

Birdwatching! A great way to get out and enjoy nature close to home. But what is it?

We all have an innate curiosity for things that are different. This is especially true when we think of the natural world. Nature and wildlife is all around us in the outdoors and just being present in the moment outside will make you more aware of what is around you. You will begin to notice wildlife everywhere, especially birds.

Have you ever wondered what that strange bird is in your garden? Or what that unusual bird is that you saw when out on your walk? Maybe you have been intrigued by a colourful dash of orange and blue whizzing past as you walk along a local river. Is there a bird you always come across but you are not sure what it is?

Birdwatching is a fantastic way of connecting with the natural world. Through birds we can see the changes in the seasons. Winter is a time when we get more birds in our gardens and visitors from overseas to our countryside. Why not look a little closer and find out what birds are in your garden, on the local farm or down at the river?

Garden Birds

If you are lucky enough to have a garden you may already be aware of the birds visiting it. But why not try identify the species you encounter? Most people know the Robin. See if you can find a Blackbird, Song Thrush, House Sparrow, Collared Dove, Chaffinch, Greenfinch or the beautifully marked Goldfinch. Those with mature gardens may be able to find the handsome Bullfinch.



Farmland Birds

When out for a local walk on country roads or farmland there is the chance to see even more types of birds. Look out for the Yellowhammer, Stonechat, Skylark and winter thrushes such as Fieldfare and Redwing on grassland. If you are lucky enough you may encounter the national bird of Ireland, the colourful Lapwing.



Stonechat



Redwing



Lapwing

Water Birds

Rivers, lakes and even small ponds will attract different birds to those in your garden. The Kingfisher is a striking blue and orange coloured bird that fishes in slow moving rivers. The Grey Wagtail has lovely yellow markings while the Grey Heron may be stalking for fish from the water. Look for Mallard, Moorhen and Little Grebe on still waterbodies.



Grey Heron



Moorhen



Mallard

If you need help identifying a bird why not try out the BirdWatch Ireland website <https://birdwatchireland.ie/>



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COVID-19: It is important to stay up to date as social distancing guidelines may change over time. The most up to date advice, information and resources can be found on: www.hse.ie and www.health.gov.ie

Nature on Your Doorstep activity sheets brought to you by Carlow Sports Partnership in collaboration with the Carlow County Council Keep Well Campaign, Carlow Mental Health Association, Healthy Carlow & Carlow Tourism.