How to attract robins to your garden

This adaptable species is one of the birds often seen in gardens. Here are some tips on how to encourage robins to visit your own patch.

The easiest way to attract a robin to your garden is to provide a source of food. Insects and invertebrates make up most of a robin’s diet, with seeds, fruit and meal worms also eaten in winter.

If you’d like robins to nest in your garden, the good news is that they’re not a fussy species when it comes to raising young. Almost any sheltered spot, hidden from the view of predators, can be used!

Source: The Woodland Trust

What side of the tree does moss grow on?

Which side of the tree moss tends to grow on depends where you are in the world. While it doesn’t occur exclusively on the north side of trees, it’s true that moss in the Northern Hemisphere tends to grow there!

Why does moss prefer the north side of trees?

The bottom line is, mosses need water to survive and there are a couple of reasons for this.

- They’re non-vascular plants which means they don’t have a network of vessels that moves water and food around the plant. All moss cells need access to water from the environment.
- They need water to reproduce. The male reproductive cells need to move via a film of water to reach the female cells for fertilisation. Sometimes this is within one plant but can also require them to reach another plant, depending on the species. If mosses dry out they are unable to reproduce, which is more likely to happen on the sunnier side of trees.

But the perfect damp conditions don’t just occur on the north side of trees. If a tree bark is deeply grooved with shaded crevices, moss can thrive there too. Or where there’s dripping water or on surfaces close to the damp ground.

Source: The Woodland Trust

It’s the season for Snowdrops!

Snowdrops mark the first sign of spring, flowering ahead of daffodils and bluebells. They emerge through frozen soil from January and are in bloom until late-February. Below are some tips on planting them...

1. Use a garden fork or spade to lift clumps of snowdrops. Dig deeply all round the clump, before levering it out in order to get down to the bulbs.
2. Divide the snowdrop clumps by tearing them apart. This can be done when they are in leaf or even in flower. To help the plants conserve energy, pick off flowerheads so they don’t waste energy on seed production.
3. Use a hand trowel or fork to replant small clumps of six to eight bulbs.

Make the hole 10cm – 15cm deep and place the bulbs at the base of the hole. Fill around the bulbs with soil taken from the hole, ensuring some of the leaf is above the surface.

Source: Gardeners World