

# Song thrush

**As our climate changes, gardens are becoming even more vital to wildlife and people. They can provide shade, absorb carbon, soak up flood water and help to cool buildings. A well managed network of gardens stretching across the Sussex would also help wildlife to move more freely and adapt to climate change enabling us to create a living landscape**

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## Nest-site necessities

The Song thrush nest is constructed several meters from the ground and as with the Blackbird, a platform is helpful. A shady place in a bush or tree is the usual location for the nest with Honeysuckle or Ivy providing good opportunities for a sturdy bowl shaped nest.



Song thrush / Darin Smith

## Building materials

The nest is mainly constructed of grass and twigs with the lining on which the eggs are laid being a mixture of mud or dung, smoothed by the female's breast.

## Chick care

Earthworms are a prime food – watering your lawn is a good idea if the weather is dry. Don't clear up the leaf-litter in your shrubbery as this is where the parents find a lot of their food – you can hear them doing it as they toss the material from side to side.



Leaf litter / Victoria Hume

## Special dietary requirements

Song thrushes often feed under or close to cover, where they will hunt out caterpillars, earthworms, slugs and snails. Supplementary food often favoured by this Thrush is fruit, raisins and mealworms. The best thing you can do is to maintain a snail population in some corner of the garden, and provide an anvil or two – a half-brick or a flint will help them crack open their food.



Song thrush / David Ball

## Night shelter

The resident pair and their well-grown family may roost together low down in thick cover.

## The ideal territory

Woodland with open areas may be the best natural habitat, but mature gardens, in suburbia, are better. Territory size can be so small that as many as five pairs can cram into each hectare.

## When it's all happening

Breeding takes place from the end of February to the beginning of September – but breeding is known to stop if the weather is too dry and food is in short supply.



Song thrush / Darin Smith

**Breeding Starts:** March – June

**Number of Clutches:** 2-4

**Number of Eggs:** 3-9

**Incubation Days:** 11-15

**Fledge Days:** 12-16

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