



BIRD  
SPOTTING

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JOHN HOLLAND.

BOOK NO.

801

BLANDFORD  
LONDON



This "BIRD SPOTTING" series is recommended by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds as a general introduction to bird-identification, especially suitable for young persons.

*The Junior Bird Recorders' Club (run by the R.S.P.B.) is open to all young bird-watchers between the ages of 11 and 18. Subscription 2/6d per annum includes quarterly magazine.*

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# BIRD SPOTTING

WITH JOHN HOLLAND

*Illustrated by Rein Stuurman*

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## INTRODUCTION

THE ability to recognise most of the birds which are known in the British Isles must be acquired gradually; it is a painstaking business, though one that will never be dull or tiresome. The *Handbook of British Birds* gives descriptions of no less than 520 birds. But there are a number of rarities among them, which may never be seen in a lifetime.

P. A. D. Hollom has, in his *Popular Handbook of British Birds*, excluded all birds which have been seen less than ten or a dozen times in the British Isles. Nevertheless, his book still deals with 330 species (some of which are only subspecies). And if we know that in many of them the females differ considerably from the males, and that the young have yet a different plumage, we can realise how wide is our subject.

However, the charm of bird study will already be within our reach, when we come to know a hundred or so at first sight.

An experienced ornithologist is able to tell the Greenshank from the Redshank, even if he sees the bird only for a few moments. This is possible mainly because he knows at first sight to which Order, or even Family the bird seen belongs. And furthermore he knows what to look for; length, colour and, perhaps a slight tilt of the bill, the pattern of the white patches on back and wings, the presence

of bars on the tail and other such particulars that may seem trivialities.

The bird watcher's aim should be to classify the bird as soon as he sees it. That is to say, it will not always be possible to call it at once by its name, but at least to place it in its group.

It is possible to group the birds on the British List according to various systems, but I believe that the best and most satisfactory classification is the scientific one, as it was first conceived by the great Swedish biologist Carl von Linné (Linnaeus) in the eighteenth century. This is a classification based largely on anatomical relationship, which in most cases goes together with likeness in appearance and posture. For instance, a knowledge of our common Wagtails enables the bird watcher, when seeing one of the rare ones, to know that this is a Wagtail also.

The scheme Carl von Linné put forward (and it has often been rearranged although the principles remain) is quite precise. The Animal Kingdom is divided into Classes, of which the birds form one Class. This Class is divided into Orders. These Orders are divided into Families. There are still further divisions which we will not deal with here. The most important help to bird recognition is the ability to tell at once to which Order, or even to which Family, or Genus a bird belongs when we encounter it for the first time. The birds on the British List belong to nineteen Orders:

Colymbiformes  
Podicipitiformes  
Procellariiformes  
Pelecaniformes  
Ardeiformes  
Phoenicopteriformes  
Anseriformes  
Falconiformes  
Galliformes  
Ralliformes

Charadriiformes  
Columbiformes  
Cuculiformes  
Strigiformes  
Caprimulgiformes  
Apodiformes  
Coraciiformes  
Piciformes  
Passeriformes

The aim of this series of books is to introduce some of the birds of these Orders by giving their portraits in picture as well as in words. Not only is their Order given in each case, but also their Family.

When you come to know a few species well, you will be able to classify birds unknown to you in the Order or the Family to which they belong.

The selection I have made for these books is, of course, arbitrary, and you may miss some birds that are seen in your district. You may also think that others which I have included might have been left out. However, the area dealt with is very extensive and a bird that is common in the south may be rare, or even unknown, in the north. By confining the compass of these books to some 220 specimens, we have avoided the confusion that often befalls the beginner when he turns to books of great

detail, and including all known Species of British birds.

The limits of a pocket-size book naturally restricts the detail of the descriptions, but I have endeavoured to give as many of the essentials as possible. It is for this reason also, that I have often given only a description of the male, as the descriptions of females and young would have taken too much of the space necessary for other particulars. I have given the sizes of the birds in order that a comparison may be made with other birds already known to the reader. I use terms like "Sparrow-sized" or "about Mallard-size", which I hope convey the right impressions.

Of the birds breeding in the British Isles, particulars are also given about their size of nest, number of eggs, and (normal) breeding-season.

Finally, I have given a very short summary of the distribution.

At the end of each caption are given the Latin (Lat.) names, the knowledge of which comes very useful when talking with ornithologists from abroad or reading foreign bird-books, as they are used all over the world. As most ornithologists love to travel abroad to study species that are scarce or unknown in Britain, the names of the species dealt with are given for some of the surrounding countries: Holland (D.), France (F.), Germany (G.) and Sweden (S.). When differing from the English names, the names used in the United States of America (N. Am.) are also given.

FAMILIES REPRESENTED  
IN BOOK 1

Plataleidae

Colymbidae

Podicipitidae

Dionedeidae

Procellariidae

Hydrobatidae

Sulidae

Phalacrocoracidae

Ardeidae

Ciconiidae

Phasianidae

Tetraonidae

Cinclus

Rallidae

Scolopacidae

Spoonbill

Diver

Grebe

Fulmar

Shearwater

Storm-Petrel

Gannett

Cormorant

Heron

Stork

Pheasant

Grouse

Dipper

Rail

Sandpiper



SPONBILLS.

## DIVERS TO GAME BIRDS

THIS book deals with seven of the Orders of birds on the British List (see page 7). The (Latin) names of these Orders for the moment may be only words, but when it is learnt that Colymbiformes stands for Divers, Podicipitiformes for Grebes, Procellariiformes for Petrels, Pelecaniformes for Gannet and Cormorants, Ardeiformes for the Heron-tribe, Galliformes for Game Birds and Ralliformes for the Rail family which includes such birds as Moorhen and Coot, the student begins to get the point. The Phoenicopteriformes are omitted as the only representative of this Order in Western Europe is the Flamingo, which is a very rare vagrant from the South of France (Camargue) and Spain.

The Great Crested Grebe in summertime is a very conspicuous bird, quite common in most countries. Of the Petrels the Fulmar is rapidly spreading along our coasts from the North. Along the coasts we may also see Gannet, Cormorant and Shag. Of the Ardeiformes the Heron is the commonest and accordingly, known even by those who have never paid special attention to birds.

The Game Birds represent a very interesting Order and this edition includes those residents of the North Country and Scotland, the Red Grouse, Capercaillie, Ptarmigan. These birds of course are mostly local.

Ralliformes have representatives in every inland area where water is to be found.

Order COLYMBIFORMES

Family COLYMBIDAE

## RED-THROATED DIVER



About as big (23 ins.) as Mallard, pointed tip-tilted bill. In summer: red throat and grey crown. In winter: palest of Divers, the dark back being sprinkled with small white spots. No wing-bar. Sexes alike.

Nests mostly along quite small tarns; 2 (3) eggs; May/June. Both sexes incubate (24-29 d.); young tended by both parents (often for 2 m.). Single-brooded.

Breeds in Scottish Highlands and Islands and (in one locality only) NW. Ireland. Winter visitor along all coasts.

*Lat. Colymbus stellatus* | N. Am. Red-throated Loon | D. Roodkeelduiker |  
*F. Plongeon catmarin* | G. Nordseetaucher | S. Smalom

Order PODICIPITIFORMES,

Family PODICIPITIDAE

## GREAT CRESTED GREBE



Largest grebe (19 ins.) with long slender neck. In summer: long crest and rufous collar. In winter: crest less obvious, collar hardly visible. Sexes alike. Dives often.

Nests on weeds near bank of river or lake; 3-4 eggs; Apr./Aug. Both sexes incubate (28 d.) and manage young for about 10 w. Single- (double-) brooded.

Resident, although breeding-population was reduced by plume-trade to below 50 pairs in 1860; protection raised this number to more than a thousand pairs in 1931 and perhaps more than double this figure at present.

Lat. *Podiceps cristatus* | D. Fuut | Fr. Grèbe huppé | G. Haubentaucher | S. Skäggdopping

## RED-NECKED GREBE



Smaller (17 ins.) than Great Crested. In summer: chestnut neck, no head-ornaments. In winter: no stripe over eye, bill black and yellow, dark crown reaching down below the eyes, gradually merging into white of cheeks. Sexes alike. Wintervisitor, mainly to E. coast.

Lat. *Podiceps griseigena* | N. Am. *Holboell's Grebe* | D. *Roodhalsfuut* | F. *Grèbe jougris* | G. *Rotalschaucher* | S. *Grahakedopping*

## SLAVONIAN GREBE

Rather small (13 ins.). In summer: black cheeks and ear-tufts pointing upwards, neck, breast and flanks chestnut. In winter: dark crown reaching down to eye level and contrasting sharply with white of cheeks. Short straight dark bill with whitish tip. Sexes alike. Floating nest of weeds and mud along little bays, sometimes semi-social; 3-5 eggs; May/July. Both sexes incubate (20-25 d.) and manage young for about 5 w. Single- (double-) brooded. Rather scarce resident in Inverness and Sutherland; wintervisitor to all coasts.



Lat. *Podiceps auritus* | N. Am. *Horned Grebe* | D. *Kuifduiker* | F. *Grèbe esclavon* | G. *Ohrentaucher* | S. *Svarthakedopping*

## BLACK-NECKED GREBE



Small (12 ins.) grebe with slightly upturned bill. In winter: dark of crown extends below eye. Sexes alike. Social breeder in shallow water; 3-4 eggs; May/July. Both sexes incubate (20-21 d.) and manage young for about 4-5 w. Often double-brooded. Resident, breeding irregularly in most parts of British Isles; wintervisitor to E. and S. coast of England.

Lat. *Podiceps caspicus* | N. Am. *Eared Grebe* | D. *Geoorde fuut* | F. *Grèbe à cou noir* | G. *Schwarzhalstaucher* | S. *Svarthalsadopping*

Order PODICIPITIFORMES

Family PODICIPITIDAE

## LITTLE GREBE



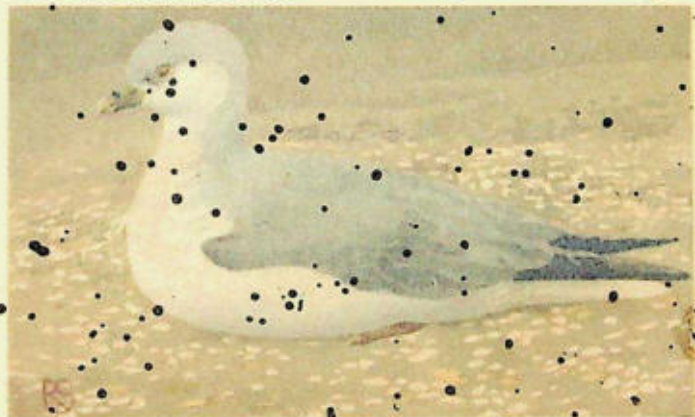
Smallest (10 ins.) grebe. In summer: White patch near short black bill, dark brown head with chestnut cheeks. In winter: brown and buff, not black and white. Sexes alike.

Nest (often floating) built of water-weeds by both sexes; 4-6 eggs; Apr./June. Both sexes incubate (19-20 d.); young fed by both parents. Double-brooded.

Resident in Britain, though rare in N. Scotland and only winter visitor to Shetlands. Most birds seem to move to coastal waters in winter, but no true migration. Winter visitor from Continent.

*Lat. Podiceps ruficollis* | Also: Dabchek | D. Dodaars | F. Grèbe castagneux |  
G. Zwergtaucher | S. Smadopping

# FULMAR PETREL



Gull-like bird (18 ins.). Big head and thick neck and proportionately narrow wings (without black tips) in combination with sailing on stiff wings preclude possibility of confusion with members of gull-tribe. Light and dark colour-phases. Sexes alike.

Social breeder on coastal cliffs; 1 egg; May/June. Both sexes incubate (8 w.) and manage young for about 8 w. Single-brooded.

More or less resident, though nesting colonies are left in second half of August, but re-occupation often starts as soon as early November. Until 1878 St Kilda was only breeding station in British Isles but since then the Fulmar has rapidly colonised along British coasts.

Lat. *Fulmarus glacialis* | D. Noordse stormvogel | F. Pétrel glaciale | G. Eissturm-vogel | S. Stormfågel

Order PROCELLARIFORMED

Family PROCELLARIIDAS

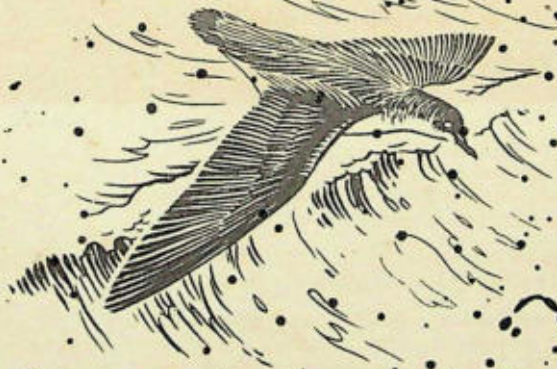
## MANX SHEARWATER

A sea bird (16 ins) with black plumage above and white underneath. Strong flight, skimming above the water with straight stiff wings.

Social breeder on coastal cliffs; nest in hole in the turf; 1 egg; May/June.

More or less resident and breeds mostly on the west coast of the British Isles; visits many parts of the coasts in the latter part of the year.

Very active at breeding place at night and has a weird cry or wail.



Lat. *Puffinus puffinus puffinus*

Order PROCELLARIIFORMES.

Family HYDROBATIDAE

## STORM PETREL

An ocean bird,  $6\frac{1}{2}$  ins., coming to land only for nesting and when storm driven. Brownish-black plumage with white band above the tail.

Breeds on the north-west coast of British Isles; nest in a hole in the turf or a crevice in rock; one egg, June.

LEACH'S PETREL ( $8\frac{1}{2}$  ins) is larger and has a forked tail.



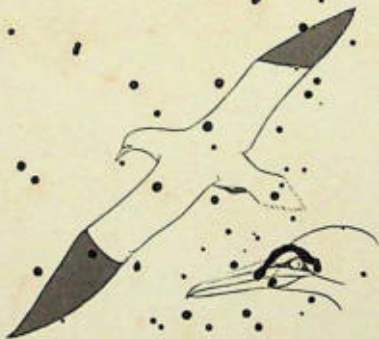
*Lat. Hydrobates pelagicus*

## GANNET

Very large (36 ins.), all-white with black-tipped wings. Dives head-first into sea often from 100 ft. Grey-brown young birds are easily recognised by typical gannet-shape. Sexes alike.

Social breeder on cliffs of marine islands; 1 egg; Apr./May. Both sexes incubate (43-45 d.) and manage young. Single-brooded.

J. Fisher (1947) states that in 1930 there were about 109,000 breeding adults in 12 colonies in the British Isles (St Kilda 16,900, Little Skellig 9500, Grassholm 6000, Ailsa Craig 5419 and Bass Rock 4374 occupied nest sites). Seen inland only after gales.



Lat. *Sula bassana* | Also: Solan Goose | D. Jan van Gent | F. Fou de Bassan |  
G. Basselpe | S. Havssula

## SHAG

Smaller (30 ins.) than Cormorant, all-black. In summer has raised crest. Immature birds have white chin but little or no white on breast. Sexes alike.

Social breeder on cliff-ledges; 3-4 eggs; Apr./June. Incubation by both sexes (35 d.) Both sexes manage young for about 7 w. Single- (double) brooded.

Rather the same distribution as Cormorant, though Shag does not breed in northern England, nor along Cardigan Bay. Never breeds inland like Cormorant does in a few places.



Lat. *Phalacrocorax aristotellus* | D. *Gekwifde aalscholver* | F. *Cormoran huppé* |  
G. *Krähenscharbe* | S. *Toppskarv*

## CORMORANT

Big (36 ins.) long-necked black bird. In summer: white cheek and thigh-patch. No crest. Immature birds have dull white under-parts. Sexes alike.

Social breeder on rocky islands and cliff-ledges along the coast; occasionally (Ireland) in trees; 3-4 eggs; Apr. June. Both sexes incubate (26-29 d.) and manage young for about 5 weeks. Usually single-brooded.

Resident, commonly breeding along W. coasts of British Isles (not in the Firth of Forth or along most parts of W. Highland coast) and locally along E. coast.



Lat. *Phalacrocorax carbo* |  
 N. Am. European Cormo-  
 rant | D. Aalscholver | F.  
 Cormoran | G. Kormoran | S. Storskarv

## HERON

Well-known very large (36 ins.) grey, long-necked and long-legged bird; in flight broad, rounded wings, neck drawn in and legs showing behind tail. Sexes alike. Young have no black on crown.

Social breeder in trees and sometimes on cliffs. Female builds nest, male bringing sticks etc.; 3-5 eggs, Feb./June. Both sexes incubate (25 d.) and feed young. (Usually) single-brooded.



Breeding population of England and Wales in 1952: 3017 pairs.

Scotland and Ireland have also (mostly smaller) heronries. Passage-migrants and winter visitors from the continent. British birds do not migrate.

Lat. *Ardea cinerea* | D. Blaue reiger | F. Héron cendré | G. Fischreiher | S. Grå höger

## LITTLE BITTERN



Smallest of heron-tribe (14 ins.); male with conspicuous white patch on wing, sharply contrasting with black on rest of wing and back; female has brown wings and back, on which light patch is less obvious.

Rare vagrant, that has been recorded in nearly all counties of England and Wales, most times from Apr./June and from Aug./Oct. Breeding is said to have occurred in E. Anglia but has never been proven. Secretive crepuscular bird, haunting reed-beds and reeds fringing fivers and meres.

Lat. *Ixobrychus minutus* | D. Wouwapje | F. Blongios nain | G. Zwergrohrdommel | S. Dvärrörddrom

## BITTERN

Large (30 ins.) golden-brown bird with long pointed bill and relatively short legs. Seldom observed on the wing, except when feeding young, owing to largely crepuscular habits.

Nests in vast reed-beds; 4-6 eggs; Apr./May. Only female breeds (25-26 d.) and manages young, which leave nest after 16-20 days but are fully fledged only after about 8 w. Single-brooded. The male Bittern shows polygamous tendencies.

Resident, breeding regularly in E. Anglia, recently also in Lincs. and Kent. Perhaps also elsewhere in extensive reed-beds of swamps and fens. In winter time wandering birds may be seen in other parts.



Lat. *Botaurus stellaris* |  
D. Roerdomp | F. Butor  
étoilé | G. Grosse Rohr-  
dommel | S. Rödrom

## HERON

Well-known very large (36 ins.) grey, long-necked and long-legged bird; in flight broad, rounded wings, neck drawn in and legs showing behind tail. Sexes alike. Young have no black on crown.

Social breeder in trees and sometimes on cliffs. Female builds nest, male bringing sticks etc.; 3-5 eggs, Feb./June. Both sexes incubate (23 d.) and feed young. (Usually) single-brooded.



Breeding population of England and Wales in 1952: 3017 pairs.

Scotland and Ireland have also (mostly smaller) heronries. Passage-migrant and winter visitors from the continent. British birds do not migrate.

Lat. *Ardea cinerea* | D. Blauwe reiger | F. Héron cendré | G. Fischreiher | S. Grå häger

Order PELECANIFORMES

Family PHALACROCORACIDAE

## CORMORANT

Big (36 ins.) long-necked black bird. In summer: white cheek and thigh-patch. No crest. Immature birds have dull white under-parts. Sexes alike.

Social breeder on rocky islands and cliff-ledges along the coast; occasionally (Ireland) in trees; 3-4 eggs; Apr./June. Both sexes incubate (26-29 d.) and manage young for about 5 weeks. Usually single-brooded.

Resident, commonly breeding along W. coasts of British Isles (not in the Firth of Forth or along most parts of W. Highland coast) and locally along E. coast.



Lat. *Phalacrocorax carbo* |  
N. Am. European Cormo-  
rant | D. Aalscholver | F.  
Cormoran ordinaire | G.  
Kormoran | S. Storskarv

Order ARDEIFORMES  
Family CICONIIDAE

## WHITE STORK

Well-known bird (40 ins.) from fairy books, easily identified by long red legs and red bill (young birds have black bills and brownish-red legs), white plumage and black wings. In flight outstretched neck and legs trailing behind.

Continental birds may be seen from March/June and in autumn in E. and S. England, though even there seldom; very scarce elsewhere.

The European population seems to be decreasing rapidly at present, though there had been a remarkable increase from 1930 till 1940.

*Lat. Ciconia ciconia* | *D. Oolevaar* | *F. Cigogne blanche* | *G. Weisser Storch* | *S. Vit stork*

Family PLATALEIDAE

## SPOONBILL (see Frontispiece).

Slightly smaller (34 ins.) than Heron. White colouring and spoon-shaped black bill are very distinctive. In flight neck and (black) legs are stretched out. Rather gregarious.

Regular visitor to E. Anglia and most parts of S. coast of England from Apr. to Nov. Rare vagrant elsewhere.

*Lat. Platalea leucorodia* | *D. Lepelaar* | *F. Spatule blanche* | *G. Löffelreiber* | *S. Skedstork*





## PARTRIDGES

*Showing their effective camouflage*

## PARTRIDGE



Small (12 ins.) rotund bird with rufous tail and chestnut patch on breast in shape of horse-shoe (often almost absent in older females). Whirring flight when taking off is another characteristic of this small game-bird.

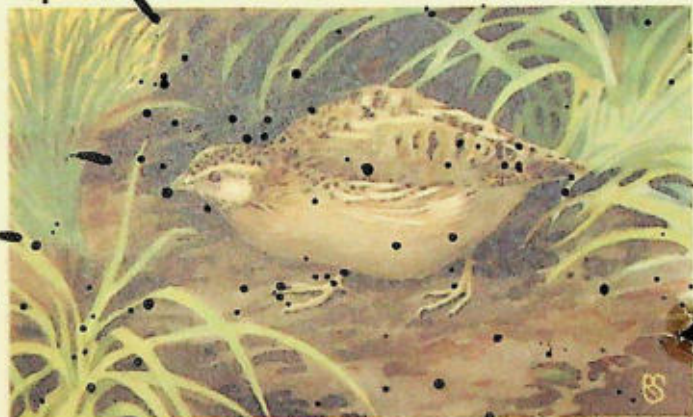
Nest is shallow hollow scraped by female, lined with dry grasses and leaves; 10-20 eggs; Apr./May. Incubation (23-25 d.) by female only. Young leave nest within few hours of hatching and are tended by both parents. Families keep together long afterwards in "coveys". Single-brooded.

Common resident in most counties of England and Wales; breeds locally in Scotland and rather scarce in Ireland.

Lat. *Perdix perdix* | N. Am. Hungarian Partridge | D. Patrijs | F. Perdrix grise | G. Rebhuhn | S. Rapphona

The Red-legged Partridge (*Alectoris rufa*) is slightly larger (13½ ins.) and has red bill and legs, white cheeks and throat, and flanks barred with white, black and chestnut. This resident in S. and E. England was introduced (from France) in the 18th century.

## QUAIL



This miniature partridge (7 ins.) is much less gregarious than the Partridge, though family-parties may keep together, even on migration. Sexes almost alike.

Nest is little, now scraped by female; 7-12 eggs; May/June. Only female broods (16-21 d.); young leave nest almost immediately and fly well within 3 weeks. They are managed by female only. Single-brooded.

Most quails arrive in May. Mostly confined to S. England, scarce in E. Scotland and E. Ireland.

Order GALLIFORMES

Family PHASIANIDAE

## PHEASANT



Game bird (up to 36 ins) with plumage of chestnut-brown, beautifully marked with green, purple and cream. Bright red face. Hen bird is less handsome and has a mottle-brown plumage.

Nest on ground lined with grass and leaves. 10/14 eggs; April/June. Resident in most parts of the British Isles, especially on game preserved land. Prefers wooded land, bushes and scrub. Mainly runs but will rocket upwards at great speed when startled.

Lat. *Phasianus colchicus* | D. Fasan | G. Gemeiner Fasan | E. Faisan

Order GALLIFORMES

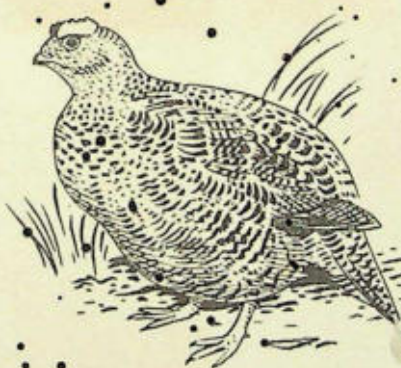
Family TETRAONIDAE

## RED GROUSE

A game bird (15 ins). Male plumage dark-red-brown heavily barred with black and red wattle over the eye. Female also barred black and buff.

Nest on the ground among the heather, 7/14 eggs; April/May.

Resident; a bird of the moorlands in Northern England and Scotland, living in flocks.



Lat. *Lagopus scoticus scoticus*

## BLACK GROUSE

Also known as Blackgame, Blackcock (male), Greyhen (female). Larger (19½") than Red Grouse the male has black plumage and a lyre shaped tail with white under tail-coverts, feathered legs and a bright red wattle over eye. Hen and juveniles are brown with mottled and barred markings. Cock has a crowing note.

Nest on ground. 7-12 eggs.

April/May.

Resident; breeding on moors in South-West England, Wales, locally in North England and over most of Scotland.

Frequents moorlands and woodlands and favours pine and birch trees.

*Lyrurus tetrix britannicus* /  
D. Korhoen / G.  
Birkhuhn / F. Te-  
tras à queue four-  
chue.



ES



Order *CHARADRIIFORMES*

Family *SCOLOPACIDAE*

## SNIPE

Very long bill ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  ins.) is characteristic as are conspicuous light streaks running down the back and zig-zag flight, combined with harsh cry flushed birds. Length about 11 ins. Sexes alike.

Nest on the ground in grassy marshes; 4 (6) eggs; Apr./June. Only female incubates (19-20 d.), but young are tended by both parents. They fly when 2 w. old. Single- (double-) brooded.



Resident, common breeder throughout the British Isles, though only local in S. England. Snipe from the Continent come to winter in or pass through Britain.

Lat. *Capella gallinago* | N. Am. Wilson's Snipe | D. Watersnip | F. Bécassine ordinaire | G. Bekassine | S. Enkelbecke

## PTARMIGAN

Slightly larger than a partridge, this bird (14½ ins) has a summer plumage of brown, barred with grey and buff, and in winter is snow white except for a few black marks on tail and wings. Both male and female have a red comb over the eye.

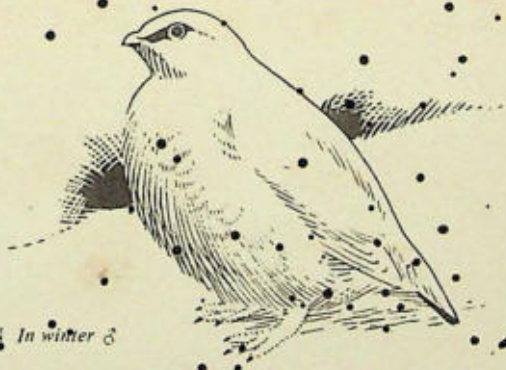
Nest on ground in a hollow; 8/10 eggs.

Resident on high mountains in Northern Scotland and the Western Isles.



summer ♀

Lat. *Lagopus mutus millaisi*



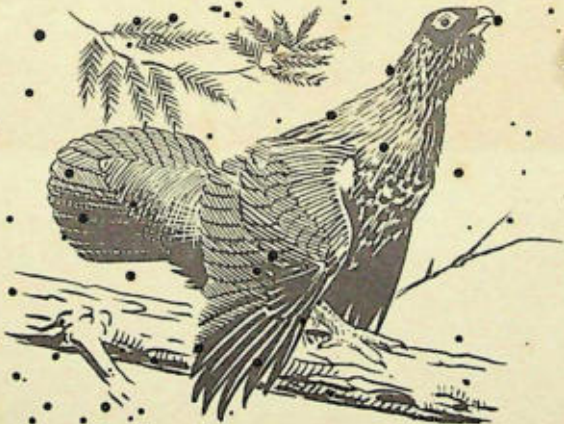
ARMIGAN *In winter* ♂

## CAPERCAILLIE

This large bird (34") of the forests is famous for its nuptial display of spreading tail and wings.

Plumage is black with green on breast, brown tinge on the wings. It has a long red wattle over the eye. Female is smaller (24") and red-brown mottled with buff, white and black.

Nest on ground; 7-10 eggs; April/May. Only found in forests of Scotland.



*Lat. Tetrao urogallus urogallus*

## MQORHEN



Small (13 ins.) almost black waterbird (young olive-brown with whitish throat and belly) with conspicuous white under tail-coverts and white line on flank. No wing bar. Red shield on forehead and red bill with yellow tip. (Young have greenish-brown shield and bill.) Sexes alike. Less gregarious than Coot.

Nest built by both sexes; 6-12 eggs; Apr./July. Incubation by both sexes (19-22 d.); young leave nest after 2-3 d. They are managed by both parents. Double-brooded.

Common resident, breeding along all kinds of fresh waters, even ponds in town-parks, provided adequate cover is present. Some winter visitors arrive on E. coast in autumn.

Lat. Gallinula chloropus | Also: Waterhen | N. Am. Florida Gallinule | D. Waterhoefje | F. Poule d'eau | G. Teichhuhn | S. Rörhona

## COOT



All-black, rather plump waterbird (15 ins.) with white frontal shield, and bill and small white wing-bar. Brownish-grey young have white throat and breast. Sexes alike. More gregarious than Moorhen.

Nest built by both sexes; 6-10 eggs; March/May. Incubation by both sexes (21-24 d.); young leave nest within 3-4 days. Each parent manages part of the brood. Double-brooded.

Fairly common resident (locally very common): prefers lakes and large ponds to smaller waters. In winter often associates with ducks.

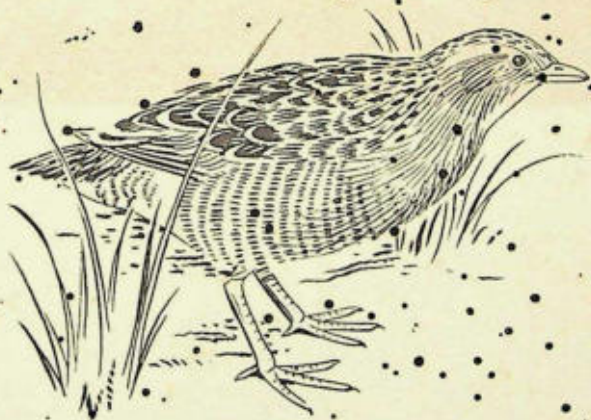
Lat. *Fulica atra* | D. Meerkoet | F. Poulque | G. Blässhuhn | S. Sottina

## CORNCRAKE

Also known as LAND RAIL (10 ins.) this brown bird with dark streaks above and pale under-parts is heard more often than it is seen. Its distinctive call, a harsh "crek, crek" is heard night and day in the breeding season.

Nest on the ground, in grass or sedge; 8/12 eggs; May/June.

Summer visitor, breeding in the North of the British Isles and sporadically in local places.



Lat. *Crex crex* | D. Kwartelkoning | G. Wachtelkönig | F. Râle des prés

## WOODCOCK



Bigger than common Snipe (14 ins.); longer (3 ins.) bill, no light streaks on face or back, round-winged, rufous coloured bird, Sexes alike.

Nest on the ground (often at foot of tree); 4 (6) eggs; Apr./May. Incubation (20-21 d.) by female only, but young are tended by both parents. Double-brooded.

Resident, breeding in varying numbers in England, Wales (scarce), Scotland and Ireland. Many Woodcocks from the Continent winter in Britain.

(The Snipe is to be found on pages 56 and 57)

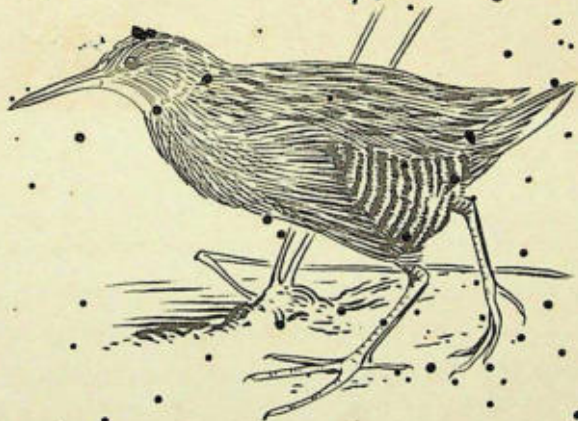
Lat. *Scolopax rusticola* | D. Houtsnijg | F. Bécasse | G. Waldschnepfe | S. Morkualla

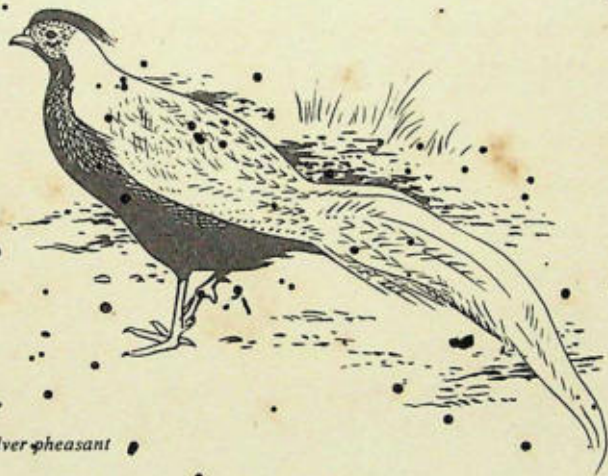
## WATER-RAIL

A bird of secretive habits (11½ ins.) very difficult to observe; it is easily alarmed and conceals itself in the river-side rushes. Chestnut-brown back, streaked black. Face, throat and under parts grey; flanks are barred and bill is red.

Nest in marshy places; eggs 7/12.

Breeds in most parts of the British Isles except West Scotland. Continental visitors in winter.





*Silver pheasant*

## NOTES

THE birds illustrated and described in the foregoing pages 10 to 32 are each of a distinctive character and for the purposes of bird watching could not be more exciting subjects.

They are all big or biggish, often handsomely coloured, of distinctive shape and many have an individuality all of their own.

On the other hand, they are mostly birds which are difficult

to approach, and they inhabit the wild places or the sea; therefore field glasses are almost a necessity to obtain a satisfactory view, or even it may be that a telescope is desirable where the birds are being watched over water such as would be the case with Divers, Grebes, Cormorants etc.

I have always found a special fascination in water birds; they seem so exciting, and what is more the water itself gives this interest an added relaxation. The Coot and the Moorhen are very numerous in some areas and seem to be fairly rapidly increasing. The Grebes are not so familiar but the Heron may turn up in any place where there is water. One has been known to clear a goldfish pond on the outskirts of London.

If the bird watcher takes his interest seriously he will keep notes of the birds he sees and maybe make rough drawings in order to compare birds he does not recognize with his reference books and illustrations. He will take note of their flight, shape, size, colour and voice, the places they frequent, and their habits. This is the only way of finding out the identity of any unfamiliar bird and a most important rule is to make the notes and the sketches on the spot while the details are fresh in mind.

It is also to be remembered that certain birds are only seen in some districts at special seasons. This is true of a number of the birds in this section which are winter visitors and so can only be seen during that period. However, it is exciting to discover such birds, especially if they are of the rarer types, and generally the birds which live on or by the water can be more easily seen at this season of the year.

There are some birds which may be difficult to see or may never be seen in Britain by the watcher. The stork is an example. However, in these days of much travel when so many go abroad for their holidays, it is possible to visit an area frequented by these birds and enjoy the thrill of seeing one for the first time, and it is an easily photographed bird.

Coming to the game birds which are dealt with fairly extensively, they are well worth all the time given to them. The partridge and the pheasant are fascinating to study, while the snipe or the woodcock on the wing have nothing to surpass them in action and speed.

There are a number of pheasants which have been introduced to Britain mainly for ornamental purposes, but which have



*Snipe in flight*

established themselves in some localities. These include the golden pheasant, the silver pheasant and the Japanese pheasant.

Other Game Birds illustrated are purely local and in some cases rare, and are only to be seen in the northern part of the country.

Since the first edition was published it has been found that there is a demand by some readers for those parts of this series of books which deal with the birds mostly seen in the reader's own locality.

This, of course, is understandable but it is not the method to acquire a true knowledge of birds. Part of the thrill of bird watching is to visit new places and see unfamiliar birds. The person who lives in the south will find endless interest in bird life in Scotland and may see some of the rarer local birds dealt with in these pages. Consequently he needs a wider knowledge than that which is confined to his own part of the country.

It must be remembered that birds move about and wander in a remarkable way. They can be influenced and governed by all kinds of conditions, mostly of course seasons and weather.

The practice of ringing birds has shown that few if any individual birds are confined to one locality; even robins may move to another country! So a local bird may be any bird that is there at the moment and my advice is to gain as wide a knowledge as possible for one never knows when it may be put to the test.



*WOODCOCK in flight*

# BIRD SPOTTING

WITH JOHN HOLLAND

---

*BOOK TWO*

---

DUCKS TO HAWKS



This "BIRD SPOTTING" series is recommended by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds as a general introduction to bird-identification, especially suitable for young persons.

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# BIRD SPOTTING.

WITH JOHN HOLLAND

*Illustrated by Rein Stuurman.*

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## DUCKS TO HAWKS

The order Anseriformes include Ducks, Swans and Hawks. As some of these are domesticated and are to be seen in the farmyard or on ornamental lakes they are familiar to everyone. However the commonly and loosely used term "wild duck" in turn embraces a wide variety of birds with such names as Teal, Widgeon, Pintail, Mallard, Shoveller, Pochard, Smew, etc., and the bird watchers' purpose is to know the distinguishing characteristics and to be able to recognise each one as he sees it. These names should be familiar to all and it is well to recognise that there are a dozen dealt with in these pages:

The geese are winter visitors and so are the Whooper Swan, and Bewick's Swan, they are among the heaviest British birds. The Hawks (Falconiformes) also have a dozen representatives illustrated here. Although some may seem to hold mainly academic interest it may be that some fortunate reader will catch sight of a great rarity and be able to recognise it through being previously acquainted himself with its description and habits.

THE FAMILIES REPRESENTED  
IN BOOK 2

Anatidae

Duck

Falconidae

Hawk

Pandionidae

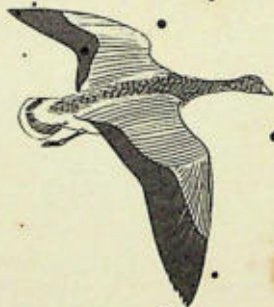
Osprey

## GREY LAG GOOSE

Biggest (30-35 ins.) of "grey" geese, very much like farm-yard geese. Heavy head, stout orange bill (without any black) and flesh coloured legs. Head and neck same shade as body, breast more or less spotted. Sexes alike.

Nest lined with down, among heather; 4-6 (8) eggs; Apr./May. Incubation by female only (27-28 d.), but young are tended by both sexes. They fly when 8 w. old. Single-brooded.

Breeds in N. Scotland and on Hebrides. Otherwise winter visitor (Oct./March), especially to estuary of Firth of Forth. Scarce or even rare in most places.



## SHELD-DUCK

Large (24 ins.) goose-like duck white with black head and patches, chestnut band round fore-part of body, (adults only), bright red bill with (male only) knob at base.

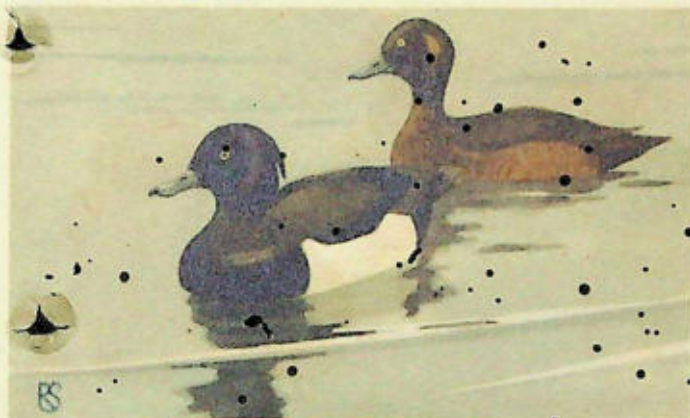
Nest usually in rabbit-burrow: 8-14 (20) eggs; May/June. Incubation by female (4 w.) while male often stands guard; both parents guide young (fly when 6,7 w. old), but often lose control, so one may see parents with up to 30 young birds. Single-brooded.

Resident (though some migrate) along all suitable coasts of Britain. In July/August adult birds from E. coast migrate to North Sea S. of Heligoland, where all Sheld-ducks of Western Europe seem to moult.



*Lat. Tadorna* | *D. Bergeend* | *F. Tadorne* | *G. Brandente* | *S. Grävand*

## TUFTED DUCK



Rather small (17 ins.). Drake is all-black but for boldly contrasting white flanks. Small tuft at back of head usually only visible at close range.

Nests quite near water (sometimes socially); 8-12 eggs; May/June. Incubation (23-26 d.) and managing of young by duck only. They fly when about 6 w. old. Single-brooded.

Resident, breeding in most counties but absent from most parts of Wales and W. coast of England and Scotland. Does not breed either in S.E. Ireland. Common passage-migrant and winter visitor.

## POCHARD



Smaller (18 ins.) than Mallard. Drake is easily recognised by chestnut-red head, black breast and light grey back and flanks. In flight neither drake nor duck show any white on wings.

Nests in or within few inches of water; 8-10 eggs; Apr./June. Incubation (24-28 d.) and managing of young (7-8 w.) by duck only.

Resident, breeding locally in most counties of Scotland and E. and S. England. Has widespread distribution in winter, when visitors from the Continent come to stay in the British Isles.

Lat. *Aythya ferina* | D. Tafelent | F. Fuligule milouin | G. Tafelente | S. Brunand

## RED-BREASTED MERGANSER



Looks smaller than Mallard (23 ins.); at once recognisable as saw-billed duck by slender bill. Male has dark-green head with prominent crest, chestnut breast-band and grey flanks. Female has brown head gradually blending into white of neck. Dives often.

Nest in hollows or close cover; 7-12 eggs; May/July. Incubation (28-30 d.) and tending of young by duck only. Single brooded.

Resident, breeding commonly in Scotland (though not in southern counties) and Ireland (scarce in S.E. Ireland). Otherwise wintervisitor (Oct./Apr.) to most parts of British coast (seldom on inland waters).

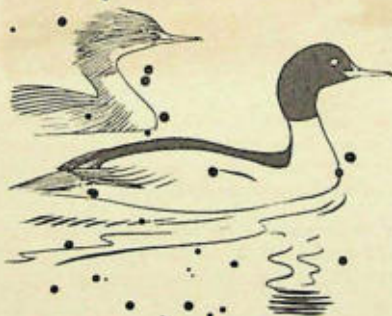
*Lat. Mergus serrator* | *D. Middelste zaagbek* | *F. Harle huppé* | *G. Mittelsäger* | *S. Småskrake*

## GOOSANDER

Looks about Mallard-size (26 ins.). Slender bill. Male: dark-green head like Merganser, but far less prominent crest; white breast and flanks. Crest of female more prominent than that of male, brown of head sharply defined from white of neck. Dives often.

Nests in hollow trees or holes in the ground; 7-17 eggs; Apr./June. Incubation (34-36 d.) and tending of young by duck only. Single-brooded.

Resident, breeding in Scotland. Elsewhere winter visitor (Oct./Apr.) to inland-waters and estuaries.



Lat. *Mergus merganser* | N. Am. American Merganser\* | D. Große zaagbek |  
F. Harle bièvre | G. Gänsesäger | S. Storskrake

## MALLARD



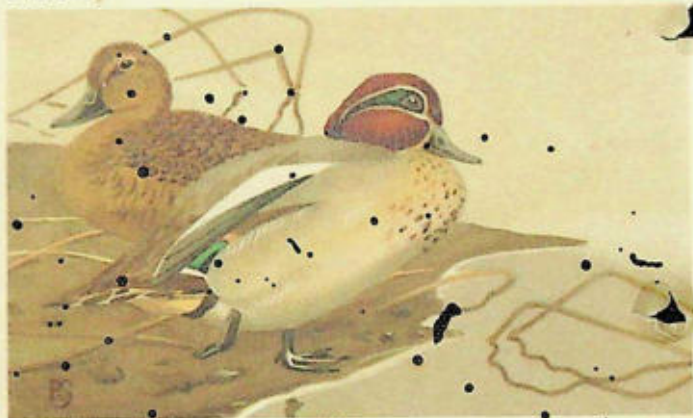
Slightly smaller (23 ins.) than well-known wild-coloured domestic duck. The sexes differ a lot but have characteristic purple-blue speculum with white bars fore and aft. Gregarious; when ducks are breeding drakes form "bachelor parties". Young birds resemble duck.

Nest always near water, under bushes and often in trees, chosen and lined with down by duck; 10-12 eggs, Apr./June. Duck incubates (28 days) while drake guards territory and sometimes helps manage young. Often double-brooded.

- Resident throughout British Isles. Passage-migrants and winter visitors from Continent, Faeroe and Iceland.

*Lat. Anas platyrhynchos* | *D. Wilde eend* | *F. Canard sauvage* | *G. Stockente* | *S. Gräsand*

## TEAL



Small (14 ins.) duck with green and black speculum. Drake with conspicuous yellow-buff patch under tail and chestnut head with green, buff-seamed patch round eye. Horizontal white streak on wing over speculum.

Nests among heather but also in marshes; 8-10 eggs; Apr./May. Incubation (21-22 d.) by female only, but drake often assists in managing young for about 3 w. Single-brooded.

Resident throughout the British Isles, though local in S. England. Part of breeding population moves S. in autumn to France. Passagemigrants and winter visitors from the Continent.

*Lat. Anas crecca* | *N. Am. European Teal* | *D. Wintertaling* | *F. Sarcelle d'hiver* | *G. Krickente* | *S. Kricka*

## WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE



Slightly smaller (26-30 ins.) than Grey Lag. Head and neck same shade as back. Adult with obvious white patch at base of pink or yellow bill, legs orange, breast with black bars. Sexes alike.

Winter visitor (Oct./Apr.). *A.a. flavirostris* (yellow bill) winters mainly in Ireland and W. Scotland; *A.a. albifrons* winters along British coast and River Severn; *flavirostris* breeds in W. Greenland, *albifrons* in N. Russia, Siberia and arctic N. America. Recognition in the field is possible only under favourable conditions.



Order ANSERIFORMES

Family ANATIDAE

## BEAN-GOOSE (above)

Big (28-35 ins.) dark goose with stout orange bill marked with black, legs orange. Sexes alike.

Winter visitor (Oct./Apr.) to S. W. Scotland, Northumberland and E. Anglia. Scarce elsewhere. Breeds in northern parts of Scandinavia, Finland, Russia and Siberia.

Lat. *Anser arvensis* | D. Rietgans | F. Oie sauvage | G. Saatgans | S. Sädgas



## PINK-FOOTED GOOSE

Smaller than Grey Lag and Bean-goose (24-30 ins.) with dark head and neck, contrasting with rather pale body. Small bill, black with pink band and pink legs. No black on under-parts. Sexes alike.

Winter visitor (Sept./Apr.) mainly to E. coast of England and Scotland, being rather scarce or even rare at most other places but for coast N. of Severn estuary. Breeds in Greenland, Iceland and Spitsbergen.

*Lat. Anser brachyrhynchus* | *D. Kleine rietgans* | *F. Oie à bec court* | *G. Kurz-schnabelgans* | *S. Spetbergsgas*

## BRENT GOOSE

Small (22-24 ins.) goose with head, neck (adults with small white patch) and breast black, upper-parts dark grey, vent and tail-coverts white. Sexes alike.

Common winter visitor (Oct./March) to E. coast, local on W. coast and in Wales. Birds with pale breasts (belonging to the race *B. b. hrota*) seen in Scotland (but for S.E. parts) and Ireland breed in Spitsbergen, Greenland and N.E. Canada. The dark-breasted race breeds in N. Russia and N.W. Siberia.



*Lat. Branta bernicla* |  
*N. Am. Brant* | *D. Rotgan's*  
*| F. Bernache cravant* |  
*G. Ringelgans* | *S. Prutgäs*

## WIGEON

Smaller (18 ins.) than Mallard. Drake has chestnut head with conspicuous yellow forehead and crown. White patch on front of wing and on belly make identification of flying birds easy.

Nests among heather on moorland; 7-8 eggs; May/June. Incubation (24-25 d.) by duck only; drake usually guards family. Young fly at about 6 w. Single-brooded.

Resident in Scotland (rather scarce in the South) and N. England. Breeds exceptionally in E. and S.E. England, Wales and Ireland. Common passage-migrant and winter visitor.



*Lat. Anas penelope* | Also: Whew, Whistler | N. Am. European Widgeon | D. Smient | F. Canard siffleur | G. Pfeife-ente | S. Bläsand

## SHOVELER



Somewhat smaller (20 ins.) than Mallard. Duck as well as drake easily recognisable by enormous spatulate bill. Shoveler and Pintail are only drakes with white breasts.

Nests usually in moorland or meadows near water; 8-12 eggs; Apr./May. Only duck incubates (23-25 d.). Drake occasionally assists in guarding of young that fly after about 6 w. Single-brooded.

Resident, breeding in varying numbers in most parts of the British Isles. Common passage-migrant and wintervisitor.

Lat. *Spatula clypeata* | Also: Spoonbill | D. Slobeend | F. Canard souchet | G. Löffelente | S. Skedand

## SMEW



Small (16 ins.) slender-billed duck. Drake: pure white with black patch round eye and few black streaks at back. In flight shows a surprising amount of black on wings and back. Dives often.

Wintervisitor (Nov./Apr.) to inland waters of S.E. England. Scarce elsewhere, especially in Scotland and Ireland. Breeds in arctic N.W. Europe and N. Asia.

*Lat. Mergus albellus* | Also: *White Nun (drake)* | *D. Nonnetje* | *F. Harle pietje* | *G. Zwergsäger* | *S. Salskrake*

## PINTAIL



About Mallard-size (22 ins.). Long slender neck, long pointed tail in combination with white breast and white band along neck make drake Pintail easily recognisable. Nests on islands in lakes; 7-9 eggs; May/June. Only duck breeds (21-23 days). Drake occasionally assists in guarding of young that fly after about 6 w. Single-brooded. Resident in Scotland, though breeding only sporadically in southern parts. Elsewhere irregular breeding-bird. Regular though local passage-migrant and winter visitor, mainly along the coast.

Lat. *Anas acuta* | D. Pijlstaart | F. Canard pilet | G. Spiessente | S. Stårtand

## SCAUP-DUCK



Smaller (19 ins.) than Mallard. Drake seems to be black with white flanks and grey back. Duck has broad white band round base of bill.

Nests near water; 7-10 eggs; May/June. Incubation (27-28 d.) and managing of young by duck only. They fly when 5-6 w. old. Single-brooded. Common passage-migrant and winter visitor (Oct./Apr.) to all coasts. Has bred in O. Hebrides, Sutherland and Caithness.

Lat. *Aythya marila* | N. Am. Greater Scaup-duck | D. Topper | F. Fuligulê milouinan | G. Bergente | S. Bergend

## MUTE SWAN

Very big (60 ins.) white bird with long neck. Truly wild birds cannot be separated in the field from domesticated or semi-wild swans on ponds, lakes and rivers. Orange (not yellow) bill with black knob (biggest in male) at base distinguish Mute Swan from following species. Juveniles are brownish-grey with grey bill.

Big nest built by female, male bringing material; 5-7 (12) eggs; Apr./May. Both sexes incubate (5 w.) and manage young that are fully fledged in about 4 m.; usually families stay together until next spring. Single-brooded.



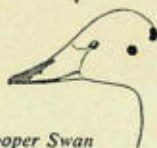
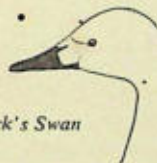
E. England has originally had real wild population. Now most residents will be semi-wild birds. At Abbotsbury (Dorset) about 200-500 pairs. Perhaps migrants from Baltic countries, Poland and E. Europe winter in Britain.

Lat. *Ognus olor* | Also: Cole (male), Pen (female), Cygnet (young) | D. Knobelzwaan | F. Cygne tuberculé | G. Häckerschwan | S. Knölsvåg

## BEWICK'S SWAN

Smaller (48 ins.) than other Swans. Yellow at base of bill rather bluntly ending at nostril (see illustration below). Juveniles greyish-brown with pale grey blacktipped bill. In winter, families stay together.

Winter visitor (Nov./March) to England, Wales and Ireland, especially when severe winters drive them from the IJsselmeer in Holland, where thousands of them winter. Also in small numbers, in Scotland. Breeds in arctic Russia and N.W. Asia.

*Whooper Swan**Bewick's Swan*

*Lat. Cygnus bewickii* / *D. Kleine zwaan* / *F. Cygne de Bewick* / *G. Zwergschwan*  
 / *S. Mindre sangsvan*

## WHOOPER SWAN



As big (60 ins.) as Mute Swan, but bill yellow at base with black tip. Yellow on bill pointed and reaching beyond nostril (see illustration on page 36; above). Juveniles brownish with flesh coloured black-tipped bill.

Nest on islands in lakes build by female, male assisting in bringing material; 5-6 eggs; May/June. Incubation by female only (5-6 w.), but young are managed by both parents. They are fully fledged when about 2 m. Single-brooded.

Perhaps few pairs still breed in Scottish Highlands, where present all year round. Otherwise winter visitor (Nov./Apr.) from Iceland and northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia and Asia.

Lat. *Cygnus cygnus* | Also: *Whistling swan* | D. *Wilde zwaan* | F. *Cygne sauvage* | G. *Singschwân* | S. *Sangsvan*

Order  
FALCONIFORMES

Family FALCONIDAE

## BUZZARD

Rather large (20-22 ins.) brown bird of prey, distinctly bigger than crow, broad-winged with relatively short tail. Dark and light colour-phases are confusing, but even very light Buzzards have slightly barred (never white) tail with broad end-bar. Frequent hovering.

Nests in trees and on cliff-ledges along coast and inland; 2-4 eggs; Apr./May. Both sexes incubate (34-38 d.) and manage young, also after they have left the nest when 6-7 w. old. Single-brooded.

Resident, breeding in increasing numbers in S.W. England, Wales, Lake District, Pennines and most parts of Scotland. Spring and autumn vagrants to Ireland, where exterminated by end of 19th century. On E. coast autumn migrants from N. Europe.



Lät. Buteo buteo | D. Buizerd | F. Bute commune | G. Mäusebussard | S. Örnvråk



BUZZARD

*In a different colour phase.*



### MONTAGU'S HARRIER

*This illustration shows the long, slender wings, black wing tips and the yellow eye of the male.*

## MONTAGU'S HARRIER

Slightly smaller (15 ½-18 ins.) than Hen-harrier. Male can be separated from that species by dark bar across wings. Has also white patch on rump. Female and young are very difficult to tell from female and young Hen-harriers.

Nest on ground built chiefly by female; 4-5 eggs; May/June. Female breeds for about 30 d. Male brings food to incubating female and young; that fly when about 5 w. old. Single-brooded.

Breeds regularly in E. A. and S.W. England; more locally in other parts of England and Wales. Rare vagrant to Scotland and Ireland. Summer visitor from Apr. till second half of Oct.



Lat. *Circus pygargus* | D. Grauwe kiekendief | F. Busard cendré | G. Wiesenweihe | S. Mindre kärhök



Order  
*FALCONIFORMES*

Family *FALCONIDAE*

## HOBBY

Slender hawk (12-14 ins.) with Swift-like silhouette. Dark slate-grey upperparts and reddish thighs. *Osprey* Peregrine (much bigger) and Hobby have obvious black moustache.

Breeds mostly in old nests of Crows, Magpies; 2-4 eggs; June/July. Incubation mainly by female (28 d.). Male brings food for young but female later assists in hunting. Young leave nest when 4-5 w. old. Single-brooded.

Summer visitor (Apr./Sept.) breeding as far N. as Cheshire and Yorkshire in small numbers. Otherwise rather rare vagrant.

*Lark*. *Falco subbuteo* | *D.* Boomwalk | *F.* Faucon hobereau | *G.* Baumfalke |  
*S.* Larkfalk

## SPARROW-HAWK

Rather small (11-15 ins.) bird of prey of hawk-type. Long tail and short broad wings are typical in combination with habit of lightning dashes along borders of woods and hedgerows, when hunting. Under-parts barred. Male smaller than (brownier) female.

Nest in trees (near trunk), often built by female only, though male may assist; 4-5 eggs; May/June. Incubation

(always?) by female only (32-35 d.). Male brings prey that is distributed to the young by female. Young leave nest when about 4 w. old. Single-brooded.

Rather common resident in wooded districts, very scarce in N. Scotland. Passage of migrants from the Continent along E. coast in autumn and spring.



*Lat.* *Accipiter nisus* |  
*D.* *Sperwer* | *F.* *Epervier*  
 (ordinaire) | *G.* *Speßbär* |  
*S.* *Sparvhök*



Order *FALCONIFORMES*

Family *FALCONIDAE*

## **MARSH-HARRIER** (above)

Long-tailed, long-winged rusty-brown hawk (19-22 ins.), often flying low over reed-beds of marshes and swamps. Though old males may have greyish-brown tails there is never a white patch on rump.

Nest on ground in reed beds, built by female; 4-5 (7) eggs; Apr./ June. Incubation largely by female (35-38 d.) Male brings food for young, that is fed to them by female. They leave the nest after 5-6 w. but are fully fledged only 3 w. after. Single-brooded.

(read on)



Order  
*FALCONIFORMES*

Family *FALCONIDÆ*

## HEN-HARRIER

Typical harrier (17-20 ins.) with white patch on rump. Male light greyish-blue, without dark bar on dark-tipped wings. Female and juveniles brown, but also with light patch on rump.

Nest on ground, chiefly built by female; 4-5 eggs; May/June. Only female broods (30 d.). Male brings food that female distributes to young which fly when 5-6 w. old. Single-brooded.

Breeds in the Orkneys, E. Hebrides (few) and in Scottish Highlands, perhaps also in Ireland. Occasionally in Wales and England. Otherwise

passage-migrant and winter visitor from Continent.

Lat. *Circus cyaneus* | N. Am. Marsh Hawk | D. *Blauwe kiekendief* | F. *Busard St Martin* | G. *Kornweihe* | S. *Blå kärhök*

(Continued)

Rare wanderer outside breeding-season, breeding in Norfolk, Suffolk, N. Wales in very small numbers.

Lat. *Circus aeruginosus* | D. *Bruine kiekendief* | F. *Busard des roseaux* | G. *Rohrweihe* | S. *Brun kärhök*

## PEREGRINE FALCON

Robust falcon (15-19 ins.). In flight: long pointed wings and rather short tail. Female birds are distinctly bigger than Kestrel and Hobby. Black moustache and slate-grey upper-parts like Hobby, which has reddish thighs. (Rufous-mantled) Kestrel has longer tail as has Sparrow-Hawk, which has rather short, broad wings. Female Peregrine (bigger) is usually darker than male.

Nest on cliffs (seldom in trees); 3-4 eggs; Apr./May. Incubation by both sexes (28-29 d.). Young tended by both parents, fly when 5-6 w. old. Single-brooded.

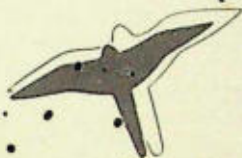
Resident and passage-migrant breeding in mountainous and hilly districts and on sea-cliffs.



Lat. *Falco peregrinus* | N.  
Am. Duck Hawk | D.  
Slechtvalk | F. Faucon  
pélerin | G. Wanderfalke |  
S. Gligrimsfalk

**MERLIN**

Smallest (10-13 ins.) falcon, male about Thrush-size. Upper-parts slate-blue, under-parts (often rufous) buff, streaked with black, tail with broad black band. Female (about Kestrel-size) has dark (not reddish) brown upper-parts. (See illustration: black: male Merlin, white: male Kestrel).



Nest usually on ground among heather; 4-5 eggs; May-June. Incubation by both sexes (28-32 days). Male brings food that female distributes to young. These fly when about 4 w. old. Single-brooded.

Resident. Except for S. and E. England and Midlands breeding in moorlands all over the country in small numbers. In autumn immigrants on E. coast (Aug./Nov.).

## KESTREL

No other bird of prey of the falcon-type hovers so often and persistently as the Kestrel. (13-14 ins.) Male: chestnut upper-parts, head and tail bluish-grey, last with black band. Female: somewhat duller coloured, tail with several small bands.

Nest on ledges of cliffs, on buildings and in trees (often in old nests of other birds); 4-5 eggs. Apr./May. Incubation mainly by female (27-29 d.), tending of young by both parents. Young fly when about 4 w. old. Single-brooded.

Commonest bird of prey, breeding even in inner-London. Resident throughout the British Isles, except for the Shetlands, where only summer visitor.



*Lat. Falco tinnunculus* | *N. Am. European Kestrel* | *D. Tornvalk* | *F. Faucon crécerelle* | *G. Turmfalke* | *S. Tornfalk*



KESTREL

*An impression of the flight action*

# OSPREY



Also known as fish hawk. Brown above, white underparts and white head, with brown streaks on neck and breast. Soars and hovers above water; dives and seizes fish with its talons. Rare migrant on east side of Great Britain, especially to Norfolk Broads and Scotland. Formerly bred in Scotland.

Order FALCONIFORMES

Family FALCONIDAE

## WHITE TAILED EAGLE



Also known as sea eagle (36 ins) this immense bird differs from golden eagle in that it develops a white tail at six years. Wing span 8 ft. Female slightly longer. Brown plumage, head is paler shade. Rare visitor to east coast and no longer breeds in British Isles.

Latin. *Haliaeetus albicilla*

Order FALCONIFORMES

Family FALCONIDAE

## GOLDEN EAGLE

The king of birds (32 ins) is dark brown with golden head and neck. Female is 3 ins, longer than male. Has magnificent flight action. Nest of sticks or crags; eggs 2; April. Resident in north Scotland where it also breeds.



Latin. *Aquila chrysaetus* |

## NOTES

The order Anseriformes comprises the wild fowl which of course can only be observed on or by water. Again the use of field glasses or a telescope is a necessity, for these are some of the most difficult birds to approach.

The geese can only be studied in Britain in the autumn and winter months when they come south to their feeding grounds from northern regions. These are only to be found in certain favoured districts, such as the flats of the east coast, the River Severn, estuaries and water land. A visit to these areas will give the bird watcher the opportunities of studying the birds or a sanctuary offers special facilities.



*Wild Duck in flight formation*

One of the most thrilling sights a bird watcher can experience is a long line of geese in the sky flying down from the north to their winter grounds. They come in, flying due south in one line after another and it is necessary to be on their line of flight in the North of England or Scotland to see them.

The ducks have considerable attraction and have been popularised through their ornamental use on public lakes in London and the provinces. Many such lakes have a wide selection of ducks which become surprisingly tame. These conditions offer opportunities for the watcher to approach the birds closely and in this way it is possible to familiarise oneself with the different species. Observing these birds in the field, however, is another matter and it means using ones opportunities when they present themselves. Several species breed in the north and come south or to inland areas as winter visitors. In some localities it is only in exceptionally severe weather that such birds are to be seen and it is necessary to be aware of all these factors. For example, during the most severe winter of this century, Smew, Pintail and other species visited a lake near London where they had not been seen before and neither have they been since; so weather can be a big factor in bird watching. One of the best

places of all is the coast of East Anglia and the Norfolk Broads where there is the richest of wild fowl life and in addition to species of duck and goose, the mighty wild Whooper Swans fly in over the sea in wedge formation from their breeding grounds in Northern lands. On this point of studying swans a visit to the famous Swannery at Abhotsbury in Dorset is recommended. This has been in existence for centuries and large numbers of swans breed and live here because the conditions of water and feeding are just right for them.

The Hawks are mostly seen on the wing. A familiar sight is the Kestrel hovering in the air watching the ground below and suddenly swooping to its prey. The Kestrel may be seen in town as well as country and for this reason is the best known of all our hawks.

The Sparrow Hawk imposes itself on our notice by its lightning flight along the side of a hedge or a wood for the purpose of catching prey. A Sparrow Hawk flying at great speed along a hedgerow is one of the sights of the countryside and it is one of the worst enemies of small birds.

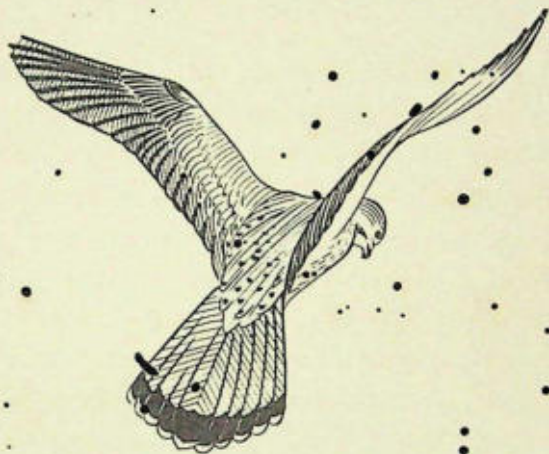
The Buzzard with its big wings can be seen patiently hovering in the air in those districts it frequents, the south-west and



*Wild Geese in flight formation*

west of Britain. The Harriers are more rare and are only likely to be spotted in those areas mentioned.

The Lord of the skies is the Peregrine Falcon the powerful bird which through the centuries has been trained and used for falconry. It is mainly found in mountainous districts and on sea cliffs. Only by watching the Peregrine Falcon tumbling across the skies can we appreciate its mastery of manoeuvre. It is a great experience to watch Peregrines playfully engaging in mock battles in the sky. Their movement in stooping and side-slipping is so fast that it is impossible to keep glasses focused on them. In stooping to kill the Peregrine rockets down upon its prey with silent speed, a fearsome sight indeed.



MALE KESTREL HOVERING

# BIRD SPOTTING

WITH JOHN HOLLAND

---

*BOOK THREE*

---

PLOVERS TO THE AUK FAMILY



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# BIRD SPOTTING

WITH JOHN HOLLAND

*Illustrated by Rein Stuurman*

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THE FAMILIES REPRESENTED  
IN BOOK 3

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Laridae	Gull
Alcidae	Auk

## PLOVERS TO THE AUK FAMILY

▶ The Charadriiformes are a very big Order, comprising such birds as Plovers, Snipes, Sandpipers, Gulls, Terns, and even Guillemots and Puffin. Here interrelation is not so obvious, but running through each of the families of this order there is an unmistakable likeness. Everyone knows the Lapwing, which is a typical Plover (Charadriidae), the Woodcock, which is a typical Snipe (Scolopacidae) and has much in common with the Sandpipers, also belonging to the Scolopacidae.

The Skuas (Stercorariidae) have much in common with the Gulls (Laridae) and most of the Terns (also belonging to the Laridae), though much slenderer than the gulls, have the same brilliant white plumage.

Many of the Charadriiformes are to be found along our coasts, on mud-lands and estuaries, stretches of sand and shingle, where they can be seen in a great variety and considerable numbers.

Finally, this book deals with the interesting members of the Auk family (Alcidae).

## GREENSHANK

Slightly bigger (12 ins.) than Redshank but paler, with slightly upturned grey-blue bill and long greenish legs. No white on wings. Lower back, rump and tail white. Sexes alike.



Nest on the ground; 4 eggs; May/June. Incubation (23-25 d.) and tending of young (leave nest; fly when about 4 w. old) by both sexes. Single-brooded.

Summer-visitor, breeding in Scottish Highlands and Skye; elsewhere common passage-migrant along British coasts, where some winter.

Lat. *Tringa nebularia* | D. Groenpootruiter | F. Chevalier aboyeu | G. Grünschenkel | S. Gluttsnäppa

## PURPLE SANDPIPER

Small (8 ½ ins.) dark wader with dark brownish bill, short yellow legs and white wing-bar. Often to be found on rocks in company of Turnstones. Sexes alike.

Common passage-migrant and winter-visitor on all British coasts where rocks offer suitable habitat. Only absent from early June to mid-July, though some occasionally summer in the Shetlands.



Lat. *Calidris maritima* | D. Paarse strandloper  
F. Bécasseau maritime | G. Seestrandläufer |  
S. Skärnsnäppa

## RINGED PLOVER



Small (7 ½ ins.) plover, colour-scheme somewhat similar to that of Lapwing, but upperparts are sandy-brown; black collar across chest. Narrow white wing-bar. (Short) bill orange with black tip; legs orange-yellow. Sexes alike. (See also page 95).

Nest little hollow in ground; 4 eggs; May/June. Both sexes incubate (24-25 d.) and tend young (that leave nest). Double-brooded.

Summer visitor on British coasts, breeding widely inland; passage-migrants from N. Europe, some of which winter on sewage-farms and reservoirs.

*Lat. Charadrius hiaticula* | *N. Am. Semipalmated Plover* | *D. Boytbek-plevier* | *F. Grand gravejot* | *G. Sandregenpfeifer* | *S. Större strandpipare*

**LITTLE RINGED PLOVER** (*Char. dubius*) is smaller (6 ins.), without white wing-bar, with flesh-coloured legs and yellow ring round eye; until about 1938 very rare vagrant, now summer-visitor, extending its range.

## GREY PLOVER

Same size and closely resembling Golden Plover, but at all seasons and ages recognisable by black "arm pits" (only in flight), light rump and tail and light wing-bar. Sexes alike. Gregarious in winter.



Summer

The Grey Plover is a winter visitor and passage-migrant (Aug./May) while few may summer. Especially to be found along E. and S. coast of England, less common along W. coast and in Scotland; in Ireland scarce on S. coast.

*Lat. Charadrius squatarola* | *N. Am. Black-bellied Plover* | *D. Zilverplevier* | *F. Pluvier argenté* | *G. Kiebitzregenpfeifer* | *S. Kustpipare*

Order CHARADRIIFORMES

Family SCOLOPACIDAE

## WOOD-SANDPIPER

Smaller (8 ins.) than Green Sandpiper. Long legs greenish, bill blackish. Rump white though less conspicuous than Green Sandpiper's. Tail barred. Under-side of wings light greyish. No wing-bar. Tends to be more gregarious and above all more noisy than Green Sandpiper.

Passage-migrant from mid-April to begin of June along E. and SE. coast of England, being rare on W. coast and very rare in Ireland.



Lat. *Tringa glareola* | D. *Bosruiter* | F. *Chevalier sylvain* | G. *Bruchwasserläufer*  
| S. *Grönbena*

## OYSTER-CATCHER



Black (above) and white (under-parts) bird (17 ins.) with long orange-red bill and long pink legs. Winter: white half-collar on throat. Noisy bird when alarmed. Sexes alike. Large flocks outside breeding-season.

Nest shallow depression; 3 eggs; May. Incubation by both sexes (25-28 d.); young, which leave nest within few hours, are tended by both parents. Single-brooded.

Common breeding-bird along British coasts (rather scarce on E. and S. coast of England); in N. England, Scotland and some parts of E. Ireland often far inland. Wintering birds confined to the coasts.

Lat. *Haematopus ostralegus* | D. *Scholekster* | F. *Huitrier pie* | G. *Austernfischer* | S. *Strandskata*

## LAPWING



Relatively large (12 ins.) plover, black (metallic green) upper-parts and white rump; broad black band on chest; obvious black crest; tail white with black terminal band. In flight broad rounded wings are distinctive. Sexes almost alike. Forms large flocks outside breeding-season.

Nest shallow depression scraped by male and female; 4 eggs; Apr./May. Incubation by both sexes (24-27 d.). Young stay at least 24 h. in nest; they are tended mainly by female. Single-brooded.

Common resident throughout Britain. British birds partially migrate and are replaced in autumn by large flocks from the Continent.

*Lat. Vanellus vanellus* | Also: Peewit | D. Kievit | F. Vanneau huppé | G. Klehitz | S. Tofsvipa

## GOLDEN PLOVER



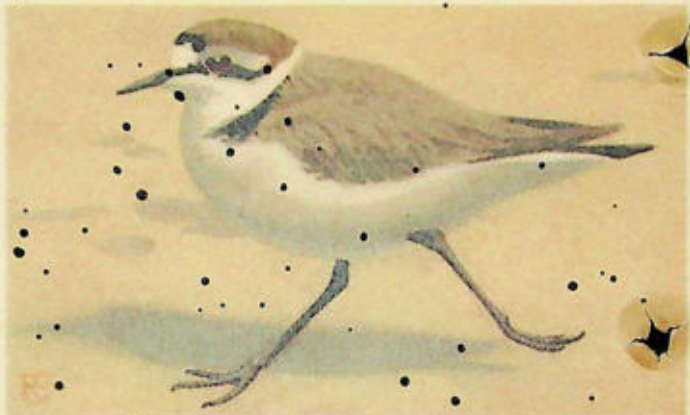
About Lapwing-size (11 ins.). Upper-parts in summer gold and black spangled, face, cheeks and rump black; northern race (*altifrons*) with conspicuous white band seaming black of rump; in southern race (*apricarius*) this pattern is far less clear cut, the white band being often even absent. Sexes alike. Gregarious in winter.

Nest shallow depression; 4 (3) eggs; Apr./May. Incubation (27-28 d.) and tending of young by both sexes. Young fly when 4 w. old. Single-brooded.

Southern race breeds in N. England and N. Wales, Scotland and Ireland. In winter migrants belonging to northern race mix with our Golden Plovers. The races then cannot be told apart and even in summer this is very difficult because of intermediates.

Lat. *Charadrius apricarius* | D. Goudplevier | F. Pluvier doré | G. Goldregenpfeifer | S. Ljungpipare

## KENTISH PLOVER



Often confused with Ringed Plover, but is somewhat smaller (6 ins.) and has interrupted collar; lead-grey legs and bill. Female has no black on fore-head and brown (interrupted) collar. More gregarious than Ringed Plover.

Nest little hollow; 3-4 eggs; May/June. Incubation (24 d.) and managing of young (that leave nest) by both parents. Single- (double-) brooded.

Only breeding-populations in Kent and occasionally Sussex. Rare passage-migrant, most often in autumn along E. and S.E. coast of England.

*Lat. Charadrius alexandrinus* | *D. Strandplevier* | *F. Gravelot à collier interrompu* | *G. Seeregenpfeifer* | *S. Svartbent strandpipare*

## CURLEW



Large (20-24 ins.) wader with very long (5 ins.) strongly curved bill, larger than Whimbrel (15-16 ins.), which has shorter bill (3 ½ ins.), though dimensions are only conclusive when the two species are seen together, especially as young Curlews have much shorter bills than adult birds. Sexes alike.

Nest shallow depression; 4 eggs; Apr./May. Incubation (28-30 d.) and managing of young by both sexes. Young fly when 5-6 w. old. Single-brooded.

Resident, breeding commonly throughout Britain, though very local in S. and E. England and Midlands. After breeding season most birds move to the coast, where joined by winter visitors from the Continent.

*Lo. Numenius arquata* | *D. Wulp* | *F. Courlis cendré* | *G. Grosser Brachvogel* | *S. storspov*

**THE WHIMBREL** (*Numenius phaeopus*) breeds in the Shetlands and few other places. Passage-migrants (Apr./June and July/Oct.) occur on all coasts of Britain.

**BLACK-TAILED GODWIT**

Rather large (15-17 ins.), long legs, bill (4 ins.) and neck. In summer chestnut colour of head, neck and chest is quite characteristic of this species. Broad white wing-bars and white tail with broad black terminal band make Black-tailed easily recognisable.

Passage-migrant especially on E. and S. coasts of England. Breeding has been proved several times since 1937.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT slightly smaller.

Tails of:

Black-tailed  
GodwitBar-tailed  
Godwit

*Lat. Limosa limosa* | *D. Grutto* | *F. Barge à queue noire* | *Uferschnepfe* | *S. Räkönv*

## GREEN SANDPIPER



About Thrush-size (9 ins.). Under-side of wings blackish, rump and tail pure white contrasting to near-black upper-parts. Whitish eye-stripe; no wing-bar. Legs greenish, straight bill blackish. Sexes alike. To be found along margins of fresh waters of all kinds (even small pools), rarely on the open shore. Has habit of sudden dashing from hidden spots with shrill call.

Passage-migrants (July/Nov. and Nov/May), common throughout the British Isles though rather rare in Scotland (except E. parts) and irregular in Ireland. Breeding in Westmorland was proved in 1917 and summering birds have been observed elsewhere.

Lat. *Tringa ochropus* | D. Witgatje- | F. Chevalier cul-blanc | G. Waldwasserläufer | S. Skogssnäppa



Order CHARADRIIFORMES

Family SCOLOPACIDAE

## RUFF

Male in summer-plumage with obvious ruff and ear-tufts of varying colour. Female and male in winter-plumage very much like Redshank, but having shorter legs and also, shorter bills. At all seasons tail black with conspicuous white patch at each side. Male 11-12 ins.; female (Reeve) 9-10 ins.

Passage-migrant from March to October (though seldom between



mid-June and mid-July, more frequent in autumn (especially young birds) than in spring. Fairly often inland. Has bred recently in Norfolk and once regularly in other parts.

Lat. *Philomachus pugnax* | D. *Kemphaantje* | F. *Chevalier combattant* | G. *Kampfläufer* | S. *Brustane*

## KNOT



Rather small (10 ins.) stocky bird with straight black bill and short olive-green legs. In summer under-parts rufous, in winter grey and white. Tail uniform grey. Sexes alike. Highly gregarious, feeding in densely packed masses along sandy and muddy shores.

Passage-migrant and winter visitor especially to E. coast and on W. coast from Solway to Dee (Cheshire). Uncommon inland.

*Lat. Calidris canutus* | *D. Kanoetstrandloper* | *F. Bécasseau maubèche* | *G. Knutt* | *S. Kustsnäppa*

## REDSHANK



Much bigger (11 ins.) than former species; long orange-red legs; bill red at base. Rump and conspicuous patch along hind-border of wing white. Tail barred. Sexes alike.

Well-concealed nest in tufts of grass; 4 eggs; Apr./May. Incubation (22-24 d.) and tending of young (leave nest; fly when about 4 w. old) by both parents. Single-brooded.

Partly resident (though many breeding-birds migrate to Ireland or France) breeding all over the British Isles (except Cornwall, Pembroke and S. Ireland). Breeding-birds from the Continent and Iceland winter in Britain.

Lat. *Tringa totanus* / D. Tureluur / F. Chevalier gambette / G. Rotschenkel / S. Rødbena

## COMMON SANDPIPER



Small (7 ½ ins.) with short dark-brown bill and short greenish legs. Obvious white wing-bar. Back, rump and tail grey-brown, the last with white margin. Sexes alike.

Nest on ground often close to water; 4 eggs; May/June. Incubation (21-22 d.) and tending of young by both parents. Single-brooded.

Summer visitor (Apr./Oct.) breeding in hilly districts of Scotland, Wales, N. and W. England (rare elsewhere) and Ireland (but for SE.).

*Lat. Tringa hypoleucos* | *D. Oeverloper* | *F. Chevalier guignette* | *G. Fluszuferläufer* | *S. Drillsnäppa*

## DUNLIN



In summer this small (7 ½ ins.) wader has black belly. In winter upper-parts brownish-grey, breast greyish, not pure white. No blackish shoulder-spot. Rather long blackish bill may be slightly curved.

Nest on the ground near water; 4 eggs; May/June. Incubation (3 w.) and tending of young (leave nest; fly when about 3 w. old) by both parents.

Breeds in Hebrides, Orkneys and Shetlands, Scottish mainland and (sparingly) in N. parts of England. Breeding birds belong to *S.* race *C.a. schinzii*, while *C.a. alpina* (not separable in the field) which breeds in arctic Europe and W. Siberia passes along our coasts and winters in very great numbers.

*Lat. Calidris alpina* | *N. Am. Red-backed Sandpiper* | *D. Bonte strandloper* |  
*F. Bécasseau variable* | *G. Alpenstrandläufer* | *S. Kärrsnäppa*

## SANDERLING



Rather plump bird (8 ins.) with short straight black bill and short black legs. Very light appearance in winter, under-parts and most of the head being white. Dark spot at shoulder. White wing-bar. Sexes alike. Gregarious, with distinct preference for sandy shores where extremely restless while feeding in small flocks.

Passage-migrant and winter visitor to all suitable (sandy) coasts of Britain, rather scarce in NW. and N. of Scotland. Uncommon inland. Non-breeding birds are often observed in summertime, though the species breeds only in arctic Europe, Asia and America. (The Ruff is to be found on pages 72 and 73).

Lät. *Crocethia alba* | D. *Drieteentje* | F. *Bécasseau sanderling* | G. *Sanderling* | S. *Sandlöpare*

# AVOCET



Snow-white bird (17 ins.) with black streaks and patches, long greenish-grey legs and strikingly upcurved black bill. Sexes alike.

Social breeder; 4 (5) eggs; May. Incubation (22-24 d.) and tending of young (leave nest; fly when about 6 w. old) by both parents. Single-brooded.

Has been extinct as breeding-bird, but resumed breeding in Ireland (1938) and Norfolk (1941) and Suffolk (1947). Otherwise scarce migrant.

Lat. *Recurvirostra avosetta* | D. Kluut | F. Avocette | G. Säbelschnäbler | S. Skärfläcka

## RED-NECKED PHALAROPE



Small (6 ½ ins.) wader, often seen swimming (very buoyant). Very slender black bill. In summer: white throat and under-parts, rufous-red patch on sides of neck. In winter: grey back streaked white.

Social breeder near water; 4 eggs; May/June. Incubation (20-21 d.) and tending of young (leave nest; fly when about 3 w. old) by male only. Single-brooded.

Summer visitor (May-Aug.) breeding in small numbers in Orkneys, Shetland, O. Hebrides and few spots in NW. Ireland. Otherwise scarce passage-migrant, most often on S. and E. coasts of England.

Lat. *Phalaropus lobatus* | N. Am. *Nothern Phalarope* | D. *Grauwe franjepoot* | F. *Phalarope à bec grêle* | G. *Odinshühnchen* | S. *Smalröbbad simsnäppa*

## GREY PHALAROPE

Slightly bigger (8 ins.) than Red-necked. Somewhat stouter bill yellow at base, legs yellowish. In summer: chestnut under-parts and throat. In winter much like Red-necked, under-parts being white. Grey back more uniform coloured (without whitish streaks), lighter than wings. Shape (yellow with black tip) and colour (shorter and thicker) of bill are best field-marks.

In contrast to most other species female phalaropes are brighter coloured than males. They take a leading part in courtship and leave incubation and tending of young to the males. Usually phalaropes are extremely tame which allows close approach needed to tell the two species apart.

Scarce passage-migrant (Sept./Dec.) along SW., S. and E. coast of England, very scarce elsewhere and at other seasons.



Lat. *Phalaropus fulicarius* | N. Am. Red Phalarope | D. Rosse franjepoot | F. Phalarope à bec large | G. Thorshühnchen | S. Brednäbbad | simsnäppa

## ARCTIC SKUA



Slender dark gull-like bird, about size of Black-headed (14-15 ins.) with long projecting central tail-feathers (2-3 ½ ins.). Uniform dark brown phases are known as well as light ones with white under-parts and many intermediates. Dark phase is commonest in Britain. The Arctic Skua has the habit (as have other skuas) of pursuing terns and small gulls until these drop the fish they are carrying or even disgorge their last meal. The small skuas (of which the Arctic Skua is commonest in Britain) are very similar while still immature. Sexes alike.

Summer visitor and passage-migrant to E. and S. coast of England, less to W. coast and Ireland. Breeds in Shetlands, and (less) on Fair Isle, Orkneys, I. and O. Hebrides, Caithness and Sutherland.

*Lat. Stercorarius parasiticus* | *N. Am. Parasitic Jaeger* | *D. Kleine jager* | *F. Labbe parasite* | *G. Schmarotzerraubmöwe* | *S. Vanhlig labb*

## GREAT SKUA

About size (and rather much like) immature Herring Gull, with conspicuous white patch on wings, shorter, thicker black bill, shorter tail and blackish legs. Length about 23 ins. Sexes alike. Chases gulls and terns for food but may also be seen fishing for itself.



Summer visitor (Apr./Sept.) breeding in the Orkneys and Shetlands, very rare in Ireland.

Lat. *Stercorarius skua* | N. Am. *Skua* | D. *Grote jager* | F. *Grand Labbe* | G. *Grosse Raubmöwe* | S. *Storlabb*

## POMATORHINE SKUA

About the size of common Gull (17-18 ins.), otherwise very much like Arctic Skua of which adult birds may be told by broad, blunt and pointed central tail-feathers projecting 2-3 ins. from tail. It has dark and light phases and intermediates. Chases terns and gulls for food like other skuas.



Rather regular autumn visitor (Aug./Nov.) to E. and S. coasts of England, scarce to rare at other coasts and other seasons.

Lat. *Stercorarius pomarinus* | N. Am. *Pomarine Jaeger* | D. *Middelste jager* | F. *Labbe pomarin* | G. *Mittlere Raubmöwe* | S. *Bredstjärtad labb*

## LONG-TAILED SKUA.

Slightly smaller (13-14 ins.) than Arctic Skua with very long (5-8 ins.) central tail-feathers, but beware of confusion with light-coloured Arctic Skua with very long tail-feathers. Immature birds are still more confusing.

Scarce and irregular autumn visitor (Aug./Oct.), mainly to E. coast of England.

Lat. *Stercorarius longicaudus* | N. Am. *Long-tailed Jaeger* | D. *Kleinste jager* | F. *Labbe longicaude* | G. *Kleine Raubmöwe* | S. *Fjällab*

## GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL



Big (25-27 ins.) black-mantled gull with flesh-coloured to whitish (never yellow) legs. Immature birds very much like young Herring-Gulls but head and under-parts at all ages somewhat lighter. Sexes alike.

Social (not always) breeder on rocky coasts and islands; 3 eggs; May/June. Incubation (26-28 d.) and managing of young (fly when 7-8 w.) by both sexes. Single-brooded.

Resident, breeding locally along British coasts, though scarce on E. coast of England and in Scotland south of Moray Firth. In autumn and winter widespread on all coasts.

*Lat. Larus marinus* | *D. Grote mantelmeeuw* | *F. Goëland marin* | *G. Mantel-möwe* | *S. Havstrut*

## LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL

Smaller (21 ins.) edition of Great Blackback (though size is never conclusive) with yellow legs. In winter even the colour of the legs of adult birds resemble that of Herring Gull's and immature birds of both species are all but undistinguishable. Lesser Black-backs breeding in Britain belong to the race *L. f. graelsii* (Faeroes, British Isles, Channel Islands and Brittany) and have rather pale mantle (always lighter than black wing-tips), varying from nearly slate-grey to nearly the silver-grey of Herring Gull's. In *L. f. fuscus* (Scandinavia, the Baltic and N. Russia) the colour of the mantle is same as Great Blackback's. Beware of intermediates and cross-breds with Herring Gull. Sexes alike.

Social breeder on rocky coasts and islands; 3 eggs; May/June. Incubation (26-28 d.) by both sexes, but only female tends young that fly when about 5 w. Single-brooded.

British race is a summer visitor (Febr./Nov.) breeding commonly in Wales, N. England, Scotland and Ireland and (less numerous) on S. and SW. coasts of England. The Scandinavian race (*L. f. fuscus*) visits the E. coast of England in autumn and winter.

## HERRING-GULL



Commonest of British gulls, bigger (20-24 ins.) than Mew Gull, with heavy yellow bill (red spot near tip), flesh-coloured legs and pale lemon-coloured eyes. The immatures of Great Blackback, Lesser Blackback, Herring Gull and Mew Gull are very difficult (often impossible) to tell apart. Sexes alike.

Social breeder on rocky coasts and islands; 3 eggs; May/June. Incubation (25-27 ins.) and tending of young (fly when 5-6 w. old) by both sexes. Single-brooded.

Common resident, whose numbers are greatly augmented by winter visitors and passage-migrants from NW. Europe.

Lat. *Larus argentatus* | D. *Zilvermeeuw* | F. *Goëland argenté* | G. *Silbermöwe* | S. *Gråtrut*

# BLACK TERN



Small (9-10 ins.) dark tern with only slightly forked tail, black bill and near-black red-brown feet. No white on slate-grey upper-parts; no white fore-wing. Immature birds and adults in winter-plumage can be very confusing. Sexes alike.

Rather irregular passage-migrant in spring (Apr./June) and autumn (July/Oct.) along E. and S. coasts of England. Some may be seen inland. Has bred in E. England till middle of 19th century and recently in Sussex.

Lat. *Chlidonias niger* | D. Zwarte stern | F. Guilfette noire | G. Trauerschwabe | S. Svarttärna



Order CHARADRIIFORMES

Family LARIDAE

## COMMON TERN (above)

Elegant white bird (12-14 ins. including deeply forked tail) with silver-gray wings and back, black crown and nape. Red legs and vermilion-red black-tipped bill. Sexes alike. In winter-plumage this and following species are very difficult if not impossible to tell from each other. Social breeder; 2-3 eggs; May/June. Incubation (21-28 d.) and tending of young (fly when about 4 w. old) by both parents. Single-brooded. Summer visitor (Apr./Oct.), breeding along all suitable coasts of the British Isles (except S. Wales) and sometimes inland in Scotland and Ireland.

(read on p. 134)



## ARCTIC TERN

Closely resembling Common Tern but blood-red bill (adults in summer) has no black cap and legs are distinctly shorter. Length 14-15 ins., owing to greater length of tail. Social breeder (often associates with Common Tern); 2 eggs; May/June. Both sexes incubate (21-22 d.) and tend young that fly when 3-4 weeks old. Single-brooded.

Summer visitor and passage-migrant (Apr./Oct.), breeding in England only along NW. coast and on Farne Is., in Wales off Anglesey, in Scotland and Ireland on all coasts.

*Lat. Sterna macrura* | *D. Noordse stern* | *F. Sterne arctic* | *G. Küstenseeschwalbe* | *S. Rödnäbbad tärna*

## ROSEATE TERN

Closely resembling Common Tern as well as Arctic Tern but in summer adult Roseate Terns can be told from these by black colour of bill (legs red). Juveniles and young birds are very tricky. Sexes alike.

Scarce summer visitor and passage-migrant (May/Sept.), a few pairs breeding on coasts of Dorset and Norfolk and on Farne Is., also in NW. England and (recently) in the Scilly Is. Some colonies in Wales, on E. coast of Scotland and in Ireland.

*Lat. Sterna dougallii* | *D. Dougalls stern* | *F. Sterne de Dougall* | *G. Paradiesseeschwalbe* | *S. Dougalls tärna*

## BLACK-HEADED GULL



This small slender gull (14-15 ins.) is easily recognised at all ages and seasons by broad white margin to front of black-tipped wings. Adults have red bill and legs. In summer (Mch/Sept.) chocolate-brown hood. Sexes alike.

Social breeder along coasts as well as inland; 3 eggs; Apr./June. Incubation (22-24 d.) and managing of young (fly when 4-5 w. old) by both parents. Single-brooded.

Resident (though some breeding-birds may winter in Spain or even N. Africa) breeding in varying numbers along all British coasts and in some inland colonies. Winter visitors and passage-migrants from W. and NW. Europe.

*Lat. Larus ridibundus* | *D. Kapmeeuw* | *F. Mouette rieuse* | *G. Lachmöwe*  
*S. Skratmas*

## COMMON GULL

Slender yellow-green bill (no red spot) and legs, black wing-tips with white spots and dark-brown eyes distinguish adults (16 ins.) from other Gulls. Immature Common Gulls are difficult to tell from other species though more or less dark subterminal band on tail may be of help. Sexes alike.

Social breeder (no large colonies) along the coasts; 3 eggs; May/June. Incubation (22-25 d.) and tending of young (by when 4-5 w. old) by both parents. Single-brooded.

Resident, breeding commonly only in Scotland and at Dungeness; irregularly in Cumberland. W. coast of Ireland. Otherwise a winter visitor from NW. Europe to all coasts as well as inland.

*Eat. Larus canus* | Also: Mew Gull | *D. Stormmeeuw* | *F. Goéland cendré* | *G. Sturmmöwe* | *S. Fiskmas*

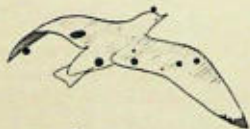


## KITTIWAKE

Same size (16 ins.) but slenderer than Common Gull with black-tipped (no white spots) wings and black legs. Yellow bill and dark eyes. Mantle a shade darker than Common Gull's. Sexes alike.

Social breeder on cliff-ledges; 2 eggs; May/June. Incubation (21-28 d.) and tending of young by both parents. Single-brooded.

Breeds very locally along NE., NW. and SW. coasts of England and along coast of Wales. Locally along coast of Scotland and rather abundantly along Irish coasts. Really abundantly on Orkneys, Shetlands and Hebrides. Common offshore in winter when heavy storms may sweep stray birds inland. In autumn Kittiwakes disperse from breeding colonies in S. and W. directions, ringed birds having been recovered off E. coast of N. America.



Lät. Rissa tridactyla | D. Drieteenmeeuw | F. Mouette tridactyle | G. Dreizehenmöwe | S. Tretaig mas

## SANDWICH TERN



Largest of more common terns (15-17 ins.), somewhat heavier with less deeply forked tail. Black bill with pale-yellow tip and black feet. Sexes alike.

Social breeder (often in large colonies); 2 (3) eggs; May/June. Incubation (21-24 d.) and tending of young (fly when 5 w. old) by both parents. Single-brooded.

Summer visitor and passage-migrant (Apr./Oct.). Breeds in England in Farne Is., N. Norfolk and NW. England; in Wales on Anglesey only; in Scotland on coasts of mainland and some islands; in Ireland mainly in N. and W. (also inland). Otherwise passage-migrant from the Continent.

Lat. *Sterna sandvicensis* | N. Am. Cabot's Tern | D. Grote stern | F. Sterne caujek | G. Brandseeschwalbe | S. Kentsk tärna

## LITTLE TERN



Very small (9-10 ins., tail included) with yellow black-tipped bill, yellow legs and white forehead. (Other Terns also have white foreheads in winter plumage). Sexes alike.

Social breeder (small colonies); 2-3 eggs; May/June. Both sexes incubate (19-21 d.) and tend young that fly when 4 w. old. Single-brooded.

Summer visitor (Apr./Sept.) breeding on all coasts of England and Wales (except Cornwall and S. Wales) and some parts of Scotland (also Hebrides and probably Orkneys); in Ireland only on E. coast. Otherwise passage-migrant strictly confined to the coasts.

Lat. *Sterna albifrons* | D. Dwergstern | F. Sterne naine | G. Zwergseeschwalbe | S. Smatārja

(Continued from page 128)

Lat. *Sterna hirundo* | D. Visdiefje | D. Sterne pierregarin | G. Fluszeeschwalbe | S. Fisktārna

Order CHARADRII-  
FORMES

Family ALCIDAE

## GUILLEMOT

Black and white like Razorbill but with straight pointed bill. In summer head and neck are dark without any white. In winter face and neck are white with conspicuous dark streak behind the eye. Length 16-17 ins. Sexes alike.

Social breeder on cliff-  
ledges; 1 egg; May/June.  
Incubation (4-5 w.) and  
tending of young by both  
sexes. Single-brooded.

Resident, breeding in  
same localities as Razor-  
bill and often together  
with this species. From  
Scotland northwards  
the dark northern U.a.  
aagle breeds; south of  
Berwick and Argyll is U.a.  
albionis which is some-  
what lighter.



Lat. *Uria aalge* | D. *Zeekoet* | F. *Guillemot de troll* | G. *Trottellumme* | S.  
*Sillgrissla*

**RAZORBILL**

This black and white sea-bird (16 ins.) is easily recognisable by its unique bill. In summer head and neck are black with a small white line from base of bill to the eye. In winter throat and sides of neck are white. Juveniles have smaller bills. Sexes alike.

Social breeder on cliff-ledges; 1 egg; May/June. Both sexes incubate (33-36 d.) and tend young that flutters down to sea when about 2 w. old, where it is fed by one of the parents. Single-brooded.

Resident, breeding on all suitable coasts of the British Isles (except E. coast between Isle of Wight and Yorkshire.)



*Lat. Alca torda* | *D. Alk* |  
*F. Pingouin torda* | *G.*  
*Tordalk* | *S. Tordmule*

## BLACK GUILLEMOT

Smaller (13-14 ins.) than Guillemot; adult birds in summer plumage are all-black except for large white patch on wing. Bill black, legs red. In winter upper parts barred black and white, head and under-parts white. Sexes alike.

Social breeder (small numbers) in hollows; 2 eggs; May/June. Both sexes incubate (28-34 d.) and tend young that fly when 5 w. old. Single-brooded.

Resident, breeding on coast of Cumberland, Isle of Man, N. and W. coasts and isles of Scotland and (locally) all around Ireland. Stay in breeding area in winter.



*Lat. Uria grylle* | *D. Zwarte zeekoet* | *F. Guillemot à miroir* | *G. Gryllteiste* |  
*S. Tobisgrissla*

## PUFFIN

Small (12 ins.) clown-like black and white bird with brightly-coloured thickly shaped bill. Feet orange.

Social breeder in burrows. 1 egg; May. Both sexes incubate (40-42 d.) and tend young for about 40 d. It is then deserted and stays in nest for 7-10 d. when it flutters down to sea. Single-brooded.

Resident, breeding at same localities (but in fewer numbers) as Guillemot and Razorbill. On east coast of England in Farnø Is. and Flamborough only. Specially favours islands off Welsh coast.



*Lat. Fratercula arctica* | *N. Am. Atlantic Puffin* | *D. Papegaaiduiker* | *F. Maccaux moine* | *G. Papageitaucher* | *S. Lunnefagg!*



## NOTES.

The Order CHARADRIIFORMES which form the whole subject of pages 103 to 138 are to be found along the coast on mud flats and estuaries excepting the Plovers which are mainly inland birds. All these birds are of the greatest interest, are of larger size and very attractive to study. It is also possible to approach within reasonable distance of many of them, an exception being the Plovers, which are very wary, no doubt through persecution.

If one can find the right place it is possible to see many of these birds in the same locality. The coast of East Anglia, Scotland and Ireland are excellent areas for first hand study. Indeed, there is no telling what else the bird watcher may see particularly in East Anglia, for there are records of visits of vagrants from places as far away as Siberia, the Caspian Sea and the Mediterranean. He can lie in the sand hills and

sweep the shore with a pair of glasses and observe without interruption.

Gulls are the most fascinating of birds for they are true world wanderers. It is only necessary to see them following a ship for hour after hour or day after day to realise they are at home anywhere and with their amazing strength of wing can be in the far north one week and on the Coast of France the next. It is a point to be able to separate the different kinds of gulls and then move on to the Terns with their wonderful flight into the wind skimming the water with all the grace of a swallow. There is no more lovely sea bird than a Tern on the wing and it is possible to be charmed by their action of flying and grace of movement. Not without reason are they called Sea Swallows.

Although the Skuas may visit the east coast they breed in the far north of Britain and a visit there is necessary to study them.

The Waders can hold our interest for hours on end. They are always so busy and full of activity and at the same time are both quaint and charming. The sea shore, mud flats, and the estuaries are their home ground.

The Razorbill, Guillemot and Puffin are mostly birds of the



*Lapwing Nestlings*



*Long-tailed Skua*

West coast particularly the islands off the coast of Wales and the North West. Here bird sanctuaries are to be found where there are opportunities of closer study. The social breeding of the Auks is one of the outstanding features of interest in bird life.

Since 1947 the Avocet has been breeding in increasing numbers near Orford in Suffolk after having been extinct in Britain as a breeding bird for many years.



*Ringed Plover*

# BIRD SPOTTING

WITH JOHN HOLLAND

---

*BOOK FOUR*

---

DOVES TO CROWS



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# BIRD SPOTTING

WITH JOHN HOLLAND

*Illustrated by Rein Stuurman*

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## DOVES TO CROWS

Book three deals with seven orders; Columbiformes, Cuculiformes, Strigiformes, Apodiformes, Coraciiformes, Piciformes, Caprimulgiformes and part of the Passeriformes. The first six orders, which are comparatively small, are easily distinguishable because the birds belonging to them are all characteristic of their order and all have in common, an unmistakable resemblance.

*Columbiformes* comprise Pigeons and Doves and this order is known and seen all over the country and in many towns and cities as well. The Cuckoo is the only member of the *Cuculiformes* that is commonly seen in Britain. It is best known for its song and you may arouse this bird's interest by imitating its call. This may also be done with other birds, though they may be less easy to imitate.

The *Strigiformes* are the Owls. With their big heads and staring eyes they have a distinctive appearance and a striking family likeness which makes them the easiest of birds to identify. Their nocturnal habits may be a handicap in studying them. However, the Little Owl and the Short-eared Owl may often be seen by day, and most of them start hunting while it is twilight.

The well-known Swift is the only representative of the *Apodiformes* in the British Isle and has only a superficial likeness to Swallows and Martins which belong to the big

order of the *Passeriformes*. The Kingfisher is the only representative of the *Coraciiformes*; this flying streak of brilliant colour, though not commonly seen, is again an easy bird to recognize.

The Woodpeckers (*Piciformes*) are easy to identify and they proclaim their presence by loud drumming on branches and trunks of trees. The Green Woodpecker drums rather less, but it has a loud ringing "laugh" which can be heard at a considerable distance.

The Nightjar is a representative of the *Caprimulgiformes*. There remains the large order of the *Passeriformes* or Perching Birds which includes not only the song birds but also Swallows and Martins, Ravens and Crows. This book deals with the Larks, the Swallows and the Martins, the Golden Oriole, and the common members of the Crow family (*Corvidae*).

FAMILIES REPRESENTED  
IN BOOK 4.

Columbidae	Dove
Cuculidae	Cuckoo
Strigidae	Owl
Apodidae	Swift
Alcedinidae	Kingfisher
Picidae	Woodpecker
Caprimulgidae	Night-jar
Sittidae	Nuthatch
Alaudidae	Lark
Hirundinidae	Swallow
Oriolidae	Oriole
Corvidae	Crow
Certhiidae	Creeper

## ROCK-DOVE

Somewhat like Stock-Dove (13 ins.) but conspicuous white rump, two black wing-bars, no black wing-tips, no white on neck or wings. Sexes alike.

Nest in holes of cliffs or among rocks; 2 eggs; Apr./June. Incubation 17-18 d.) and tending of young (fly when about 5 w. old) by both sexes. Double-brooded (at least).

Resident, breeding in decreasing numbers along Scottish and Irish coasts (not S. of Firth of Forth).



Lat. *Columba livia* | D. Rotsduif | F. Pigeon biset | G. Felsentaube | S. Klippduva

## STOCK-DOVE

Rather like domestic pigeon. Length about 13 ins. No white on neck or wings. No white rump. Black-tipped wings. Irrescent green patch (not white) on sides of neck. Sexes alike.

Nest in holes of trees (even rabbit-burrows); 2 eggs; Mch/Sept. Incubation (16-18 d.) and tending of young (fly when about 4 w. old) by both parents. Double-brooded (at least).

Resident, breeding all over British Isles except N. Scotland, rather local in Ireland. Some of the young birds emigrate.



Lat. *Columba oenas* | D. *Holenduif* | F. *Pigeon colombin* | G. *Hohltaube* | S. *Skogsduva*

Order COLUMBI-  
FORMES

Family COLUMBIDAE

## WOOD-PIGEON

Large (16 ins.) blue-grey pigeon with broad white band across wing and white patch on sides of neck. Rather long tail. Immature birds lack white patch on the neck. Sexes alike.

Nest in trees, hedgerows and on buildings; 2 eggs; Mch/Oct. Incubation (17-20 d.) and tending of young (fly when 5 w. old) by both parents. Double-brooded.

Resident, breeding all over the British Isles (except Shetland, where passage-migrant) but scarce in N. Scotland.



Lat. *Columba palumbus* | D. Houtduif | F. Pigeon ramier | G. Ringeltaube |  
S. Ringduva

Order COLUMBIFORMES

Family COLUMBIDAE

## TURTLE-DOVE

Distinctly smaller (11 ins.) than Wood-Pigeon with long white-tipped black tail. Upper-parts rufous-brown. Immature birds lack patch of black and white feathers on sides of neck. Sexes alike.

Nest in tall hedgerows and trees; 2 eggs; May/July. Incubation (13-14 d.) and tending of young (fly when about 3 w. old) by both parents. Double-brooded.



Summer visitor (April/May to Oct.) breeding in S. and E. England and Midlands, rare in Devon and Cornwall and W. Wales. Irregular passage-migrant to Scotland. Scarce visitor to S/Ireland.

Lat. *Streptopelia turtur* /  
D. *Tortelduif* / F. *Tourterelle des bois* / G. *Turteltaube* / S. *Turturduva*



TURTLE-DOVE

*The smallest of the Dove family*

## LONDON PIGEON

The London Pigeon is similar to Stock Dove, but occurs in differing plumage types. They may be blue rock, blue chequer, red rock, red chequer, black, white or any of those colours splashed with white. Gregarious and found in the centre of towns where they feed in the streets and squares; also in many seaside resorts and country districts. There is much crossing which accounts for the variety of plumage and domesticated or carrier pigeons joining wild or semi-wild flocks carry the admixture still further.



## CUCKOO



Slender bird (13 ins.) somewhat like male Sparrow-Hawk though pointed wings and long graduated white-tipped tail are characteristic, as is call-note. Sexes alike.

No nest as eggs (up to 15-20) are laid in nests of other species, especially small passerines, after removing one of the foster parents' eggs. The young Cuckoo (which hatches out after 12-13 days) ejects eggs or young of foster-parents. It flies when about 4 w. old.

Summer visitor (Apr./Sept.) generally distributed all over the British Isles (except Shetland, where scarce migrant).

Occasionally south-coast end of March, generally Apr.-Sept; adults leave August, young follow Sept. and Oct.

*Lat. Cuculus canorus* | *D. Koekoek* | *F. Coucou gris* | *G. Kuckuck* | *S. Gök*

## BARN-OWL

Rather large (14 ins.) very pale owl. Heart-shaped face and underparts white, upper-parts orange-buff. Sexes alike.

Nest in buildings or ruins and in holes of trees or cliffs; 4-7 eggs; Apr./May (Dec.). Incubation (32-34 d.) by female only; male assists in feeding of young which fly when 9-10 w. old. Single- (double)-brooded.



Resident breeding all over the British Isles except NE. Scotland.

*Lar. Tyto alba* | *D. Kerkuil*  
*¶ F. Chouette effraye* | *G. Schleiereule* | *S. Tornuggla*

Order STRIGIFORMES  
Family STRIGIDAE

## LITTLE OWL

Small (9 ins.) plump flat-headed owl, greyish-brown with white spots. Often seen by daylight, when mobbed by passerine birds. Likes perching on wires or telegraph-poles. Sexes alike.

Nest in holes of trees, walls, cliffs and even rabbit-burrows; 3-5 eggs; Apr. May. Incubation (28-29 d.) by hen only but male assists in feeding of young which fly when 5-7 w. old. Single-(double-) brooded.

Introduced (first 1842, later 1879, and 1896) from Italy. Now breeding in England and Wales (N. to Northumberland). Resident.



Lat. *Athene noctua* | D. *Steenuil* | F. *Chouette chevêche* | G. *Steinkauz* |  
S. *Minervas uggla*

Order STRIGIFORMES Family STRIGIDAE

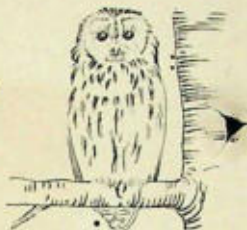
## TAWNY OWL

Rather large (15 ins.) thick-headed short-winged owl with big black eyes. No ear-tufts. Mottled brown. Sexes alike.

Nest in holes of trees or in old nests of other birds; 2-4 eggs; Febr./Apr. Incubation (28-30 d.) by female only but male brings food to the young which fly when about 5 w. old. Single-brooded.

Resident breeding all over the British Isles (though uncommon in the W. and not in N. isles).

Lat. *Strix aluco* | D. Bosuil | F. Chouette hulotte | G. Waldkauz | S. Kattuggla



## SHORT-EARED OWL

A rather big (15 ins.) long-winged owl seen by daylight in open country is almost certain to be a Short-Eared Owl. Ear-tufts are seldom visible. Eyes golden-yellow. Sexes alike.

Nest on the ground; 4-8 eggs; Apr./May. Incubation (24-28 d.) by hen only but male provides food for the young, which fly when about 4 w. old. Single- (double-) brooded.



Resident breeding locally in Scotland (rarely in Shetlands), N. England and W. Wales, very scarce elsewhere. Winter visitors from the Continent.

Lat. *Asio flammeus* | D. Velduil | F. Hibou des marais | G. Sumpfohreule | S. Jorduggla



TAWNY OWL



LONG-EARED OWL

*A night-time impression\**

## LONG-EARED OWL

Somewhat smaller (13-14 ins.) broad-winged owl with prominent (when perching) ear-tufts and bright yellow eyes. When roosting ear-tufts are laid flat and become invisible. Sexes alike.

Nest in old nest of other birds (exceptionally on the ground); 4-5 eggs; Mch/Apr. Incubation (27-28 d.) by female only but male provides food for the young which fly when about 3 w. old. Single-brooded.

Resident breeding all over British Isles in woody districts though scarce in N. Scotland and rarely in the Shetlands. Only owl breeding commonly in Ireland.



*Lat. Asio otus* | *D. Ransuit*  
*F. Hibou moyen-duc* | *G. Waidohreule* | *S. Hornuggla*

## SWIFT



Very dark Swallow-like bird (6-7 ins.) with long scythe-like wings and short shallow-forked tail. Has habit of chasing in flocks over towns or villages with a scream-like note. Sexes alike.

Social breeder in holes of roofs of high buildings; 2-3 eggs; May/June. Incubation (18-20 d.) chiefly by female but probably both parents feed young which fly when 5-7 w. old. Single-brooded.

Summer visitor (Apr./Aug.) breeding all over the British Isles (except NW. Scotland. Passage-migrants.

*Lat. Apus apus* | *D. Gierzwaluw* | *F. Martinet noir* | *G. Mauersegler* | *S. Törnsvala*

## KINGFISHER

Only bird with blue-green upper-parts and warm chestnut under-parts. Long straight black bill reddish at base. Legs red. Sexes alike.

Nest at end of self-bored tunnel in steep banks of streams; 6-7 eggs; Apr./May. Incubation (19-21 d.) and tending of young (fly when 3-4 w. old) by both parents. Double-brooded.

Resident breeding along slow-flowing streams in lowlands of England, Wales, Ireland and S. Scotland. In severe winters moving to the coast.



*Lat. Alcedo atthis* | *D. IJsvogel* | *F. Martin-pêcheur* | *G. Elsvogel* | *S. Kungfis-kare*

Order PICIFORMES

Family PICIDAE

## GREEN WOODPECKER

Largest (12-13 ins.) of British woodpeckers and only green one. Red crown and bright yellow rump. Male has red, black-bordered moustache-like stripe that is all-black in females. Heavy bill grey-black.

Nest in self-bored hole in tree; 5-7 eggs; Apr./June. Incubation (16-18 d.) and tending of young (fly when about 3 w. old) by both parents. Single-brooded.



Resident, breeding in England and Wales and spreading into Scotland.

Lat. *Picus viridis* | D. Groene specht | F. Pic vert  
? G. Grünspecht | S. Gröngöling

Order PICIFORMES

Family PICIDAE

## GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER

Rather small (9 ins.) woodpecker with bold pied black back, buffish-white under-parts with crimson under tail-coverts. Male has red nape and juveniles red crown.

Nest in self-bored hole in tree; 4-7 eggs; May/June. Incubation (16-17 d.) mainly by female; young which fly when about 3 w. old are fed by both parents. Single-brooded.

Resident breeding fairly common in England and Wales and S. Scotland. Does not breed in Ireland where only passage-migrant.



Lat. *Dendrocoptes major* | Also : Pied Woodpecker | D. Grote bonte specht |  
F. Pic épeiche | G. Bunzspecht | S. Större Häckspecht

## LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER :

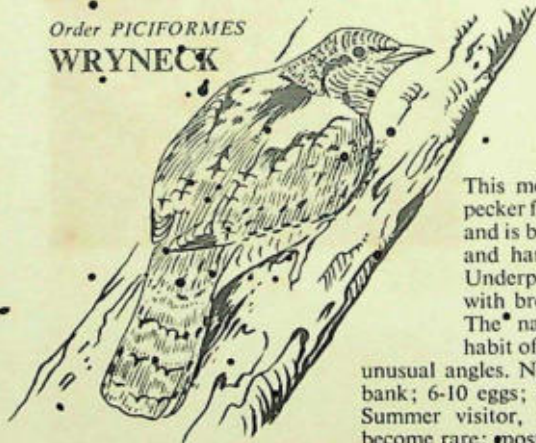


Very small (6 ins.) woodpecker with black and white barred back and wings. No red under tail-coverts. Male has red crown, female whitish, juveniles reddish.

Nest (high) in self-bored hole in tree; 4-6 eggs; May. Incubation (14-15 d.) and tending of young which fly when 3-4 w. old, by both sexes. Single-brooded. Resident breeding locally in England (very rare in the N.) and Wales. No reliable records from Scotland and Ireland.

Lat. *Dendrocopos minor* | Also: Barred Woodpecker | D. *Kleine bunte specht* | F. *Pic épeichette* | G. *Kleinspecht* | S. *Liten hackspet*

## WRYNECK



This member of the woodpecker family is small (6½ ins) and is brown and grey above and handsomely marked.

Underparts are buff, barred with brown; sexes are alike. The name derives from a habit of twisting the head to

unusual angles. Nest in hole in tree or bank; 6-10 eggs; May.

Summer visitor, in recent years has become rare; mostly seen in south-east England.

Lat. *Tynx torquilla torquilla*.

Order PICIFORMES

Family PICIDÆ

## GREAT BLACK WOODPECKER



Larger than Green Woodpecker with all black plumage except for red crown and crest. Thick light coloured bill and yellow eye. Hen has brown tinge with red on nape. Voice is loud and has flute-like double notes as well as single note like Green Woodpecker. Its "drum" is long and loud. Breeding unknown in Great Britain, but vagrants from Continent have often been reported in various parts of England.

Lat. *Dryocopus martius* | D. Zwarte Specht | G. Schwarzspecht | F. Pic noir

Order CAPRIMULGIFORMES

Family CAPRIMULGIDAE

## NIGHTJAR



- Sometimes called Goatsucker this bird (10½ ins) has perfect camouflage with the ground where it is concealed during the day. It is grey and barred with brown, buff and black. Male has white spots on wings and white tips to outer tail feathers.  
Eggs (2) are laid on the ground; May/June.  
Summer visitor, voice recognised by a purring sound like a machine at work.

Lat. *Caprimulgus europaeus* / D. Nachtzwalve / G. Nachtschwalbe / F. Engoulevent

Order PASSERIFORMES

Family CETHIIDAE

## TREE-CREEPER

Small (5 ins.) brown bird with light under parts; has habit of climbing up (never down) trees hunting for insects, with slender distinctly curved bill. Sexes alike.

Nest in cracks of trunks, behind loose bark or crevices of buildings; 6-7 eggs; Apr./June. Incubation (18, 20 d.) chiefly by female. Both parents feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Single- (double)-brooded.

Resident breeding all over the British Isles (except Shetlands, Orkneys and O. Hebrides).

Lat. *Certhia familiaris* | D. Boomkruiper | F. Grimpereau des bois | G. Wald-  
baumläufer | S. Trädkröpare



# NUTHATCH



Sparrow-sized (5 ½ ins) plump, short-tailed bird with woodpecker-habit of climbing trees. Upper-parts blue-grey, under-parts buff with chestnut flanks. Sexes alike.

Nest in holes of trees and nest boxes of which entrance is narrowed with mud; 6-11 eggs; Apr./May. Only hen incubates (14-15 d.) but both parents feed young which fly when 3-3 ½ w. old. Single-brooded.

Resident, breeding in England and Wales though scarce in N. England. Rare vagrant to Scotland and Ireland.

## WOOD-LARK



Has shorter white-tipped tail, less conspicuous though longer crest and more pronounced eye-stripes (meeting across the nape) than Sky-Lark. Length about 6 ins. Musical song delivered from fence-posts, tree-tops or in flight and even at night.

Nest on the ground; 3-4 eggs; Mch/May. Incubation (13-14 d.) by female only. Both parents feed young which fly when about 3 w. old. Double-brooded.

Resident, breeding in S. England and Wales. Rare vagrant elsewhere.

## SKY-LARK

Best field mark is habit of mounting steeply to sing from considerable height. Sky-Lark (7 ins.) differs from Wood-Lark in having longer tail and conspicuous crest. Sexes alike.

Nest on the ground; 3-4 eggs; Apr./June. Incubation (11-12 d.) by female only but both parents feed young which fly when about 3 w. old. Double-brooded (sometimes three broods).

Breeds commonly all over the British Isles. Most British breeding-birds winter in Europe or Ireland. Migrants from N. Europe winter in England and Ireland. Also passage-migrants from Central Europe.

Lat. *Alauda arvensis* | D. Veldleeuwerik | F. Alouette des champs | G. Feldlerche | S. Sanglärka



Order PASSERIFORMES

Family HIRUNDINIDAE

## SAND-MARTIN

Small (4-5 ins.) swallow with slightly forked tail. Upper-parts brown, under-parts white with brown band across the breast. Sexes alike. Social breeder in self-bored holes in sand-pits and steep banks of rivers; 4-5 eggs; May/July. Incubation (13-14 d.) and tending of young by both sexes. Young fly when about 3 w. old. Double-brooded. Summer visitor (Mch/Sept.) breeding all over the British Isles, but scarce in N. Scotland.

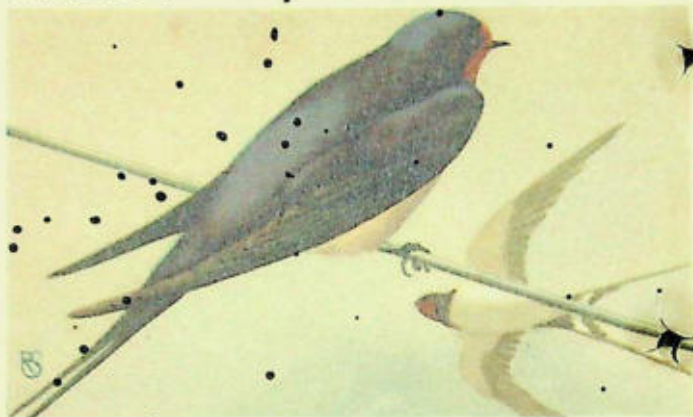
*Lat. Riparia riparia* | *N. Am. Bank Swallow* | *D. Oeverzwaluw* | *F. Hirondelle de rivage* | *G. Uferschwalbe* | *S. Backswala*



Order PASSERIFORMES

Family HIRUNDINIDAE

## SWALLOW



Deeply forked tail, blue-black upper-parts and chestnut throat and fore-head are characteristic. No white rump. Juveniles have less deeply forked tail. Sexes alike (7½ ins.).

Nest open, saucer-shaped, built (by both sexes) of mud; 4-5 eggs; May/Aug. Incubation (14-15 d.) by female only. Both parents feed young which fly when about 3 w. old. Double-brooded (sometimes three broods).

Summer visitor (Apr./Oct.) breeding all over the British Isles, though scarce in NW. Scotland and isles.

Lat. *Hirundo rustica* | N. Am. Barn Swallow | D. Bärenzwaluw | F. Hirondelle de cheminée | G. Rauchschnalbe | S. Ladusvala

Order PASSERIFORMES

Family HIRUNDINIDAE

## HOUSE-MARTIN

Much like Swallow but conspicuous white rump, less deeply forked tail and lack of chestnut at throat exclude confusion. Length about 5 ins. Tail included.

Social breeder under eaves in cup-shaped nests built (by both sexes) of mud; 4-5 eggs; May/Aug. Incubation (14-15 d.) and tending of young (fly when about 3 w. old) by both sexes. Two (three) broods.

Summer visitor (Apr./Oct.) breeding all over the British Isles (locally in Ireland, scarce in I. Hebrides and Orkneys, seldom in the Shetlands; rare vagrant to O. Hebrides).



Lat. *Delichon urbica* | D. *Huiszwaluw* | F. *Hirondelle de fenêtre* | G. *Mehlschwalbe* | S. *Hussvala*

## GOLDEN ORIOLE



About Thrush-size. Male bright yellow with black wings and tail. Female (and immature birds) yellowish-green, wings and tail darker. Length 9-10 ins.

Nest in fork of small branch; 3-4 eggs; May/June. Incubation (14-15 d.) and tending of young (fly when about 2 w. old) by both parents. Single-brooded.

Scarce and irregular passage-migrant in April and May, more regularly in SW and SE. England. Occasionally, breeding in southern counties.

## ROOK



ROOK (right) and JACKDAW

Much like Carrion Crow but slenderer bill, black plumage with purplish gloss, wings longer, baggy appearance of thigh-feathers. Adults have greyish-white face. Sexes alike (18 ins.).

Social breeder in large trees; 3-5 eggs; Mch/Apr. Female alone incubates (16-18 d.) but both parents feed young which fly when about 4w. old. Single-brooded.

Resident breeding all over Britain (including Shetlands, since 1952). Many migrants arrive at E. coast in autumn to winter in England or Scotland.

Order PASSERIFORMES

Family CORVIDAE

## JAY

Least crow-like of Corvidae, but blue wing-patch, white rump and black tail, in combination with size (13 ins.) and harsh voice are distinctive. Rather conspicuous crest. Sexes alike.

Nest in small trees or bushes; 5-6 eggs; May/June. Incubation (16-17 d.) mainly by female. Both parents feed young which fly when about 3 w. old. Single-brooded.

Resident, breeding commonly in England and Wales, very local in Scotland. In Ireland a somewhat darker plumage: *G.g. hibernicus*.

Lat. *Garrulus glandarius* | D. Vlaamse gaai | F. Geai des chênes | G. Eichelhäher | S. Nötskrika





JAY

*View from the back*



MAGPIE

*A winter impression*

## MAGPIE



Black and white plumage combined with size (18 ins. including long tail) are distinctive. Usually seen in pairs or small parties. Sexes alike

Domed nest in tall trees or bushes; 5-8 eggs; Apr./May. Incubation (17-18 d.) by female only but both parents feed young which fly when 3-4 w. old. Single-brooded.

Resident breeding commonly, though often locally, all over the British Isles. Very scarce in N. Scotland.

## HOODED CROW

Typical crow whose grey mantle and under-parts exclude confusion with other species. Length 18-19 ins. Sexes alike.

Nest in trees or bushes; 4-6 eggs; Mch/Apr. Incubation (19-20 d.) by female only but male assists in feeding of young which fly when 4-5 w. old. Single-brooded.

Resident breeding in N. Scotland, Ireland and the Isle of Man. In England and Wales (scarce) winter visitor (Oct./Apr.). Mixed pairs of Hooded Crow and Carrion Crow occur where breeding ranges of both overlap.

Lat. *Corvus cornix* | D. *Bont kraai* | F. *Corneille mantelée* | G. *Nebelkrähe* | S. *Gra kraka*



Order PASSERIFORMES Family CORVIDAE

## RAVEN

Biggest (25 ins.) of crow-tribe all-black with heavy bill and wedge-shaped tail. Sexes alike.

Big nest built by both sexes; 4-6 eggs; Febr./Mch. Female broods (20-21 d.) and is fed by male. Both parents feed young which fly when 5-6 w. old. Single-brooded.

Resident breeding in fair numbers along coasts of England (not E. coast between Moray and Kent), Wales, Scotland and Ireland and also inland.

Lat. *Corvus corax* | D. Raaf | F. Grand corbeau | G. Kolkrabe | S. Korp



## CARRION CROW

All-black but smaller (18-19 ins.) than Raven and differing from Hooded Crow in having shorter, broader wings, shorter tail, greenish gloss on plumage. See also Rook. Sexes alike.

Nest in tall trees, bushes or on cliff-ledges; 4-5 eggs, Apr./June. Only female incubates (18-20 d.) but young are fed by both parents. They fly when 4-5 w. old. Single-brooded.

Resident, breeding in England, Wales and S. and E. Scotland.




Lat. *Corvus corone* | D. Zwarte kraai | F. Corneille noire | G. Rabenkrähe | S. Svart kraka

**JACKDAW** (illustration p. 179)

Small (13 ins.) but typical crow whose gray nape excludes confusion with other species. Black bill and legs. Sexes alike.

Tends to social nesting in holes of trees, walls and rocks; 4-6 eggs; Apr./May. Only hen incubates (17-18 d.) but both parents feed young which fly when 4-5 w. old. Single-brooded.

Resident breeding all over Britain except O. Hebrides and Shetland, though scarce in NW. Scotland. There seems to be some migration and many birds from the Continent winter here.



*Lat. Corvus monedula | D. Kanwtje |  
F. Choucas • dex tours | G. Dohle |  
S. Kaja*

Order PASSERIFORMES

Family CORVIDAE

## CHUGH

Slightly larger than jackdaw (16 ins) but has glossy black plumage, long curved scarlet bill and scarlet legs.

Nest of sticks in a crevasse on a cliff; 3-6 eggs; April/May.

Resident, now very rare, only to be found in west Ireland, Wales and Scotland, and south-west England



*Lat. Pyrrhocorax*

## NOTES

Bird watching is a case of using our opportunities wherever we happen to be. Field Marshall Lord Alanbrooke a great bird lover tells in his story of the war how he would slip away from a top level conference to study the birds in the garden of the house where he was staying. He found this a great relaxation. By using our opportunities we may, on occasions, be in the right place at the right time.

There is nothing particularly exciting in the doves except to study their habits and to note how in spring and summer the wood pigeons are seen singly or in pairs and yet in winter in the south of Britain they congregate in flocks. The change of habits of any birds are to be looked for and noted, that is part of the fascination of discovery. It is not what we read about birds that make this a fascinating hobby but what we discover for ourselves.

The date of the first cuckoo to arrive as well as the first swallow and martin is always noteworthy, but it is in the latter part of their stay at nesting and breeding time that the swallows and the martins are a fascination. The martin never fails to charm from the time of its remarkable undertaking of building the mud nest until the young begin to fly. Whilst the nestlings are still in the nest the parents show a great feat of endurance in flying without cessation all through the hours of daylight, twisting and turning in the sky, catching insects and approaching the nest with the speed of a jet, pausing to feed the young and off again. But the real climax comes when the young are being schooled to fly and fend for themselves; the parent leads with the young bird following just behind. Round and round in wide circles they go, the young bird following in exactly the same course as the parent and never was there a more apt pupil.

The woodpeckers reward any time given to them. The green woodpecker seems to have increased over the last years and offers ample opportunity for study. It is a regular visitor to gardens where it searches for insects or grubs in the lawn. Lastly the crow family, which includes a number of highly individualistic members and the common rook in his colony high in the trees offers a most interesting study of bird

behaviour, for there is always something fresh to note. Rooks appear to be the most intelligent of birds. They will no longer nest in a tree which is threatened with rot or disease. They are thoughtful and suspicious to a degree as will be observed by their action when they fly down to pick up a piece of food. They are said to hold "Rook Parliaments" to decide if and when they shall move the rookery, and there have been reports of rooks gathering in a circle and pronouncing judgment on one of their fellows. Their habits are mysterious and in consequence offer the bird watcher a study of considerable interest and a good deal of amusement as well. What is more the rook is found in almost every place where there are trees, even in the middle of towns and cities.

# BIRD SPOTTING

WITH JOHN HOLLAND

---

*BOOK FIVE*

---

TITS AND THRUSHES TO WARBLERS.



This "BIRD SPOTTING" series is recommended by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds as a general introduction to bird-identification, especially suitable for young persons.

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# BIRD SPOTTING

WITH JOHN HOLLAND

*Illustrated by Rein Stuurman*

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## TITS, THRUSHES & WARBLERS

The families represented in Book V are mainly the Paridae (Tits), the Turdidae (Thrushes) and the Sylviidae (Warblers). The handsome Tit family is resident and the family likeness runs through all the members so that recognition is never difficult.

The Thrush family covers a diverse range from the Thrush, Blackbird and Robin which are resident, to the Redwing and Fieldfare, (winter visitors), and the Wheatear, Chats, Redstarts and Nightingale which are Summer visitors. The Black Redstart is the most rare being mainly a Continental bird which visits the south-eastern part of the country, and in fact it has been known to colonise bombed sites in the centre of London.

The Sylviidae do not differ to the same extent — indeed there is a striking similarity in shape, size and general characteristics. It is because of this strong family resemblance that identification is difficult and in some cases the differences are very subtle. It is recommended that the bird watcher first becomes familiar with the more common members of the family and recognition of the rarer ones will follow.

FAMILIES REPRESENTED  
IN BOOK 5.

Paridae

Turdidae

Troglodytidae

Sylviidae

Tit

Thrush.

Wren

Warbler

Order PASSERIFORMES

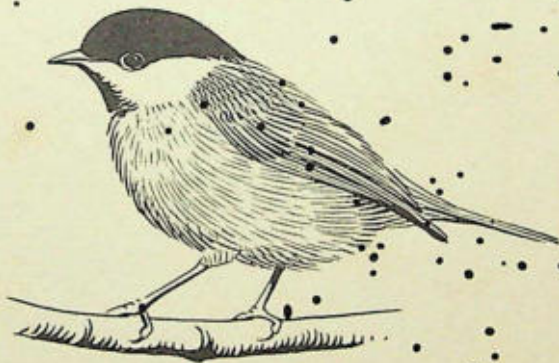
Family PARIDAE

## WILLOW TIT

Very similar to Marsh Tit, with dull instead of glossy black cap. Call is nasal, harshly slurred "zi-zurr-zurr-zurr". Sexes alike.

Nest in self-bored hole in rotten wood; 8-9 eggs; Apr./May. Only hen incubates (13-14 d.); both parents feed young which fly when 17-19 d. old. Single-brooded.

Resident, breeding locally in England, Wales and Scotland. Unknown in Ireland.



*Lat. Parus atricapillus* | *N. Am. Chickadee* | *D. Matkopmees* | *F. Mésange boréale* | *G. Mönchsmeise* | *S. Tälltita*

**BEARDED TIT**

This rare reedling (6¼") is easily recognised by those who are fortunate enough to see it, on account of its wedge shaped tail and light red and grey plumage. Male has a blue-grey head and a prominent black moustache from whence it gets its name. The wings are striped, and the female is duller in tone, and has no moustache.

Nest above the water; eggs 6-7; April/July.

Resident, only in East Engla.



Latin. *Panurus biarmicus biarmicus* / D. Baardmannetje / G. Bartmeise /  
F. Mesange à moustache

Order PASSERIFORMES

Family PARIDAE

## COAL TIT

Even smaller (4 1/4 ins.) than Blue Tit, head-pattern as Great Tit, but conspicuous white patch on the nape, under-parts buff; double white wing-bar, short tail. Young birds have yellow under-parts but also yellow cheeks. Sexes alike.

Nest in hole of tree (close to the ground) or bank; 7-11 eggs; Apr./May. Incubation (14-16 d.) by hen only; both parents feed young which fly when 16-17 d. old. Single-brooded.

Resident, breeding all over the British Isles though unknown in the Shetlands, Orkneys and O. Hebrides. Irish Coal Tits have yellowish cheeks and patch on the nape (P.a. hibernicus).



Lat. *Parus ater* | D. *Zwarle mees* | F. *Mésange noire* | G. *Tannenmeise* | S. *Svartmes*

## CRESTED TIT

Small (4 ½ ins.) tit with distinctive crest which excludes confusion with any other member of tit-tribe. Sexes alike.

Nest in self-bored holes in decayed pine-wood; 5-6 eggs; Apr./May. Only female incubates (13-15 d.), both parents feed young which fly when 17-18 d. old. Single-brooded.

Resident breeding in the Scottish Highlands only, especially in the Spey Valley.



Lat. *Parus cristatus* | D.  
Kuifmees | F. Mésange  
huppée | G. Haubenmeise |  
S. Tofsmos

## MARSH TIT

Small (4½ ins.) titmouse with glossy black crown. No white patch on the nape, no wing-bar, cheeks pale but not white. Very much like Willow Tit, difference in notes being practically only safe distinction. "Pitchuu" is the note of Marsh Tit. Sexes alike.

Nest in holes of trees (sometimes walls or nest-boxes); 7-8 eggs; Apr./May. Incubation (13-14 d.) by female only; both parents feed young which fly when 16-18 d. old. Single- (double-) brooded.

Resident, breeding in England and Wales (local in Cornwall, Cumberland and NW. Wales). In Scotland only in Berwick; unknown in Ireland



*Lat. parus palustris* | *D. Glanskopmees* | *F. Mésange nonnette* | *G. Nonnenmeise* | *S. Kärjmes*

## LONG-TAILED TIT

Very small (5 ½ ins. including 3 ins.-tail) like ball of wool with knitting-needles (tail) put into it. Head white with black eye-stripe, under-parts pinkish-white, back and wings blackish with pink. Sexes alike.

Domed nest of moss, lichen, cobwebs and hair built by both sexes; 8-12 eggs; Apr./May. Incubation (14-16 d.) by female; both parents feed young which fly when 15-16 d. old. Single-brooded.

Resident breeding all over the British Isles, but almost unknown in the O. Hebrides, Orkneys and Shetlands.

Lat. *Aegithalos caudatus* | D. *Staarntees* | F. *Mésange à longue queue* |  
G. *Schwanzmeise* | S. *Stjærtmes*



Order PASSERIFORMES

Family PARIDÆ

## BLUE TIT

Small (4 ½ ins.) short-tailed tit with bright blue crown, white face, green mantle and yellow under-parts. Sexes alike.

Nest in holes of trees, walls and nest-boxes; 7-14 eggs; Apr./May. Only female incubates (13-14 d.) but both sexes feed young which fly when 18-20 d. old. Single-brooded.

Resident breeding commonly in Britain though scarce in NW. Scotland.

Lat. *Parus caeruleus* | D. *Pimpelmees* | F. *Mésange bleue* | G. *Blaumeis* | S. *Blames*



## GREAT TIT



About Sparrow-size (5 ½ ins.). Bright yellow under-parts, green mantle, black and white head, broad black bib (biggest in male). Sexes almost alike.

Nest in hole of tree, wall or nest-box; 5-11 eggs; Apr./May. Only female incubates (13-14 d.) but both parents feed young which fly when 18-21 d. old. Single-brooded.

Resident, breeding all over British Isles though rather scarce in N. and W. Scotland.

Lat. *Parus major* | D. Koolmees | F. Mésange charbonnière | G. Kohlmeise | S. Talgoxe



GREAT TIT  
*Side view*



Order *PASSERIFORMES*

Family *TURDIDAE*

## FIELDFARE

Somewhat like Thrush but blue-grey head, nape and rump, contrasting with chestnut back and wings and blackish tail are distinctive. In flight white underwings and "arm-pits" like Mistle-Thrush. Length about 10 ins. Sexes alike.

Passage-migrant winter visitor (Oct./Apr.) all over the British Isles. Highly gregarious, often associated with Redwings, feeding nearly always in the open though seldom far from cover.



Lat. *Turdus pilaris* | \*D. ~~H~~amsvogel | F. Grive litorne | G. Wacholderdrossel |  
S. Björktrast



WREN

*Back view*

Order PASSERIFORMES

Family

TROGLODYTIDAE

## WREN

Very small ( $3\frac{3}{4}$  ins.), russet-brown bird with short, usually cocked-up tail. Male sings nearly all year round. Sexes alike.

Domed nest of moss, grass and leaves is lined with feathers; 5-7 eggs; Apr./May. Incubation (14-15 d.) by female only, but both parents feed young which fly when 16-18 d. old. Double-brooded. One male may have two or even three wives at the same time.

Resident, breeding all over the British Isles. In the Shetlands breeds *T.t. zetlandicus*; in the O. Hebrides *T.t. hebridensis* in St Kilda *T.t. hirtensis*.



*Lat. Troglodytes troglodytes* | *D. Winterkoninkje* | *F. Troglodyte* | *D. Zaunkönig* | *S. Gårdsmyg*

## MISTLE-THRUSH

Slightly bigger (10-11 ins.) but very much like Song Thrush. Long tail with whitish tips to outer feathers. White under-wings and "arm-pits". Dark spots on breast bigger than in Thrush. No eye-stripe. Sexes alike.

Nest usually in fork of tree; 4 eggs; March/May. Incubation (13-14 d.) by hen only; both parents feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Double-brooded.

Resident, breeding all over the British Isles though scarce in NW. Scotland and rare in the Orkneys. Northern birds tend to move S. in autumn.



Lat. Turdus viscivorus | D. Grote lijster | F. Grive draine | G. Misteldrossel | S. Dubbeltrast

Order PASSERIFORMES  
Family TURDIDAE

## SONG- THRUSH

Smaller (9 ins.) than Mistle-Thrush with shorter tail, breast with smaller spots, upper-parts warmer brown. Under-wing and "arm-pits" golden-buff. Sexes alike.

Nest in hedgerows, bushes and trees; 4-5 eggs; Apr./June. Only female incubates (13-14 d.); both parents feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Double-brooded.

Resident, breeding all over the British Isles. Part of the British Thrushes move S. in autumn when winter-visitors from the Continent (belonging to the race *T. e. philomelos*) arrive on E. coast.



*Lat. Turdus ericetorum* | Also: *Throstle* | *D. Zanglijster* | *F. Grivemusicienne* |  
*G. Singdrossel* | *S. Taltrast*

Order PASSERIFORMES

Family TURDIDAE

## REDWING

Small (8¼ ins.) typical thrush, that can easily be told from other thrushes by chestnut-red flanks and under-wing and conspicuous light eye-stripe. Sexes alike. Highly gregarious (often with Field-fares).

Passage-migrant and winter visitor (Sept./Apr.) which has exceptionally bred in N. Scotland and Fair Isle.

*La. Turdus nausicus* | *D. Koperwick* | *F. Grive mauvis* | *G. Weindrossel* |  
*S. Rödvingetrast*





RED WING

*Front view*



BLACKBIRD  
*Side view of male*



FIELDFARE  
*A different impression to that on page 208*

## BLACKBIRD

All-black plumage combined with yellow bill of cock are distinctive. Females and juveniles have upper-parts dark-brown and under-parts mottled. Length about 10 ins. One of our commonest song-birds.

Nest in bushes, hedges, and even on window-sills; 4-5 eggs; Apr./June. Incubation (12-14 d.) chiefly by hen; both parents feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Two/three broods.

Resident all over the British Isles Winter visitors from the Continent.

*Lat. Turdus merula* | *D. Merel* | *F. Merle noir* | *G. Amsel* | *S. Koltrast*



## **WHEATEAR**

Sparrow-sized (5 3/4 ins.) bird with conspicuous white rump. Nearly always seen on the ground in open country. Male with bold black cheeks.

Nest in hole in the ground (rabbit-burrows), in walls or drainpipes; 5-6 eggs; Apr./May Incubation (14 d.) chiefly by female; both sexes feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Single-brooded.

Summer visitor (Mch/Oct.) breeding all over the British Isles.



Lat. *Oenanthe oenanthe* |  
D. Tapuit | F. Tracquet  
motteux | G. Steinschmät-  
zer | S. Stenskvätta



WHEATEAR

*The white rump is conspicuous in flight  
(See picture opposite)*

## REDSTART

Redstarts are small birds with chestnut-red tails which constantly move. Male common Redstart (5 ½ ins.) has black face and throat and white fore-head. Females and juveniles are very difficult to tell from those of Black Redstarts.

Nest in hole of tree or wall or nest box; 5-6 eggs; May/July. Incubation chiefly by female (12-14 d.); both parents feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Often double-brooded.



Summer visitor (Apr./ Oct.) breeding in fluctuating numbers in most parts of England, Wales and Scottish mainland, but very rarely in Ireland and passage-migrant or vagrant elsewhere.

Lat. *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* | D. Gekraagde roodstaart | F. Rouge-queue à front blanc | G. Gärtenschwanz | S. Rödstart



REDSTART  
*Side view*

## BLACK REDSTART

Has typical redstart-tail but lacks orange under-parts and white forehead of common Redstart, being very dark bird (5½ ins) having breast black as well as throat and face and only white patch on the wing. Female and juveniles are very much like those of common Redstarts though somewhat darker.

Nest in hole or on ledge of building or rock; 4-6 eggs; Apr./July. Only female incubates (12-14 d.), both parents feed young which fly when about 2½ w. old. Two (three) broods.

Summer visitor (Mch/Nov.). Has colonized bombed sites in Inner London and has bred in Middlesex and Sussex. Migrants pass along E. coast of England and through Ireland. Small numbers winter in S. and SW. England, W. Wales and S. Ireland.



Lat. *Phoenicurus ochrurus* | D. Zwarte roodstaart | F. Rougequeue noir |  
G. Hausrotschwanz | S. Svart röstjärt

Order PASSERIFORMES  
Family TURDIDAE

## WHINCHAT

Conspicuous white eye-stripe. Black cheeks with white mark below are distinctive for red-breasted, male Whinchat (5 ins.) Females and juveniles resemble Stonechats but have also distinct though duller eye-stripes.

Nest on the ground in high grass; 5-6 eggs; May/July. Only hen incubates (13-14 d.); both sexes feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Single- (double-) brooded.

Summer visitor Apr./Oct. to all parts of British Isles, though not breeding in W. Cornwall and Shetlands and scarce in the Orkneys, O. Hebrides and S. half of Ireland.



*Lat. Saxicola rubetra* | *D. Paapje* | *F. Tracquet tarier* | *G. Braunkehlchen* |  
*S. Buskskvätta*

## STONECHAT

Black-headed, red-breasted bird with white patch on the sides of the neck. No eye-stripe. No white in tail. Female and young resemble Whinchat but lack white eye-stripe. Likes to perch on tops of bushes, fence-posts and wires. Length about 5 ins.

Nest on or near the ground; 5-6 eggs; Mch/July. Incubation (14-15 d.) by female only; both sexes feed young which fly when about two w. old. Double-brooded.

Resident, breeding all over the British Isles, commonest in coastal regions, rarely breeding in the Orkneys and only occasional visitor to the Shetlands. Birds breeding in the N. move S. in autumn.

*D. Goodborskaputt*

*F. Tracquet pâtre.*

*G. Schwarzkehlchen*

*S. Svarthakad buskskvätta*

*Lat. Saxicola torquata*



## ROBIN.



This well-known little bird (5 ½ ins.) with its bright red breast, throat and fore-head is one of our commonest garden-birds. Juveniles have speckled breast. Sexes alike.

Nest in hole in bank, tree or wall or even old tins; 4-6 eggs; Mch/June. Only female incubates (13-14 d.); both parents feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Two (three) broods.

Resident, breeding commonly all over the British Isles (except Shetlands) though scarce in N. Scotland and the Orkneys. British birds (E.r. melophilus) cannot be separated in the field from the Continental (E.r. rubecula) which winters here.

Lat. *Erithacus rubecula* | D. Roodborstje | F. Rougegorge | G. Rotkehlchen | S. Rödihake

## NIGHTINGALE

Rufous-brown bird (6 ½ ins.) with reddish tail recognized by its well-known song. Has typical thrush-silhouette. Sexes alike.

Nest on or close to the ground among nettles and other tall weeds. 4-5 eggs; May/June. Incubation (13-14 d.) by hen only; both parents feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Single-brooded.

Summer visitor, breeding commonly in S. and E. England, very locally in SE. Wales.



Lat. *Luscinia megarhynchos*  
| D. Nachttegaal | F. Rossignol  
| G. Nachtigall | S. Sydlig näktergal

## REED-WARBLER

Slender unobtrusive bird (5 ins.) with near-white throat. No black markings on brown upper-parts, no eye-stripe, no streaks on light buff under-parts. Best field-mark is song. Sexes alike.

Nest is deep cup woven by female between reeds; 4-5 eggs; June/July. Incubation (11 d.) and tending of young by both parents. Young fly when 11-12 d. old. Single- (double-) brooded.

Summer visitor (Apr./Sept.) breeding fairly common in S. and mid-England, very locally in S. and SE. Wales, only rare vagrant to Scotland and Ireland.

*Lat. Acrocephalus scirpaceus* | *D. Kleine karekiet* | *F. Rousserolle effarigée* |  
*G. Teichrohrsänger* | *S. Rörsängare*



Order *PASSERIFORMES*,  
Family *SYLVIIDAE*

## BLACKCAP

Glossy black cap of male and reddish-brown of female and juveniles are distinctive. Only other small birds with black caps are Marsh- and Willow-tits, which also have black throats and are smaller.

Nest in bushes or hedge-rows; 4-5 eggs; May/June. Incubation (10-11 d.) and tending of young by both sexes. Young fly when 10-13 d. old. Single- (double-) brooded.

Mainly summer visitor (Apr./Oct.). Breeds in England, Wales and S. counties of Scotland (N. to the Spey Valley).



Lat. *Sylvia atricapilla* | D. Zwartkopje | F. Fauvette à tête noire | G. Mönchgrasmücke | S. Svarthätta

Order PASSERIFORMES

Family SYLVIIDAE

## SEDGE-WARBLER

Typical warbler (5 ins.) with broad creamy eye-stripe and streaked crown and mantle. Tawny rump without streaks. Under-parts creamy-white. Sexes alike.

Nest mostly near water in tall weeds or bushes; 5-6 eggs; May/June. Incubation (13-14 d.) chiefly by female; both parents feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Single- (double-) brooded.

Summer visitor (Apr./Sept.) breeding fairly commonly in England, Wales and Ireland; less common in Scotland.

*Lat. Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* | *D. Rietzanger* | *F. Phragmite des Joms* |  
*G. Schilfrohrsänger* | *S. Sävsångare*



Order PASSERIFORMES

Family SYLVIIDAE

## ICTERINE WARBLER

Rather big (5 ½ ins.) among warblers, with pale-yellow under-parts, olive-brown upper-parts, bluish grey legs and long pointed wings. Inside of mouth orange-red. Sexes alike.

Though the Icterine Warbler is a common breeding-bird in W. Europe, it is only a rare vagrant to Britain in spring and (more often) autumn on E. coast. (Has bred in Wiltshire).

Lar. *Hippolais icterina* | D. Spotvogel | F. *Hippolais icterine* | G. Gartenspötter  
S. Bastardnäkttergal



Order PASSERIFORMES

Family SYLVIIDAE

## WHITETHROAT

No other warbler has rufous wings. Male Whitethroat has grey head and conspicuous white throat. No dark ear-coverts. Rather poor song is also very characteristic.

Nest in low bushes and rank vegetation; 4-5 eggs; May/July. Both sexes incubate (11-13 d.) and feed young which fly when 10-12 d. old. Double-brooded.

Summer-visitor (Apr./Oct.) breeding all over the British Isles, though local in N. Scotland and rare in O. Hebrides, being a passage-migrant only in the Orkneys and Shetlands.



Lat. *Sylvia communis* | D. Grasmus | F. Fauvette grisette | G. Dorngrasmücke |  
S. Törnsångare

Order PASSERIFORMES  
Family SYLVIIDAE

## LESSER WHITETHROAT

Slightly smaller (5  $\frac{1}{4}$  ins.) than Whitethroat with dark patch behind the eye. No rufous wings but otherwise much like common Whitethroat though song is quite different.

Nest in hedges or bushes; 4-6 eggs; May/June. Incubation chiefly by female (10-11 d.); both parents feed young which fly when about 11 d. old. Single-brooded.

Summer visitor (Apr./Oct.) breeding fairly common in S. England, Midlands and E. Wales (not Cornwall). Has bred in several counties in Scotland. Rare vagrant to Ireland.



Lat. *Sylvia curruca* | D. Braamsluiper | F. Fauvette babillarde | G. Zaungrasmücke | S. Årtsångare

Order PASSERIFORMES

Family SYLVIIDAE

## GRASHOPPER WARBLER

Small and inconspicuous, this green-brown warbler is very secretive and needs much patient observation. It is distinctive from the other warblers on account of its strongly mottled plumage.

Nest of grass and moss in undergrowth or bush; eggs 4-6; May/April. Summer visitor; favours downland, heaths and marshes.



Latin. *Locustella naevia naevia*

Order PASSERIFORMES

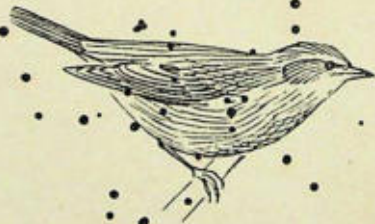
Family SYLVIIDAE

## GARDEN-WARBLER

Rather negative features (no black cap, no light throat, no eyestripe). Has sweet musical song, summer visitor. Very secretive bird. Sexes alike.

Nest in shrubs or trees or even tall weeds; 4-5 eggs; May/June. Incubation chiefly by female (12-13 d.); both parents feed young which fly when only 9-10 d. old. Single-brooded.

Summer visitor (Apr./Oct.) breeding in England, Wales, S. Scotland and very local in Ireland.

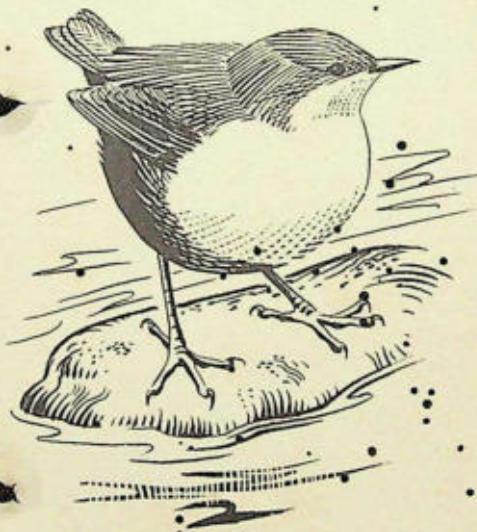


Lat. *Sylvia borin* | D. Tuinfluiter | F. Fauvette des jardins | G. Gartengras-  
mücke | S. Trädgårdsångare

## DIPPER.

Small (7 ins) bird of rocky streams and burns; in shape like a large wren; its dark plumage, white breast and throat make it most outstanding. Head dark brown and chestnut band across the belly. Has a habit of bobbing and dipping by the water. Seen both on and under the water. Domed nest of moss and leaves in a cliff in the rock or a hole in the bank; 4/6 eggs; April/June.

Resident and breeding in hill districts of the West and North. Continental birds, sometimes winter in South and East England.



## NOTES

The most familiar birds are in the Order *Passeriformes* because many of them are to be seen at any hour of the day in the garden or near our homes and the first start in bird study should be made here. They include the Tits, Blackbird, Song Thrush, Robin, Woodpecker, Sparrow and the Finches. There is an abundance of interest to be found in our immediate surroundings and we should familiarise ourselves with the birds there and study their habits and their notes.

The birds in this order are our most notable songsters and often recognition is easiest made through their voices. We need to separate the note of the Blackbird from that of the

Song Thrush; to pick out the sweet voice of the Robin and know the repertoire of the Starling, for this bird is certainly the one with the widest range of notes.

If we go into the woods it is important to know the screech of the Jay, the laughing cry of the green Woodpecker and the Magpie's chatter. Wider afield in the Spring and Summer we can rejoice in the song of the Skylark and be amused by the Yellowhammer's song "Little bit of bread and no cheese".

We usually know of the arrival of the summer visitors by their song. The Cuckoo and the Chiff-Chaff and Willow Wren are three we may hear before we see them. The same can mostly be said of the Warblers. These are small birds which enrich our lives by their voices. Much of the fascination of bird study lies in the ability to put a name to a voice and in Spring and Summer especially the recognition of bird notes is most necessary.

It is also essential to bear in mind that some of our summer visitors just pass through some localities on the way to their breeding grounds. A case in point is the Wheatear which frequents and breeds on the moors of the North and in

consequence is only seen in some areas of the South on its way in the Spring or on its return journey in the Autumn. A special watch can be kept for such birds at these particular seasons.

There is no rule of thumb about bird behaviour or where they may be seen. Who would have believed that the Avocet would have bred in Britain again after a long absence of many years?

Some years our winter visitors, perhaps because of the weather, frequent a locality where they are rarely seen. Flocks of Fieldfares for instance may only visit a place once every few years and their striking appearance will cause most people to notice them.

It is this element of surprise, never knowing what may have the good fortune to see that makes bird spotting such an absorbing study. It is a matter of using time, eyes and ears to discover one of the most satisfying and rewarding of interests.



COAL TIT

# BIRD SPOTTING.

WITH JOHN HOLLAND

---

*BOOK SIX*

---

WAGTAILS TO FINCHES



This "BIRD SPOTTING" series is recommended by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds as a general introduction to bird-identification, especially suitable for young persons.

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# BIRD SPOTTING

WITH JOHN HOLLAND

*Illustrated by Rein Stuurman*

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PASSERIFORMES

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## WAGTAILS TO FINCHES

In the following pages we continue with the last of the Warblers, followed by the Goldcrest and Firecrest which are the tiniest birds in Britain. They often associate with the Tits which they resemble in some respects although the bold colours of their crests assure identification.

Flycatchers and Hedge Sparrows are unobtrusive birds and consequently unfamiliar, although the Hedge Sparrow is very common. Pipits show a greater likeness to the Skylark than to the closely related Wagtails which can be confusing until one becomes familiar with both.

Few birds have such a striking family appearance as the Wagtails (Motacillidae). The Shrike is known to schoolboys as the "butcher bird".

The common Starling and the Chaffinch are known to everyone for the latter is one of the most numerous birds. The Finches are one of the largest families and embrace the Buntings. The true Finches offer less problems in recognition than the Buntings, of which the three commonest are dealt with as well as the rarer species. Finally there are the House Sparrow and the Tree Sparrow. The House Sparrow is the best known bird both in town and country, though it is not the most numerous as townspeople often believe.

Bird spotting, absorbing hobby though it may be, is never an end in itself. It should be the means of starting a study of

bird behaviour and of gaining bird knowledge. There is indeed no more satisfying or delightful study than of ornithology, particularly if we go deeper into the subject, find out by our own observation the wonderful ways of birds, and experiences for ourselves all the charm and all the beauty in this realm of nature.

(These books follow the Wetmore order of classification and although this has met with criticism, it is desirable to preserve uniformity. Technical reasons of printing production, however, have made some rearrangement necessary.)

FAMILIES REPRESENTED  
IN BOOK 6

Sylviidae  
Regulidae  
Muscicapidae  
Prunellidae  
Motacillidae  
Lanidae  
Sturnidae  
Fringillidae

Warbler  
Kinglet  
Flycatcher  
Accentor  
Wagtail  
Shrike  
Starling  
Finch

## DARTFORD WARBLER

This small warbler (5") is grey-brown above and a reddish hue underneath. In winter it has reddish marks on the throat. Female is lighter in tone and both have a long tail. Has a distinctive triple call note. Nest of dry grass, lined with hair or wool in gorse bushes or heather; eggs 4-6; April/July.

It is the only resident warbler and found only in some southern areas.



*Latin. Sylvia undata dartfordlensis*

## WILLOW-WARBLER

Small (4 1/4 ins.) slender greenish (above) and yellow (below) warbler with lighter brownish legs than Chiffchaff, but otherwise very similar. These birds can only be separated safely, by their quite different songs. Large trees are the usual song sites.

Small oven-like nest on the ground among grass; 6-7 eggs; May/June. Incubation (13 d.) by female only; both parents feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Single- (double-) brooded.

Summer visitor (Apr./Sept.) breeding in fair numbers all over the British Isles.



Lat. *Phylloscopus trochilus* | D. Fitis | F. Pouillot fitis | G. Fitislaubvogel | S. Lövsångare

## CHIFFCHAFF



Somewhat greyer above, and whiter below, than Willow-Warbler, always with blackish legs. Song of Chiffchaff (4  $\frac{1}{4}$  ins.), a monotonous chiff-chaff, repeated quite a few times, is characteristic.

Small oven-like nest near the ground in rank herbage or low bushes; 6 eggs; May/June. Only hen incubates (13 d.); both parents feed young that fly when about 2 w. old. Single- (double-) brooded.

Mainly summer visitor (Mch/Oct.) though few birds may winter in S. England, S. Wales and Ireland. Breeds in England (except Norfolk and NW. England) Wales and Ireland and locally, in S. Scotland.

Lat. *Phylloscopus collybita* | D. Tjiftjaf | F. Pouillôt véloce | G. Weidenlaubvogel | S. Gransangare

## WOOD-WARBLER

Somewhat bigger (5 ins.) than most other warblers, yellowish-green (above) and sulphur-yellow (throat and breast) and white (below) and bright-yellow stripe over the eye. Sexes alike.

Nest in hollow in the ground under undergrowth; 6-7 eggs; May/June. Incubation (12-13 d.) by hen only; both parents feed young which fly when 11-12 d. old. Single-brooded.

Summer visitor (Apr./Aug.) breeding in England and Wales, fairly common in S. Scotland but rare in Ireland. Has a distinct preference for beech woods, where its plaintive call gives away its presence.



Lat. *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* | D. Fluter | F. Pouillot siffleur | G. Waldlaubvogel | S. Grönsangare

GOLDCREST (left)



Tiniest ( $3\frac{1}{2}$  ins.) of British birds with black-bordered yellow crest, orange in the centre in male and lemon-yellow in female (absent in juveniles). No black and white eye stripes.

Nest is suspended from end of branch of conifer; 7-10 eggs; Apr./June. Only female incubates (14-16 d), but both parents feed young which fly when about 3 w. old. Double-brooded.

Resident, though there is a southward movement in Autumn; breeding all over Britain (except Shetlands, Orkneys and O. Hebrides). British Goldcrests belong to the *R.r. anglorum* but the Continental race *R.r. regulus* passes along the E. coast.

Lat. *Regulus regulus* | D. Goudhaantje | F. Roitelet huppé | G. Wintergoldhähnchen | S. Kungsfagel

## FIRECREST (See ill. p. 252, right).

Same size (3 ½ ins.) and much like Goldcrest from which Firecrest can be surest told by black and white eye-stripes, though whole plumage is brighter and cleaner-looking. Orange-red in crown (brightest in male) is broader than in Goldcrest, with only small yellow seams. Young lack crest but have vague eye-stripes.

Winter visitor (Oct./Apr.) to English coast from Scilly Is. to Norfolk and less common to Kent, Sussex and Cornwall and to Wales.

*Lat. Regulus ignicapillus* | *D. Vuurgoudhaantje* | *F. Rottelet à triple bandeau* | *G. Sommergoldhähnchen* | *S. Brandkronad kungsfågel*

## PIED FLYCATCHER

Male black above with white under-parts and fore-head and broad white wing-bar (3 ins.). Female and young very unobtrusive, but have typical flycatching-habit and white wing-bar (absent in Spotted Flycatcher.).

Nest in holes of trees, walls and in nest-boxes; 5-9 eggs; May/June. Incubation by hen only (12-13 d.); both parents feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Single-brooded.

Summer-visitor and passage-migrant (Apr./Sept.) breeding in Wales, W. and N. England and S. Scotland; and rare vagrant to Ireland.

*L. Muscicapa hypoleuca* | *D. Bonte vliegenvanger* | *E. Gobe-mouches noir* | *G. Trauerfliegenfänger* | *S. Svart och vit flugsnappare*



Order PASSERIFORMES

Family MUSCICAPIDAE

## SPOTTED FLYCATCHER

Unobtrusive bird (5 ½ ins.) with habit of sitting upright on branch or fence-post making frequent sallies after insects and returning to the same perch. No wing-bars. Sexes alike.

Nest against walls or trees on some support; 4-5 eggs; May/June. Both sexes incubate (12-14 d.) and feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Single- (double-) brooded.

Passage-migrant and summervisitor (Apr./Sept.) breeding all over Britain (though rarely in N. Scotland).

Lat. *Muscicapa striata* | D. Grauwe vliegenvanger | F. Gobe-mouches gris /  
G. Grauer Fliegenfänger | S. Gra flugsnappare



## HEDGE SPARROW



Sparrow-sized (5  $\frac{3}{4}$  ins.) thin-billed with grey under-parts, streaked flanks and very vague wing-bar. Sexes alike.

Nest in hedges, evergreens or ivy; 4-5 eggs; Apr./June. Only hen incubates (12-13 d.); both parents feed young which fly when about 12 d. old. Two (three) broods.

Resident though birds from the N. move S. in autumn, breeding all over the British Isles (except Shetlands and scarce in the Orkneys). Hedge Sparrows in the Hebrides and W. Scotland have darker plumage (*P.m. hebridium*.)

*Lat. Prunella modularis* | Also: Dunnock | *D. Basterdnachtegal* | *F. Accenteur mouchet* | *G. Heckenbraunelle* | *S. Järnsparv*

## MEADOW-PIPIT

Smaller (5 3/4 ins.) but Skylark-like bird, closely resembling Tree-Pipit, song being best field-mark.

Nest in depression in the ground between grasses; 3-5 eggs; Apr./June. Incubation (13-14 d.) chiefly by female; both parents feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Double-brooded.

Partly resident though breeding birds leave N. in autumn and may even migrate to Ireland, France, Spain and Portugal. Many from the Continent pass through Britain or winter here.

Lat. *Anthus pratensis* | D. Graspieper | F. Pipit farlouse | G. Wiesenpieper |  
S. Ängplärka



## TREE-PIPIT

Slightly bigger (6 ins.) than Meadow-Pipit. Likes perching in tops of trees from where it mounts steeply and parachutes down with wings and tail spread, singing all the time.

Nest in depression in the ground; 4-6 eggs; May/June. Incubation by hen only (13-14 d.); both parents feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Single- (double-) brooded.

Summer visitor (Apr./Oct.) breeding in fair numbers in England (not W. Cornwall), Wales and Scotland (not in the N.). Only vagrant in Ireland.

Lat. *Anthus trivialis* | D. Boompieper | F. Pipit des arbres | G. Baumpieper | S. Trädpiplärka

## ROCK-PIPIT

Still larger (6 1/4 ins.) and darker pipit; outer tail-feathers are smoky-gray, not white.

Nest in hole of cliff; 4-5 eggs; Apr./June. Incubation (13-14 d.) by hen only; both parents feed young (fly when about 2 w. old). Double-brooded.

Rock-Pipit (*A.s. petrosus*) breeds along rocky shores of Britain, except O. Hebrides where slightly darker bird (*A.s. mejnertzhageni*) breeds. The WATER-PIPIT, winter visitor (Sept./Apr.) chiefly to SE. England, Wales and Ireland, has outer tail-feather pure white and whitish eye stripe.

Lat. *Anthus spinoletta* | D. Rotspieper | F. Pipit maritime | G. Strandpieper | S. Skärpiplärka

## PIED/WHITE WAGTAIL

Very slender (7 ins. including tail) birds with black, grey and white plumage and black constantly wagging tails. Pied Wagtail has black back and rump, White Wagtail (illustrated) distinctly grey back and rump.

Nest in hole of wall, bank, shed, thatch or woodstack; 5-6 eggs; Apr./ July. Incubation (13-14 d.) chiefly by hen; both parents feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Two (three) broods.

Pied Wagtail (*M.a. yarrellii*) is partly resident, breeding all over the British Isles. White Wagtail (*M.a. alba*) is chiefly coastal passage-migrant (occasional inland) from the Continent.

Lat. *Motacilla alba* | D. Rouwkwikstaart | Witte kwikstaart | F. Bergeronnette  
d'Yarell | Bergeronnette grise | G. Trauerbachstelze | Bachstelze | S. Engelsk  
sadesarla | Sadesarla



Order PASSERIFORMES

Family MOTACILLIDAE

## GREY WAGTAIL

Slightly bigger (7 ins.) but otherwise much like Yellow Wagtail though longer tail, blue-grey upper-parts and greenish-yellow rump are distinctive. Male in spring has black throat.



Male (spring and summer)

Nest close to running water in hole or crevice; 4-6 eggs; Apr./June. Incubation (13-14 d.) chiefly by hen; both parents feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Single-(double-) brooded.

Resident, breeding in England (scarce in E. and S.), Wales, Ireland and Scotland (scarce in N. and in the Orkneys and only visitor to the Shetlands and O. Hebrides) along swift running rocky streams.

Lat. *Motacilla cinerea* | D. Grote gele kwikstaart | F. Bergeronnette des ruisseaux | G. Bergbachstelze | S. Graärla

## YELLOW WAGTAIL

Male in spring has yellow head with crown and ear-coverts greenish (never bluish-grey) and yellow rump. Otherwise much like Blue-headed Wagtail (see picture on p. 260).

Nest in depression on the ground under cover; 5-6 eggs; May/June. Incubation (12-13 d.) and tending of young by both sexes. Young fly when about 2 w. old. Double- (single-) brooded.

Summer-visitor (Mch/Sept.) breeding in England and Wales (rarely in the W.) and Clyde-area of Scotland. Not in Ireland.

Lat. *Motacilla flava flavissima* | D. Engelse gele kwikstaart | F. Bergeronnette flavéole | G. Grünköpfige Schafstelze | S. Engelsk gulärla

**BLUE-HEADED WAGTAIL**

Only difference with Yellow Wagtail are bluish-grey crown and ear-coverts and white (not yellow) eye-stripe and chin. Females in autumn and immature birds are indistinguishable and intermediates occur.

The Blue-headed Wagtail breeds in small numbers in Sussex and Kent and has done so in several other counties, but is otherwise a passage-migrant through S. England. Inter-breeding accounts partly for intermediate plumages that can be very confusing.

Lat. *Motacilla flava flava* | D. Gele kwikstaart | F. Bergeronnette printanière | G. Schafstelze | S. Gulárla



## RED-BACKED SHRIKE



Bigger than House-Sparrow (7 ins.), male has blue-grey head, nape and rump and chestnut back with black stripe through eye. Female and young less distinctly coloured.

Nest in bushes and hedgerows, 5-6 eggs; May/June. Incubation (14-16 d.) by female only; both sexes feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Single-brooded.

Passage-migrant and summer visitor (Apr./Oct.) breeding in fluctuating numbers in S. and central England and in Wales. Occasional visitor to Scotland and rare vagrant to Ireland.

Lat. *Lanius collurio* | D. *Grauwe klauwier* | F. *Pie-grièche écorcheur* | G. *Rotrückenwürger* | S. *Vanlig törnskata*

Order PASSERIFORMES

Family STURNIDAE

## STARLING

Well-known and very common bird even in towns. Male plumage flecked in autumn, wearing off during winter and less prominent in females. Length about 8 ½ ins.

Tends to social nesting in holes of trees and buildings; 5-7 eggs; Apr./ June. Incubation (12-13 ins.) and tending of young which fly when about 3 w. old by both sexes. Single- (double-) brooded.

Resident breeding all over the British Isles though very local in W. Wales and W. Ireland. Many migrants from the Continent winter in Britain.

Lat. *Sturnus vulgaris* | D. Spreeuw | F. Etourneau | G. Star | S. Stare



Order PASSERIFORMES

Family FRINGILLIDAE

## HAWFINCH



Rather big ( 6½ ins.) heavy-billed stout finch with short white-tipped tail and obvious white patch on wings. Rather shy and very secretive bird. Sexes rather alike. Nest usually on fruit-trees; 4-6 eggs; May/June. Only female incubates (9-10 d.); both parents feed young which fly when 10-12 d. old. One (two) broods.

Resident, breeding locally all over England, except in extreme west; rare in Wales and Scotland and only vagrant to Ireland.

Lat. *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* | D. Appelvink | F. Gros-bec | G. Kirsch-kernbeisser | S. Stenknäck

Order PASSERIFORMES  
Family FRINGILLIDAE

## GREENFINCH

Sparrow-sized ( $5\frac{3}{4}$  ins.) olive-green finch with yellow patches on the wings and at sides of tail; yellow-green rump. Female somewhat duller, juveniles browner.

Nest in hedgerows or bushes; 4-6 eggs; Apr./June. Only female incubates (13-14 d.); both parents feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Two (three) broods.

Mainly resident, breeding commonly all over the British Isles, though only passage-migrant in Shetland and O. Hebrides. Large numbers of passage-migrants and winter-visitors arrive on E. coast in autumn.



Lat. *Chloris chloris* | D. Groenling | F. Verdier | G. Grünling | S. Grönfink

## GOLDFINCH



Small ( $4\frac{3}{4}$  ins.) finch with (adults) red face, conspicuous yellow bar on black wings and black white-tipped tail. Sexes alike. Juveniles lack red, white and black pattern of head but yellow wing-bar is distinctive.

Nests preferably on fruit-trees and chestnuts; 5-6 eggs; May/July. Incub. (12-13 d.) by hen only; both parents feed young which leave nest when about 2 w. old. Two (three) broods.

Rather common, though local resident, absent from most parts of Scottish Highlands.

Lat. *Carduelis carduelis britannica* | D. Buttertje | F. Chardonneret | G. Stjeglitz | S. Stieglitz

## SISKIN



Smaller than House-Sparrow (4¾ ins.). Yellow-green, slender finch with black crown and chin and yellow rump. Female and juveniles duller ~~and~~ without black crown.

Nest in conifers; 3-5 eggs; Apr./June. Incubation (11-12 d.) by female only; both parents feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Double-brooded.

Resident in Ireland and Scotland (though scarce in southern counties) and winter-visitor to England and Wales (Sept./Apr.).

Lat. *Cárdwyls spinus* | D. *Sijsje* | F. *Tarin* | G. *Erlenzeisig* | S. *Grönsiska*

## LINNET

Slightly smaller than House-Sparrow (5½ ins.), male has chestnut mantle, grey head and (in summer only) red fore-head and breast. No black chin. Bill brown. Female and juveniles have no red and are duller coloured.

Nest in thorn-bushes or hedgerows; 4-6 eggs; Apr./June. Incubation chiefly by female (10-12 d.); both parents feed young which fly when 11-12 d. old. Two broods.

Mainly resident, breeding all over the British Isles. Winter visitors from the Continent.

*Lat. Carduelis cannabina* | *D. Kneu* | *F. Linotte mélodieuse* | *G. Blühhänfling* | *S. Hämpling*



## BULLFINCH

Fine male bird ( $5\frac{3}{4}$  ins.) with black cap, red breast and under-parts, grey back and conspicuous white rump. Female has pinkish-grey under-parts. Juveniles are browner than female and lack black cap.

Nests preferably in thick hedges and evergreens; 4-5 eggs; May/June. Incubation chiefly by female (12-14 d.), but both parents feed young

which fly when about 2 w. old. Two (three) broods.

Fairly common resident, though rather local in Scotland and Ireland, including the I. Hebrides.

The race *P.p. nesa* is confined to the British Isles.

The Northern bird *P.p. pyrrhula*, which is larger and more brightly coloured

than our birds, is irregular autumn and winter visitor to E. coast

(especially Scotland, the Shetlands and Fair Isle.)



*Latif. Pyrrhula pyrrhula* |  
*D. Goudvink* | *F. Bouvreuil* |  
*G. Gimpel* | *S. Domherre*

## CHAFFINCH



Sparrow-sized (6 ins.). Male has blue crown and nape, chestnut mantle and pinkish-brown under-parts. Female and young far duller coloured. In flight both sexes have white shoulder-patch, white outer tail-feathers and green rump.

Nest in bushes or trees; 4-5 eggs; Apr./May. Incubation chiefly by hen (11-13 ins.); both parents feed young which fly when about 2w. old. Single-brooded.

Resident, breeding in large numbers all over the British Isles (exceptionally Shetlands). Winter visitors *F.c. coelebs* (Scandinavia) and *F.c. hortensis* (Central Europe) are inseparable in the field.

*Lat. Fringilla coelebs* | *D. (Boek)vink* | *F. Pinson des arbres* | *G. Buchfink* | *S. Bofink*

## BRAMBLING

About same size ( $5\frac{3}{4}$  ins.) as Chaffinch, with white rump and (in male) orange-buff shoulder-patch and breast; head brown or blackish. Female and juveniles are duller coloured. Often in flocks with other finches.

Winter-visitor in varying numbers (Sept./Apr.). Has bred exceptionally in Scotland.

Lat. *Fringilla montifringilla* | D. Keep | F. Pinson du Nord | G. Bergfink |  
Bergfink



## CROSSBILL



This interesting finch (6") is distinctive on account of the tips of its beak crossing and which it uses to good effect in extracting seeds from fir cones. Male is red with brown wings and tail. Female olive-green and yellow, mottled with brown.

Nest in a fir tree; eggs 4-5; March/May.

Resident in the north and irregularly in East Anglia and south-east England. Continental visitors may be seen on sporadic visits to any district where there are fir trees.



YELLOW BUNTING

*Front view*

Order PASSERIFORMES

Family FRINGILLIDAE

## YELLOW BUNTING

Buntings have longer tails than finches. Male Yellow-Hammer has yellow head and under-parts and chestnut mantle and rump. White outer tail-feathers. Female and juveniles duller coloured.

Nest on the ground at the foot of hedgerows and bushes; 3-4 eggs; Apr./June. Incubation chiefly by female (12-14 d.); both parents feed young which fly when about 12-13 d. old. Two broods.

Resident breeding all over the British Isles. Winter visitors from the Continent arrive at E. coast in Sept./Nov. and stay till Mch/Apr.



Lat. *Emberiza citrinella* / Also: *Yellowhammer* / D. Geelgor / F. Buant  
jaune / G. Goldammer / S. Gulsparr

## CORN-BUNTING

Large (7 ins.) robust bunting with heavy head and bill. No white outer tail-feathers or wing-bar. Flies often with dangling legs. Song of male (from telegraph-poles or wires) characteristic. Sexes alike.

Nest on the ground or in low bushes; 3-5 eggs; May/June. Only hen incubates (12-13 d.) and male even seldom assists at feeding of young which fly already when 9-12 d. old. Single- (double-) brooded.

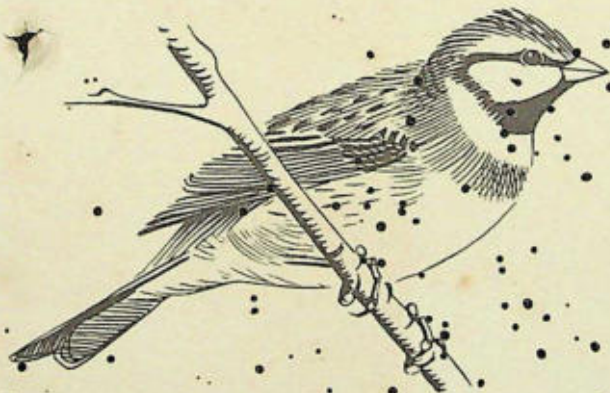
Partly resident. Breeding (locally in fair numbers) in most parts of Britain. Part of our breeding birds emigrate in autumn and is replaced by winter-visitors from the Continent.



Lat. *Emberiza calandra* |  
D. Grauwe gors | F. Bruant  
proyer | G. Grauammer |  
S. Kornspary

## CIRL BUNTING

Smaller than Yellow Bunting (6") it has olive green tinge on breast and head. Cheeks are yellow with black band running through the eye. Throat black and underparts yellow and back brown. White outer tail feathers seen in flight. Female lacks the black and yellow head. Nest of grass, moss and hair low in bush; eggs 4-6; May/July. Resident in the south and much rarer than Yellow Bunting.



Latin. *Emberiza cirlus* *cirlus*

Order PASSERIFORMES

Family FRINGILLIDAE

## SNOW BUNTING

This is a white bird (6¼") with black marking on tail and wings. Female has brown tinge. The note is a twitter and the birds may be seen in small flocks.

Nest among rocks made of grass, moss and feathers; eggs 5-8; May/July. Mainly winter visitor but breeds in Scotland. Mainly seen on high moorlands and the coast.



Latin. *Plectrophenax nivalis nivalis*

Order PASSERIFORMES

Family FRINGILLIDAE

## REED-BUNTING

Sparrow-sized (6 ins.)  
bunting with character-  
istic black and white  
head-pattern (male) and  
white outer tail-feathers  
(both sexes).

Nest on or near the  
ground in marshy re-  
gions; 4-5 eggs; Apr./  
June. Incubation (13-14  
d.) and feeding of young  
by both sexes. Two  
broods.

Present throughout the  
year though most birds  
move S. or even emigrate.  
Winter visitors from the  
Continent (Sept./Apr.).  
Breeds in most parts of  
of the British Isles.



Lat. *Emberiza schoeniclus* | D. Rietgors | F. Buaht de roseaux | G. Gohrammer  
| S. Sävspary

Order PASSERIFORMES  
Family FRINGILLIDAE

## HOUSE-SPARROW

Familiar bird (5¾ ins.) to everyone, even townsmen. Male differs from Tree-Sparrow in having dark-grey crown and single white wing-bar. Female and juveniles have grey tump, no white shoulder-patch and no wing-bar.

Nest in all kinds of holes in or near houses; 3-4 eggs; May/Aug. (but may be found in any month). Incubation (12-14 d.) chiefly by hen; both parents feed young which fly when about 2 w. old. Two (three) broods.

Resident, breeding all over the British Isles though seldom far from human habitations. Local in many parts of Ireland.



*Lat. Passer domesticus* | *D. Hausmus* | *F. Moineau domestique* | *G. Hausperling* | *S. Graspaw*.

## TREE-SPARROW

Slightly smaller (5 ½ ins.) than and somewhat resembling male House-Sparrow, but chocolate-brown crown, black patch on white cheeks and double white wing-bar are distinctive. Sexes alike.

Nest in holes of trees, buildings or cliffs; 4-6 eggs; Apr.-June. Incubation (12-14 d.) and tending of young (fly when 12-14 d. old) by both parents. Two (three) broods.

Resident, breeding locally in England and Scotland (rare in NW. and SW.) and Wales and even very local in some parts of Ireland.



Lat. *Passer montanus* | D.  
Ringmus | F. Molneau fri-  
quet | G. Feldsperling | S.  
Püfink



•BRAMBLING  
*In summer plumage*

## NOTES

The two birds on pages 249 and 250 present one of the outstanding puzzles of bird watching for the Willow Warbler and the Chiff-Chaff are so similar that it is only an experienced eye which can separate them. The one sure method of identification is their song. The Willow Warbler has a more gentle fluent series of descending notes whilst the other bird calls a continuous "chiff-chaff" which can never be mistaken. Both sing from a large tall tree.

The Goldcrest is a delight, it being the tiniest of the British birds; its nest is suspended from a conifer branch and is one of those features of bird life which never fails to charm. The Pipits are also birds which can be distinguished by their

song; it is uttered as they leave and return to the ground. They also have the Wagtails nimble run.

The Wagtails are to be seen everywhere and their striking plumage makes them unmistakable. The habits of the Starling are full of interest, it is indeed a fascinating bird to watch. It has been called the "English Mocking Bird" for it can mimic other birds and can command an extraordinary repertoire.

Finally there are the Finches which are the most populous birds, the Chaffinch is believed to have the greatest population, whilst the Sparrow is everywhere in town and country. The Hawfinch, Goldfinch, Bullfinch and Cross Bill are the most handsome of the small birds and being resident they are some of our closest friends. In observing the Finches it is necessary to know where to find them for although they are all members of the same family, their ways and habits vary considerably.



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