

# The guests in your back garden

Although some animals go into hibernation at this time of the year, your garden can still be a hive of activity for autumnal wildlife.

Here are just some of the things that you might see (or hear) in the weeks ahead. Put a tick against those that appear in your garden.



## ROBIN

Robins are Britain's most nosy bird and will always come and have a good look as gardeners turn over the soil – exposing lots of tasty worms to eat.

**Fact:** The robin is the United Kingdom's national bird.

## HEDGEHOG

Hedgehogs usually go into hibernation in autumn – often in hedgerows and piles of wood, so it's important to check your bonfires for sleepy residents...

**Fact:** The UK's only spiny mammal.



## FOX

You might not spot a fox, but you could see evidence that they've been sniffing around, such as tracks, droppings or trails through the hedges.

**Fact:** Despite their reputation for cunning, foxes are shy creatures.



## GREY SQUIRREL

Grey squirrels are at the peak of their activity during autumn as they feed on acorns and fruits in preparation for the winter.

**Fact:** These American invaders can live for up to nine years.



## STARLING

During the colder months, British starlings are joined by migrating starlings from the continent. Mass flights at dusk are a popular sight in our skies.

**Fact:** Starling roosts can be massive – sometimes millions of birds roost together.

## MUSHROOMS AND TOADSTOOLS

Not all fungi are brown and slimy! Some look like coral, while others are very colourful.

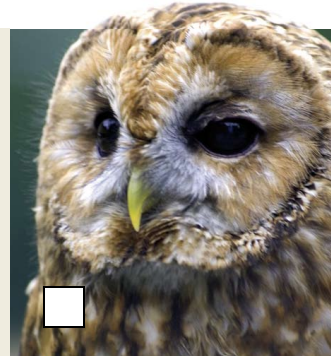
**Fact:** Autumn sees lawns spring into life as the damp conditions are perfect for emerging fungi.



## TAWNY OWL

Even if you don't actually see a Tawny owl, you will almost certainly hear them – with their characteristic 'kerwick' call.

**Fact:** Tawny Owls respond well to imitation calls – try experimenting and see what happens!



## GARDEN SPIDER

Female spiders die at the end of autumn, and although near the end of their life spend the time protecting their eggs.

**Fact:** Female spiders are usually between 10–13mm, while the males are much smaller at 4–8mm.

