



COPY APPROVAL REQUEST (DRAFT)

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Project:	<u>DRAFT 3- HK</u> what3birds? campaign press release: launch NATIONAL MEDIA version (with example of regional stats – N.E. England)	No. of Pages:	3 (including this)
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NEWS ALERT!

[SongBird Survival](#) charity launches [‘what3birds?’](#) campaign.

The Public are Challenged to do 3 Things to Help Prevent Britain’s most threatened Songbirds going extinct:-

1. **Spot** 3 birds in your neighbourhood
2. **Plot** the sightings on a dedicated map
3. **Share** which 3 birds you see, which 3 are at risk in your region, why, and how to help

20th April 2021 [LONDON] This year's Big Garden Birdwatch saw [twice](#) as many members of the British public get involved compared to last year, proving that Lockdown plus environmental concerns have led to ever greater interest in UK wildlife and biodiversity. This may be of no surprise, given that 4 out of 5 Brits say birdsong makes them happier, and [72% say](#) it makes them less stressed. Yet, how many people know **which 3 songbird species are the most threatened in their region**, or how to help keep their exquisite songs alive?

Today, the independent charity, [SongBird Survival](#), launches a new campaign, [what3birds?](#) to encourage the UK public of all ages (rural and urban) to ‘spot and plot’ three species of birds they can see, but also learn about the **3 species at risk from extinction** in their region. Susan Morgan, CEO of the charity explains, *“The what3birds campaign is focussed on education, but its ultimate goal is to keep a rich and diverse dawn chorus alive. Few people realise that UK songbirds have fallen 50% in just two generations - 50 years! Yet the public can help stem this tide of extinction by finding out more, taking simple steps to support local songbirds, and putting pressure on policy makers to make songbird survival a priority.”*

The 50% decline refers to all songbird species: some species have declined by up to 90%, whilst others have increased. The aim is to boost biodiversity. However, as Birdwatch results showed, goldfinch and collared doves (which had done well in recent years) had declined year on year, and only a few species - robins, blackbirds, carrion crows and song thrush - increased.

THE NATIONAL STATISTICS VIA THE [B.I.O.](#) [ADD: map + national / regional ‘Wanted’ posters]

The most at-risk species include the following, whose populations fell from 1995-2018 by:-

North East:	Swift -72% Greenfinch -63% Yellowhammer -63%
North West:	Swift -74% Greenfinch -59% YellowHammer -46%
Yorkshire:	Starling -63% Greenfinch -64% Cuckoo -62%
East Midlands:	Cuckoo -83% Willow Warbler -57% Meadow Pipit -54%
West Midlands:	Cuckoo -78% Starling -70% Greenfinch -52%
South East:	Turtle Dove -96% Willow Warbler -81% House Martin -56%
South West:	Cuckoo -83% Starling -71% Mistle Thrush -57%
London:	House Sparrow -67% Starling -63% Mistle Thrush -59%
East Anglia:	Turtle Dove -95% Willow Warbler -81% Meadow Pipit -61%
Wales:	Swift -72% Greenfinch -71% Starling -65%
Northern Ireland:	Greenfinch -82% Skylark -28% Reed Bunting -28%
Scotland:	Greenfinch -67% Curlew by 59% Lapwing -56%

A special map [\[HYPERLINK\]](#) has been designed by the charity so that members of the public can plot the birds they've spotted in their region, and also learn about the most at-risk species there. Fast-growing geo-location platform, [what3words](#), supports the campaign: it helps by giving people three commonly-used words to describe the 1m² location where birds are sighted (rather than using complicated OS-Map grid references). [\[NAME + TITLE\]](#) at [what3words](#), says, "Our platform is an ideal way to plot where the birds are seen by the bird loving community because postcodes and street names don't cater as well. We are delighted to support SongBird Survival's what3birds? campaign."

Georgina Bradley, Manager of [SongBird Survival](#) regularly spots song thrushes, green woodpeckers and Cuckoos at the [what3words](#) location, 'enclosing.example.brightly' in Norfolk. In her words, "A combination of factors has led to the halving of UK songbirds in just two generations: Habitat loss, lack of food, predation and invasion by non native species are all to blame. Education is everything when it comes to conservation, so what3birds will inform people which species are at risk in their region, and how to help. We hope the campaign stokes curiosity and unites us all as bird lovers of Britain."

How can the public get involved in what3birds?

1. **Spot** 3 types of bird in your neighbourhood via the identification tool www.what3birds.com/spot
2. **Plot** the sightings on the What3Birds? map via website: www.what3birds.com/plot
3. **Share** with your friends & family the birds you've seen, and the species at risk, using the *what3word* location and hashtag #what3birds via social media

What else can the public do to help?

1. Clean your [feeders](#) and [birdbaths](#) regularly to stop the spread of disease
2. Delay [hedge cutting](#) until after the nesting period (September), as it disturbs songbirds
3. [Plant insect-attracting plants, seeding plants and native plants](#) so native wildlife flourishes
4. Avoid [chemical pesticide or herbicides](#), as they can be DEADLY to songbirds
5. Do NOT [feed birds bread, milk, desiccated coconut or any salty foods](#)
6. Inspire others to take action - send them an inspirational image of an at risk songbird species in their area
7. Become a member of SongBird Survival, [donate](#) or [fundraise](#) - e.g. go on a sponsored cycle ride
8. Find out more about the top quality [scientific research](#) that SongBird Survival funds

IMAGES of the at risk songbird species can be found [here](#). [\[INSERT HYPERLINK WHEN READY\]](#)

ABOUT SONGBIRD SURVIVAL

SongBird Survival is the only charity in the UK solely dedicated to halting the alarming decline of song and other small birds – birds, such as corn bunting, willow tit, tree & house sparrow. It does so by funding independent scientific studies that aim to shed light on the reasons why around 50% of our songbirds have disappeared over the past 50 years. These studies will help determine how land can be managed more sustainably, with a view to restoring a rich, balanced and resilient population of birds similar to that enjoyed in the 1970s to help keep a healthy dawn chorus alive. The charity was founded in 2001. www.songbird-survival.org.uk **Facebook** @SongBirdSBS | **Twitter** @SongBirdSBS | **Instagram** @songbirdsurvival



MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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