



House Sparrows, patiently waiting whilst their feeders are filled up.

A big “thank you” for signing up to take part in the Henfield Birdwatch 2026 Garden Bird Survey. We could do with a few more people, so please encourage anybody you know in the Parish to join in, they don’t have to be a member.

We have created a map showing the postcodes that we have signed up so far, it can be viewed [here](#). As you can see, we’re particularly lacking people in the north of the village.

2026 has started as a tough year for our garden birds, freezing cold, snow & ice and now the wind and rain. All of this is making it difficult for them to locate their natural food. There’s an interesting [BTO article](#) on how much blue and great tits need to eat to keep warm over long winter nights. So if you are in a position to provide supplementary bird food, please do.

However once you start, please don’t stop until natural food becomes available. Birds establish a route round feeders and will waste energy visiting feeders only to find them empty.

- We say it frequently, please keep those feeders and bird baths clean. Feeders bring birds into an unnatural proximity, where disease can spread more easily. The RSPB now recommend not to use bird tables and flat surfaces. Obviously, it’s up to you if and how you feed the birds but please keep an eye out for disease and stop feeding if you see a problem. There’s more information [here](#).
- Many of us have ponds for wildlife, but they can be frozen in this winter, so please consider putting out a shallow dish of clean water when needed.

One final plea on behalf of those chilly birds, please keep hedges and shrubs thick to provide roosting spots. And, if you have somewhere suitable, consider having some bird boxes. Even if they are not used for nesting, they may make useful roosting places.

That’s it for this bulletin. Next time we’ll cover how to do the survey and identify any less familiar birds.