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## **Level 1 – 26th February 2026**

### **Birdwatching could protect against ageing, say scientists**

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<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260226-birdwatching-1.html>

## **Contents**

The Reading	2
Phrase Matching	3
Listening Gap Fill	4
No Spaces	5
Survey	6
Writing and Speaking	7
Writing	8

**Please try Levels 0, 2 and 3. They are (a little) harder.**

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# THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260226-birdwatching-1.html>

Birds are beautiful. Looking at them could be good for us. Researchers believe birdwatching protects our brains against old age. They said: "Skills from birding could be beneficial for intelligence and thinking as people age." The researchers compared brain scans of veteran and new birdwatchers. The brains of the veteran birders were a lot more active. The veterans had a better memory and could process information quicker.

Birdwatching benefits the brain because we learn new skills. Birdwatching combines the ability to identify things with a sensitivity to detecting patterns. The hobby is good for our mental and physical health. It can reduce stress. This is because we are outside in the fresh air and sunlight. We can connect with nature and the environment. Birdwatchers say their hobby improves their social life. This is because they meet many people.

Sources: <https://www.newscientist.com/article/2516604-birdwatching-may-reshape-the-brain-and-build-its-buffer-against-ageing/>  
<https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/birdwatching-birding-brain-boost-cognition-research-rcna259945>  
<https://www.thesun.co.uk/health/38314282/bird-watching-health-benefits/>

# PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260226-birdwatching-1.html>

## PARAGRAPH ONE:

- |                                     |                        |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. researchers believe birdwatching | a. new birdwatchers    |
| 2. skills from birding could        | b. scans               |
| 3. as people                        | c. be beneficial       |
| 4. researchers compared brain       | d. quicker             |
| 5. veteran and                      | e. lot more active     |
| 6. the veteran birders were a       | f. protects our brains |
| 7. veterans had a better            | g. age                 |
| 8. process information              | h. memory              |

## PARAGRAPH TWO:

- |                            |                      |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. we learn                | a. physical health   |
| 2. the ability to          | b. and sunlight      |
| 3. detecting               | c. new skills        |
| 4. good for our mental and | d. patterns          |
| 5. it can reduce           | e. their social life |
| 6. this is because we are  | f. identify things   |
| 7. in the fresh air        | g. stress            |
| 8. their hobby improves    | h. outside           |

# LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260226-birdwatching-1.html>

Birds are beautiful. (1) \_\_\_\_\_ could be good for us. Researchers believe birdwatching (2) \_\_\_\_\_ against old age. They said: "Skills from birding (3) \_\_\_\_\_ for intelligence and thinking as people age." The researchers compared brain scans of (4) \_\_\_\_\_ birdwatchers. The brains of the veteran birders were a (5) \_\_\_\_\_. The veterans had a better (6) \_\_\_\_\_ process information quicker.

Birdwatching (7) \_\_\_\_\_ because we learn new skills. Birdwatching combines the (8) \_\_\_\_\_ things with a sensitivity to detecting patterns. The (9) \_\_\_\_\_ for our mental and physical health. It (10) \_\_\_\_\_. This is because we are outside in the fresh (11) \_\_\_\_\_. We can connect with nature and the environment. Birdwatchers say their hobby improves their social life. This is because they (12) \_\_\_\_\_.

# PUT A SLASH ( / ) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260226-birdwatching-1.html>

Birds are beautiful. Looking at them could be good for us. Researchers believe birdwatching protects our brains against old age. They said: "Skills from birding could be beneficial for intelligence and thinking as people age." The researchers compared brain scans of veteran and new birdwatchers. The brains of the veteran birders were a lot more reactive. The veterans had a better memory and could process information quicker. Birdwatching benefits the brain because we learn new skills. Birdwatching combines the ability to identify things with a sensitivity to detecting patterns. The hobby is good for our mental and physical health. It can reduce stress. This is because we are outside in the fresh air and sunlight. We can connect with nature and the environment. Birdwatchers say their hobby improves their social life. This is because they meet many people.

# BIRDS SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260226-birdwatching-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about birds in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_

e) \_\_\_\_\_

f) \_\_\_\_\_

*Birdwatching could protect against ageing, say scientists – 26th February 2026*  
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## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_

e) \_\_\_\_\_

f) \_\_\_\_\_

