

Starlings

Deterring Starlings

The following information has been provided by the RSPB.



- Starling roosts are found in locations where large numbers of birds can gather in safety. Such sites are becoming scarcer, and roost sizes are declining as the numbers of starlings Europe-wide decline. Because of the adverse conservation status of the starling, it would be best to tolerate a roost wherever it may be. However, if the roost must be moved on, a tape of a starling distress call played underneath a roost after dark can effectively move the birds to another location.
- Perching on ledges can be prevented by fitting spike strips and other such barrier deterrents onto the ledge.
- Because of their intermediate size, it is not possible to exclude starlings only from feeders in gardens. Timing the feeding to avoid the peak times of starling presence may help.
- Any audible deterrent (apart from distress calls) will not be starling specific, but is just as likely to scare any bird within its effective range, and in gardens is likely to be unacceptable because of the nuisance it would cause to the neighbourhood.

Starlings and the Law

Starlings are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which makes it illegal to intentionally kill, injure or take a starling, or to take, damage or destroy an active nest or its contents.

Preventing the birds from gaining access to their nests may also be viewed as illegal by the courts. It is therefore important to check for active nests before any repairs to roofs and soffits are carried out during the breeding season.

The provision to control starlings under a general licence was removed from the Act in 2005, making the species fully protected in England.

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