

Starling

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

This bird tends to cram an untidy nest of straw and grass lined with hair and feathers, into holes in trees and the walls of old buildings, or under



Starling / Hugh Clark

the eaves. The male selects a hole and entices a female to join him – she selects him and his hole. A Starling nest box should be big – 40cm tall by 20cm square and with a 5cm entrance hole.

Building materials

Straw, twigs, leaves, etc, with a nest chamber lined with feathers. The structure may be enormous if the nest site is unrestricted.

Chick care

All sorts of foods may be taken, but it is crucial that there should be good numbers of invertebrates to make sure the chicks are healthy.



Juvenile starling / Dave Kilbey

Special dietary requirements

The parents can make use of your kitchen scraps for themselves, and may select choice items for feeding their young.

Night shelter

Females roost in the nest, and some breeding males may roost nearby. Otherwise, the roosts are communal and may exceed a million birds in winter. Roosts may be on buildings, in reedbeds, bushes or even piers!



Starlings at Brighton pier / Mark Bond

The ideal territory

Starlings are looking for a good perch and a lovely nest hole. Feeding may be up to a kilometre or more away – the birds having to trade off the quality of food with the time it takes to collect.

When it's all happening

Starlings start to display in early April, and eggs are laid at the end of the month. Many have double broods in the South, with the last chicks flying in July.



Singing starling / Dave Kilbey

Breeding Starts: April

Number of Clutches: 1-2

Number of Eggs: 4-9

Incubation Days: 12-15

Fledge Days: 20-22

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