

PEST BIRD FACT SHEET

SPECIES PROFILE - COMMON BLACKBIRD

Common Name: Common Blackbird

Scientific Name: *Turdus merula*



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Distribution & habitat

- Breeds in Europe, Asia, and North Africa, and has been introduced to Australia and New Zealand.
- Introduced to Australia at Melbourne in the 1850s.
- Most often found in urban areas and surrounding localities, but has successfully moved into bushland habitats.
- It is often seen in orchards, vineyards and gardens, as well as along roadsides and in parks.
- Habitats with exotic flowering plants can be preferred by introduced bird species such as the Common Blackbird.

Feeding

- Eats insects, earthworms, snails, spiders and a range of seeds and fruit.
- Mainly forages on the ground, probing and scratching at leaf litter, lawns and soil.

Breeding

- Breeds from September to January.
- Common Blackbirds build a cup-shaped nest of dried grass, bound with mud, and lined with fine grasses.
- The nest is usually placed in a tree, shrub or low bush, but they will also use tree hollows.

Living with humans

- The Common Blackbird can be a pest in orchards, parks and gardens, being rather destructive of ground vegetation, particularly backyard vegetable patches.
- Blackbirds have also been implicated in the spread of weed species including blackberry, bitou bush and boneseed.
- They are aggressive and compete with native species for food and nesting sites.

Control options

- **Habitat Management:** Reduce nest site availability, Nest destruction, Limit availability of food, Plant native vegetation, Exclusion
- **Lethal:** Trapping, Egg oil

For further information see 'Pest Birds - Potential Control Options' fact sheet

Blackbird in nest



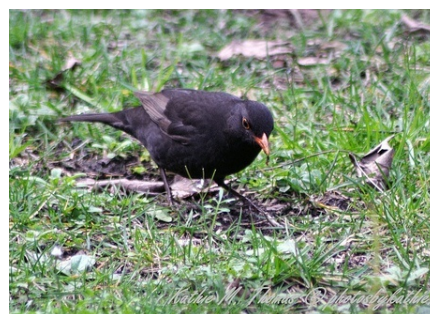
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Blackbird eggs



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Blackbird in garden



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27 <http://biosnaps.gaiareources.com.au/BDRS/images/mv/species/360407.jpg>

28 <http://www.lemis.com/grog/Photos/20081104/big/blackbird-3.jpeg>

29 http://gallery.hd.org/_exhibits/natural-science/_more2010/_more06/blackbird-nest-in-suburban-garden-with-blue-speckled-eggs-in-London-England-1-VG.jpg

30 http://farm5.static.flickr.com/4076/4870317712_c2b1bd453b_d.jpg