenulata*)

Grown against a wall, this evergreen shrub produces white flowers in spring and an abundant supply of bright orange berries in autumn, great for attracting a whole host of bird species.



Ivy (*Hedera helix*) (the normal wild form)

Climbs up trees and walls. The fruit is eaten in late winter and early spring by Woodpigeons, thrushes, Robins and Blackcaps. Ivy also provides good cover for nests, and its flowers are attractive to insects in the autumn.



Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*)

A range of different varieties provide a long flowering and long fruiting season. Attracts warblers as well as thrushes and Bullfinches. The dense growth of this climber provides ample cover for nesting and the nectar is great for other wildlife such as butterflies and bees.



Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)

For a good crop of berries, plant female trees of the normal wild form: note that to ensure good fruiting there should be a male Holly tree nearby. Trees defended by territorial Mistle Thrushes may hold their berries until the spring. Larger Holly trees also provide good secure nesting sites.



Rowan/Mountain Ash (*Sorbus aucuparia*)
(the normal red-berried form)

The large clusters of red berries attract winter thrushes such as Redwings and Fieldfares. These berries are also the main source of food for the rare Waxwing.



Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)

Although slow-growing, its berries are a great favourite with Redwings and Blackbirds. A dense hedge will provide plenty of nesting cover for a wide range of species and beautiful blossoms each spring.



Crab Apples (*Malus sylvestris*)

The small fruits on these trees are much welcomed by wintering Blackcaps and thrushes and are great for making crab apple jelly.

**BirdWatch Ireland,
P.O. Box 12,
Greystones,
Co. Wicklow**

Phone +353-1-2819878 Fax +353-1-2819763

E-mail info@birdwatchireland.ie Website www.birdwatchireland.ie