

Online recording for the Garden Bird Survey



A quick start guide

For almost 30 years, the Lincolnshire Bird Club has been coordinating a survey of garden birds to help get a picture of the status of some of our more common species.

Now, working in partnership with the GLNP, the technology has been made available to enable more people to take part using an online recording system.



Registering

In order to use the online recording form, you will need to register on the website.

Visit the online form at <http://record.glnp.org.uk/> and click "Create new account". Enter in your details and read the terms and conditions – if you agree, then tick box and click the "Create new account" button. Once your account has been verified by a member of the GLNP staff, you will receive an email and you'll be able to log in.

Setting up your site

Once you've logged in you'll need to set up your first recording patch. If you're keen, you can set up more than one – for instance your workplace as well as your own garden.

Follow these steps to set up a location:

- Click on "Add a new survey location".
- Type a name for your site that's useful for you.

- Find your site on the map and click to set the map reference. Try to zoom in as close as possible.
- The next step provides information on your site, such as how big it is and what the adjacent habitats are. This information can be used to see if there are any correlations between changes in bird numbers and habitats.
- Once you've filled in the details, click "Save". You should now see your site under "Survey locations". If you need to make any changes, click "Edit" next to the site to make the changes.

Starting a recording form

To start recording, select your site from the season tables and start entering counts!

The online form mimics the paper form closely – species are listed down the page, with recording weeks across the top and the tick boxes across the top allow you to keep track of when you've put food out for the birds.





Name..... Address..... Email.....

Table with columns for week no (1-19) and rows for bird species (SH, BH, WP, CD, PW, WR, D, R, B, FF, ST, RE, M, GC, LT, CT, BT, GT, MG, JD, SG).

The paper form

To help you, the number of species seen in each week is automatically totalled at the bottom of the table, and the maximum count and number of weeks a species is seen is shown on the right.

When you've finished adding your counts, hit the "Submit" button below the table and you'll be taken back at the home page.

Updating the recording form

Depending on how you like to record, the online form can be used in a couple of ways.

You can enter and change your counts on the recording form as they happen - just click on the "Load survey form" next to the form you want to update.

Table with columns for weeks (1-8) and rows for bird species (JAY, CHIFFCHAFF, TAWNY OWL, COMMON WHITETHROAT, SWALLOW, GREY WAGTAIL, SPARROWHAWK, GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER, ROOK, CARRION CROW, WAXWING, WILLOW WARBLER, GREEN WOODPECKER, BRAMBLING).

The online form

Only numbers can be entered into the boxes, and if you need to change a value (for instance you've seen more blackbirds), just delete the old value and enter the new one.

To completely remove a count (perhaps you entered a count in the wrong box) change the value to a zero.

Alternatively, if you prefer to keep a paper copy by your window, you can also enter your counts in one go every now and again if you prefer.

Having problems?

This online form is the first of its kind and is quite complex - if you experience any problems, please let us know.

The site is administered by the GLNP Team who can be contacted using the details below or using the contact form on the online recording website.

Future plans

At the moment the form is designed to make an easy transition from paper to online.

We will be monitoring the use of the online form as it gets used, to see if we can improve it and help make it easier to use. We are keen to hear ideas on how to improve the system and all feedback is welcome.

A number of ideas are already being developed to make it more useful, such as viewing the current reporting rate of species, geographic distribution of recorders and information pages on the focus bird species.

Behind the scenes

The online recording form uses the Indicia online biological recording toolkit.

This has enabled us to simplify the construction of the online form by using pre-built functions and modules. It also allows us to integrate with the National Biodiversity Network and ensure all data collected is in a useable format.

Behind the scenes, the form was developed by Biodiverse IT with funding from Defra through their contract for the development of the National Biodiversity Network.

The Indicia online biological recording toolkit is incredibly flexible - if you can think of a way it can be used to improve and encourage biological recording in Greater Lincolnshire, just let us know!

