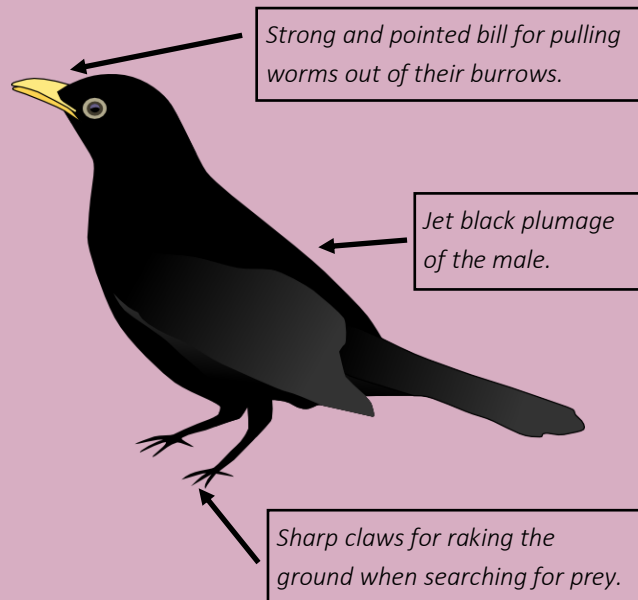


THE BLACKBIRD (*Turdus merula*)

The blackbird is one of the most common birds that can be seen in our gardens all the year round. A smart, plump bird with a distinctive habit of raising its tail once it has landed. Although they're often seen in our gardens, they live in woodland, farmland and around parks.



The male blackbirds live up to their name having shiny black **plumage** and a bright yellow bill and ring around their eye. Confusingly, the females are brown, often with spots or streaks on their chests. Because of this, they are often mistaken for **Thrushes** (another common garden bird).



The male blackbird is a superb singer and can often be heard very early in the morning before sunrise or late

in the evening towards **dusk**. They can be spotted perched high on a treetop or on the top of buildings.

What they eat: Their natural diet is made up of insects, worms and berries but they will eat a lot of the food that we leave out for them such as mealworms, apples and bread.

Measurements	
Length	24 - 25 cm
Height	12 - 18 cm
Weight	80 - 100 g
Wingspan	34 - 39 cm

Fun Facts!

- The male blackbird bobs it's tail to attract a mate, and to act as a warning to other birds.
- There are about 5 million breeding pairs in the UK.
- Blackbirds like singing after it has been raining.
- The most common causes of death are cats and cars.
- Blackbirds were captured alive and put in an empty pie for King Charles I. At an evening feast, the candles were blown out. The King opened the pie making the birds fly around in the darkness scaring the ladies! This appears in the nursery rhyme 'Sing a song of sixpence'.

Don't be dead, blackbird! Pg 3.

Draw lines to match the statements.

Only the male blackbird

to pull worms out of their burrows.

They have strong bills

is actually black

Female blackbirds

raise their tails once they've landed.

Blackbirds are known to

are often mistaken for Thrushes.

In the fact file about blackbirds, some words are in bold type.

Explain why.

(1)

Where would you find these type of words in a non-fiction book? (1)

What does the word '*broods*' mean?

(1)

Don't be dead, blackbird! Pg 4

List three features of non-fiction writing that can be seen in the fact file about blackbirds. (1)

E.g, Heading

Give two reasons why a male blackbird 'bobs it's tail'. (2)

What are the two main causes of death for blackbirds? (2)

Blackbirds are a very successful species of bird in this country (3)

Explain your choice using evidence from the text.

True/False
