

How to protect bird nests: if you love them, leave them alone



Every spring, birds devote a huge amount of time and energy to looking after their eggs and chicks. If you want to give them a helping hand, here are some simple tips that you can follow in your garden and local area to keep nesting birds safe.

Leave them alone- Once you discover a nest's location, it's important to leave it alone. If you get too close, you could risk damaging it.

Let that garden grow! Trees, hedges, meadows, undergrowth – all of these have cosy nooks where birds love to raise their young. If you see a bird building a nest in one of these places, don't prune it until breeding season is over.

Keep pets away- Cats can have a devastating effect on garden bird populations – especially birds nesting near the ground. So keep your cat indoors, or create an enclosed outside area or “catio”.

Build a predator-proof bird box- Location is important: ideally, the box should be at least three metres from the ground and far away from any buildings, trees or bushes that predators can climb up.

See a nest in danger? Say something! Many countries have laws in place to protect nesting birds. If you see someone stealing eggs or chicks from a nest, or if an important nesting habitat in your local area is about to be built on or destroyed, inform your local authorities. Remember that your safety comes first.