

STADTVÖGEL

Birdwatching in Dresden

A curated nature guide for garden, park and river



VOLUME I • SPRING TO WINTER

ABOUT THIS BOOK

Imprint & notes

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DATA SOURCES

Species occurrences: GBIF (datasets under CC0 and CC-BY). Observation sites: OpenStreetMap (ODbL) and public web sources. Map and place data © OpenStreetMap contributors.

NOTE ON ACCURACY

The species listed are frequently reported and easily observable birds of the region — an observation cannot be guaranteed. Please respect protected areas and paths and do not disturb breeding birds.

WELCOME

The birdlife around Dresden

A companion for garden, park, forest and river.

This book presents 25 characteristic and special bird species occurring within 30 km of Dresden, and guides you to the region's finest birding spots. Each species is shown with illustrations, a description, notes on behaviour and identification, and an observation tip.

OVERVIEW

All species at a glance



Great Tit



Eurasian Blue Tit



Eurasian Blackbird



House Sparrow



Great Spotted Woodpecker



Woodpigeon



Common Chaffinch



Robin



Nuthatch



Carrion Crow



Greenfinch



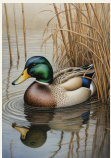
Magpie



Starling



Jay



Mallard



Goldfinch



Green Woodpecker



Tree Sparrow



Eurasian Buzzard



Common Chiffchaff



Sparrowhawk



Western Jackdaw



Serin



Goldcrest



Egyptian Goose

HABITAT:



Garden



Forest



Water



Open country

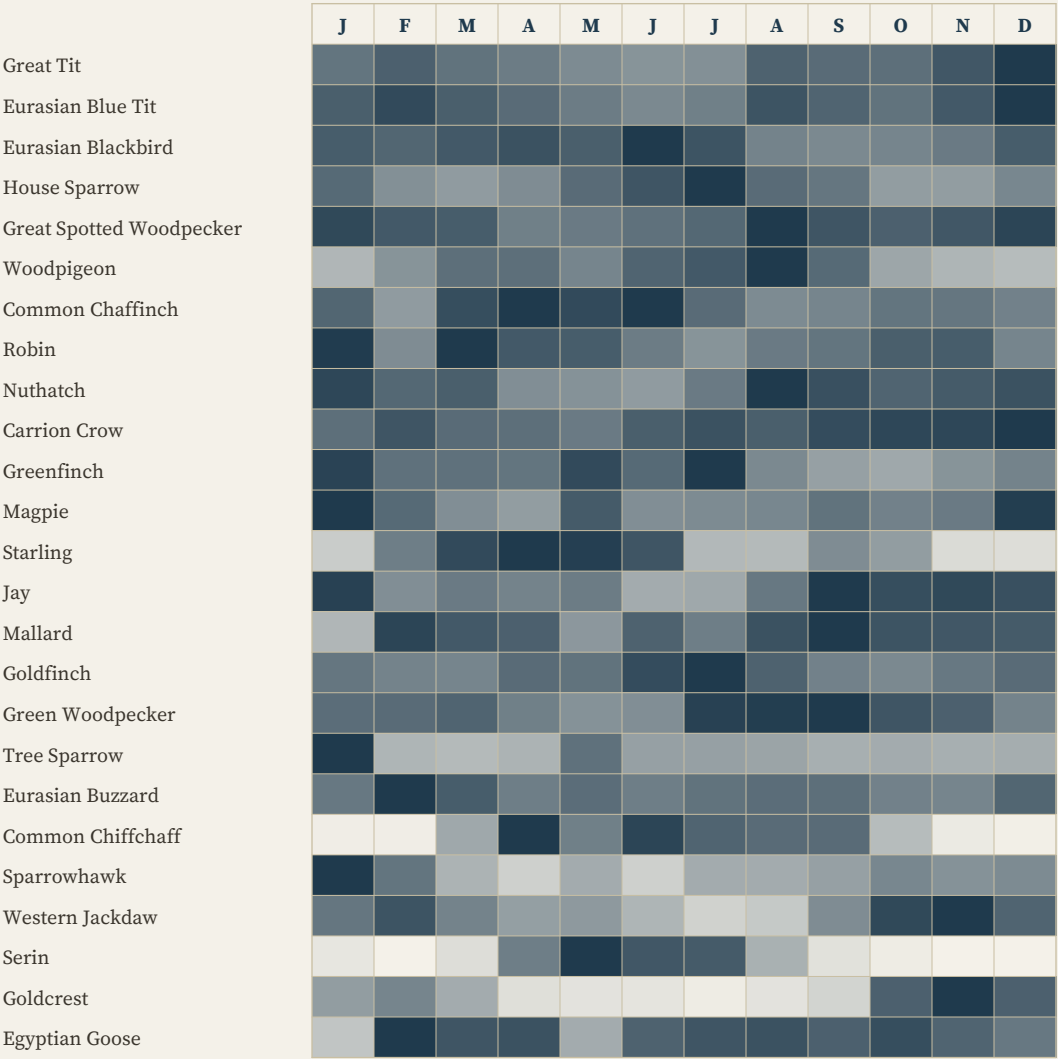


Town

OVERVIEW

When to see it

The darker, the more often reported





Male



Female

Great Tit

Kohlmeise · Parus major



DESCRIPTION

The great tit (*Parus major*) is a small passerine bird with striking black head and neck, framed by prominent white cheeks. Its upperparts are olive-colored while the underparts are bright yellow, creating a vivid contrast against its surroundings.

IDENTIFICATION

Male and female great tits are similar in appearance, with the most distinctive features being a black head and neck contrasted by white cheeks, olive upperparts, and yellow underparts. Subspecies variations exist but these core characteristics remain consistent across its range.

OBSERVATION TIP

Great tits can be observed year-round in various woodland habitats, including urban parks and gardens where they are often quite approachable. They tend to frequent areas with a mix of deciduous and coniferous trees for nesting and feeding.

BEHAVIOUR

Predominantly insectivorous during summer months, the great tit expands its diet to include seeds, nuts, and even small hibernating bats in winter. Known for their cavity nesting habits, these birds typically raise two broods annually and remain resident except under extreme winter conditions when they may move short distances.



Male



Female

Eurasian Blue Tit

Blaumeise · Cyanistes caeruleus



DESCRIPTION

The Eurasian blue tit is a small passerine bird with striking blue and yellow plumage that makes it easily recognizable among other species in its family. It measures between 10.5 to 12 centimeters long, and its wingspan ranges from approximately 17 to 20 centimeters.

IDENTIFICATION

Both male and female Eurasian blue tits share the same striking appearance with predominantly blue wings and tail, while their backs are pale greenish-blue. Their heads feature a prominent white stripe above each eye, a black forehead patch, and a bright yellow cap on top of their head. The underparts are mostly white with yellow flanks.

OBSERVATION TIP

Eurasian blue tits can be observed year-round in deciduous or mixed woodlands, particularly those rich in oak trees. They frequent gardens and parks where they may visit bird feeders for supplementary food during colder months.

BEHAVIOUR

This bird is known for its acrobatic abilities, often hanging upside down on the outer branches of trees and shrubs while searching for food. Its diet consists mainly of insects and spiders, supplemented by seeds and plant-based foods outside of breeding season. The Eurasian blue tit is a non-migratory resident throughout temperate and subarctic regions.



Male



Female

Eurasian Blackbird

Amsel · Turdus merula



DESCRIPTION

The Eurasian blackbird is a medium-sized bird with glossy black plumage and yellow beak and eye-ring in adult males. Females and juveniles are mostly dark brown, though they retain the distinctive yellow markings around the eyes and bill.

IDENTIFICATION

The adult male Eurasian blackbird stands out with its entirely glossy black plumage and a bright yellow ring around the eye and bill. Females and juveniles are predominantly dark brown but share similar yellow markings around their eyes and bills.

OBSERVATION TIP

Eurasian blackbirds can be observed year-round in suitable habitats such as woods, gardens, and parks where they nest and forage. They are most active during dawn and dusk when singing or searching for food.

BEHAVIOUR

This species exhibits territorial behavior during breeding season but becomes more social when migrating or overwintering. It is omnivorous, feeding on insects, earthworms, berries, and fruits, depending on availability throughout different seasons.



Male



Female

House Sparrow

Haussperling · Passer domesticus



DESCRIPTION

The house sparrow is a small bird with a robust build and a distinctive short tail. It measures around 16 cm in length, weighing between 24 to 39.5 grams. Males are easily distinguished by their striking black bib and crown, contrasted with chestnut brown on the sides of their head and white patches behind the eyes. Females and young birds have a more subdued palette of pale grey and buff tones.

IDENTIFICATION

Male house sparrows are readily identified by their black bib, grey crown, chestnut brown on the sides of the head, and distinctive white patches behind the eyes with black markings above and below them. Females and immature birds lack these bold color patterns, instead showing a more uniform buffish-grey plumage.

OBSERVATION TIP

Look for house sparrows near buildings and in parks where they frequent bird feeders or scavenge from human-provided food sources. They are most active during the day and can be observed year-round.

BEHAVIOUR

House sparrows are highly adaptable and can be found in urban or rural settings near human habitation. They feed primarily on seeds from grains, flowering plants, and weeds but also take advantage of insects and other small invertebrates when available. Their vocalizations include a variety of chirps and trills that serve for communication within their flocks.



Male



Female

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Buntspecht · Dendrocopos major



DESCRIPTION

The great spotted woodpecker is a medium-sized bird with striking black and white plumage. It features a red patch on its lower belly, which extends to the nape in males and some young birds.

IDENTIFICATION

To identify a great spotted woodpecker, look for the black and white plumage with red markings on the lower belly and neck or head in males. The presence of these distinctive features helps distinguish it from other similar species.

OBSERVATION TIP

Great spotted woodpeckers can be observed year-round in various types of woodland environments where they feed on a diverse diet including seeds, insects, and bird eggs. They are most active during the day.

BEHAVIOUR

This species is resident across most of its range but may migrate northward if conifer cone crops fail. Great spotted woodpeckers are known for chiseling into trees to find food or excavate nest holes, as well as drumming for contact and territorial advertisement.



Male



Female

Woodpigeon

Ringeltaube · Columba palumbus



DESCRIPTION

The common wood pigeon is a large grey bird with a pinkish breast and distinctive white patches on its neck and wings. Adult birds exhibit green and white patches on their necks, along with a prominent pink patch on the chest. Juveniles initially lack these white patches but develop them gradually as they mature.

IDENTIFICATION

Identifying characteristics of the common wood pigeon include its larger size compared to other Columba pigeons, white patches on either side of the neck, and pale yellow eyes contrasting with those of rock doves. Juveniles can be distinguished by their greyer bills and lighter overall appearance until they reach maturity.

OBSERVATION TIP

The common wood pigeon is frequently observed in parks and gardens, increasingly also in urban areas during warmer months. It is generally seen feeding on plant material including cereals across various habitats.

BEHAVIOUR

The common wood pigeon is known for its fast and regular flight pattern, often accompanied by sharp wing flicks. It can be seen perching well in trees and during courtship displays, it walks along branches with its neck swollen and wings drooping. In colder regions, this species migrates while in warmer areas, it remains a resident throughout the year.



Male



Female

Common Chaffinch

Buchfink · Fringilla coelebs



DESCRIPTION

The common chaffinch is a small passerine bird with striking plumage. The male boasts a blue-grey cap and rust-red underparts, while the female's colors are more subdued but still distinctive with white wing bars and tail sides.

IDENTIFICATION

Male chaffinches can be identified by their bright colors and strong singing voice from exposed perches. Both sexes share white wing bars and white sides to the tail, which are key identification features.

OBSERVATION TIP

Chaffinches are typically observed throughout the year in various habitats such as woodlands and gardens. They are most active during breeding seasons when they can be seen foraging in trees.

BEHAVIOUR

Chaffinches exhibit varied behavior depending on the season. During breeding periods, they forage in trees for caterpillars to feed their young, whereas outside of this period, they form flocks in open countryside, feeding on seeds found on the ground. They are partial migrants; those in colder regions migrate southward during winter.



Male



Female

Robin

Rotkehlchen · Erithacus rubecula



DESCRIPTION

The European robin, *Erithacus rubecula*, is a small passerine bird measuring 12.5–14.0 cm in length with an iconic orange-red breast and face that contrasts sharply against its grey-brown upper parts and white belly. Juveniles are distinctively freckled brown without the red breast, while first-winter immatures resemble adults but have more obvious yellow-brown tips on their wing covert feathers.

IDENTIFICATION

Both male and female European robins have identical plumage with an orange-red breast and face lined in grey-brown upper parts and a white belly. Juveniles are freckled brown throughout without the red marking until they reach maturity, at which point first-winter immatures display more noticeable yellow-brown tips on their wing covert feathers compared to adults.

OBSERVATION TIP

European robins can be observed year-round in suitable habitats such as gardens, parks, and woodlands. They are particularly active during dawn and dusk when singing or foraging for insects among the ground cover.

BEHAVIOUR

The European robin is an insectivorous bird found across Europe, with varying migratory patterns depending on its geographic location. In western and southern regions, it remains sedentary year-round, whereas in the north and east where winters are harsher, populations migrate to milder climates. Known for its distinctive song, this species is active during both day and night, especially when defending territories or attracting mates.



Male



Female

Nuthatch

Kleiber · Sitta europaea



DESCRIPTION

The Eurasian nuthatch is a small bird with blue-gray upperparts and a distinctive black eye-stripe. It has a long bill suited for its feeding habits, and depending on the subspecies, it may have orange-buff underparts in western regions or whitish underparts further east.

IDENTIFICATION

The Eurasian nuthatch can be identified by its blue-gray upperparts, black eye-stripe, and the presence or absence of white underparts depending on the subspecies. The female may plaster tree holes with mud to create suitable nesting sites, a behavior that distinguishes this species from others in its habitat.

OBSERVATION TIP

Look for the Eurasian nuthatch in large, old trees within deciduous or mixed woodlands during any season. It is often seen climbing and descending tree trunks headfirst while searching for food.

BEHAVIOUR

This vocal bird is non-migratory and maintains permanent territories within mature deciduous or mixed woodlands. Its diet consists primarily of insects but shifts to include nuts and seeds during autumn and winter. The nuthatch forages on tree trunks, sometimes descending headfirst, and visits bird tables where it consumes both natural and man-made food items.



Male



Female

Carrion Crow

Rabenkrähe · Corvus corone



DESCRIPTION

The carrion crow features entirely black plumage with a green or purple sheen and has a wingspan of 84–100 cm, weighing between 400–600 grams. Juveniles are distinguished by their brownish feathers and blue eyes which darken as they mature.

IDENTIFICATION

The carrion crow can be identified by its larger size compared to the American crow and its stockier build relative to the hooded crow. Juveniles have distinctive brown plumage that darkens with age, while adults are entirely black.

OBSERVATION TIP

Carrion crows are typically observed in urban areas, farmlands, and woodlands throughout their range. They are most active during daylight hours.

BEHAVIOUR

Carrion crows are non-migratory birds that reside in their territories year-round. They are omnivorous, feeding on carrion, seeds, insects, and small vertebrates. Their vocalizations include a range of harsh caws and croaks.



Male



Female

Greenfinch

Grünling · Chloris chloris



DESCRIPTION

The European greenfinch is a small bird similar in size to a house sparrow but distinguished by its vibrant green plumage and yellow accents on the wings and tail. Females and juveniles are less striking, with brownish tones on their backs.

IDENTIFICATION

Male greenfinches can be identified by their brighter green plumage with yellow highlights, whereas females are more subdued with brownish tones on their backs. Males exhibit higher degrees of fluctuating asymmetry in bone development compared to females.

OBSERVATION TIP

Greenfinches are typically observed from the second half of March through June during breeding season and can be found in woodland edges, farmland hedges, and gardens with thick vegetation.

BEHAVIOUR

Greenfinches are primarily resident birds, though some northern populations migrate southward during colder months. They forage in trees and bushes as well as on the ground, feeding on seeds, berries, fruit, buds, flowers, and occasionally arthropods.



Male



Female

Magpie

Elster · Pica pica



DESCRIPTION

The Eurasian magpie is a striking bird with glossy black plumage and a white patch on its belly that extends up to its neck, creating a bold contrast. It has long, pointed wings and a relatively short tail compared to other corvids.

IDENTIFICATION

The most distinctive feature of the Eurasian magpie is its striking black-and-white plumage pattern. Both males and females look alike, with no sexual dimorphism in appearance.

OBSERVATION TIP

Eurasian magpies are commonly observed year-round in various habitats such as woodlands, farmlands, and suburban areas. They can often be seen scavenging for food or engaging in social activities like grooming each other.

BEHAVIOUR

Eurasian magpies are highly intelligent birds known for their curiosity and playful behavior. They feed on a variety of foods including insects, small animals, fruits, and carrion. Their vocalizations include harsh chattering sounds and mimicry. Resident throughout much of Eurasia, these birds do not migrate.



Male



Female

Starling

Star · Sturnus vulgaris



DESCRIPTION

The common starling, *Sturnus vulgaris*, is a medium-sized bird with glossy black plumage that appears speckled with white during certain times of the year. Its legs are pink and its bill changes color from black in winter to yellow in summer.

IDENTIFICATION

The common starling is easily identified by its glossy black feathers with a metallic sheen, which become speckled with white during the breeding season. Juveniles have browner plumage compared to adults, but all ages share the same pink legs and distinctive call that echoes through urban areas.

OBSERVATION TIP

Common starlings are typically seen in open habitats such as farmland, parks, and gardens throughout the year. They can be observed feeding on the ground or perched high up in trees, often gathering in large flocks during winter months.

BEHAVIOUR

This omnivorous species feeds on a wide range of invertebrates as well as seeds and fruit, making it beneficial to agriculture by controlling pest populations but also problematic when feeding on crops. Common starlings are known for their mimicry abilities and form large flocks that can be seen both migrating and roosting.



Male



Female

Jay

Eichelhäher · Garrulus glandarius



DESCRIPTION

The Eurasian jay is a relatively small corvid with light rufous brown to pinkish brown body plumage and a whitish throat bordered by black moustache stripes. The wings feature a bright blue patch, while the tail is predominantly black.

IDENTIFICATION

The most distinctive features are the bright blue patch on the upper wing and the black moustache stripes framing a whitish throat. The streaked crown is another key identifier, especially when comparing different racial forms across its vast range.

OBSERVATION TIP

Eurasian jays can be observed in woodlands year-round, though they may move to lower elevations during winter months. They are typically seen foraging on the ground or perched high in trees.

BEHAVIOUR

This bird is known for its harsh, rasping screech used as an alarm call upon sighting predators or competitors. It also exhibits mimicry of other birds' calls and feeds on acorns and insects, often caching food in autumn to sustain itself during winter months.



Male



Female

Mallard

Stockente · Anas platyrhynchos

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DESCRIPTION

The mallard is a medium-sized dabbling duck known for its distinctive appearance and widespread distribution across temperate regions of the world. Males, or drakes, are easily recognized by their green heads, while females have brown-speckled plumage that provides excellent camouflage.

IDENTIFICATION

A key identifier for both sexes is their speculum—a patch of iridescent blue or purple feathers bordered by white on their wings. Male mallards tend to have more vibrant blue speculum feathers compared to the females, who often show a more subdued coloration.

OBSERVATION TIP

Mallards can be observed throughout the year in wetland habitats such as ponds, lakes, and marshes. They are particularly active during dawn and dusk when they feed on aquatic vegetation and small animals.

BEHAVIOUR

Mallards are social animals often found in groups near wetlands where they feed on water plants and small aquatic creatures. They are vocal birds with a variety of calls used for communication within the flock. While many populations migrate seasonally, some mallard populations remain resident year-round in certain areas.



Male



Female

Goldfinch

Stieglitz · Carduelis carduelis



DESCRIPTION

The European goldfinch is a small passerine bird characterized by its vibrant colors and distinctive markings. The breeding male boasts a striking red face with black patterns around the eyes, complemented by a black-and-white head pattern. Its back and flanks are adorned in buff or chestnut brown hues, while its wings display a broad yellow bar against a black background. A white rump and black tail complete this elegant bird's appearance.

IDENTIFICATION

Male goldfinches are easily distinguished by their bright red face markings and bold black-and-white head pattern, with females having slightly smaller red patches on their faces. Both sexes share the same wing marking: a broad yellow bar against a black background, which is one of their most distinctive features.

OBSERVATION TIP

Goldfinches can be observed in gardens, parks, and open countryside throughout the year. They are particularly active during the day when foraging for food or engaging in social activities with other birds.

BEHAVIOUR

Goldfinches are social birds that often forage in small flocks, feeding on seeds from thistles, teasels, and other plants rich in oil-rich seeds. They have a sweet, twittering song and the ability to mimic sounds they hear around them. In some regions, these birds migrate seasonally, while others remain resident year-round.



Male



Female

Green Woodpecker

Grünspecht · Picus viridis



DESCRIPTION

The European green woodpecker is a striking bird with vivid green and red plumage. It measures 30–36 cm in length, with a wingspan of 45–51 cm. Both sexes are predominantly green above and pale yellowish-green below, featuring a bright red crown and nape. The moustachial stripe is distinctive, being red in the center for males but solid black in females.

IDENTIFICATION

The most distinctive feature of the European green woodpecker is its bright red crown and nape, with males having a red center to their black moustachial stripe. Females lack this central red marking on their moustache, making it easy to distinguish them from males. Juveniles are spotty and streaked overall, with juvenile males showing some red feathers by early summer.

OBSERVATION TIP

The European green woodpecker is generally seen in open woodland and parkland where there is an abundance of ants for food. It is a resident bird across much of Europe and the western Palearctic, though it avoids areas where the Iberian green woodpecker occupies.

BEHAVIOUR

This woodpecker spends much of its time on the ground feeding on ants rather than drumming on trees like other species. It is known for its loud calls, often referred to as 'yaffling', which are more commonly heard than seen due to the bird's shy nature. The male produces a soft, fast roll during rare drumming events, while both sexes emit a noisy kyü-kyü-kyück sound when flying.



Male



Female

Tree Sparrow

Feldsperling · Passer montanus



DESCRIPTION

The tree sparrow measures 12.5–14 cm in length with a wingspan of about 21 cm and weighs around 24 grams, making it slightly smaller than the house sparrow. Its rich chestnut crown and nape are distinctive features, along with its black ear patches on pure white cheeks. The upperparts are light brown streaked with black, while the wings display two narrow white bars.

IDENTIFICATION

The tree sparrow can be easily identified by its contrasting face pattern featuring a rich chestnut crown and nape with kidney-shaped black ear patches on pure white cheeks. There are no plumage differences between the sexes, making identification straightforward regardless of gender. Juveniles closely resemble adults but tend to have duller colors.

OBSERVATION TIP

The tree sparrow can be observed in lightly wooded open countryside in Europe and is widespread in towns and cities in eastern Asia. It is generally seen feeding on seeds and insects, often near human settlements where food sources are abundant.

BEHAVIOUR

This bird primarily feeds on seeds but also consumes invertebrates during breeding season. It lacks a true song but communicates through various vocalisations including tship calls made by unpaired or courting males and chirps used for social interactions. The tree sparrow is resident, not migratory, and builds its nest in natural cavities or holes in buildings.



Male



Female

Eurasian Buzzard

Mäusebussard · Buteo buteo



DESCRIPTION

The common buzzard is a medium-sized bird of prey with a wingspan ranging from 106 to 128 centimeters and weighing between 475 and 975 grams. Its plumage varies widely, but it typically has brown or reddish-brown feathers with lighter underparts and dark streaks on the breast.

IDENTIFICATION

Identification features include broad wings and a short, hooked beak. Plumage can vary significantly, making it challenging to distinguish from other *Buteo* species based on appearance alone. However, the common buzzard's larger size compared to smaller raptors like kestrels helps with identification.

OBSERVATION TIP

Common buzzards are generally seen in open countryside and woodland edges throughout the year. They are most active during daylight hours when hunting for food.

BEHAVIOUR

This opportunistic predator primarily feeds on small mammals such as voles and mice, hunting from a perch in trees before swooping down to catch its prey. It is generally a year-round resident over much of its range but migrates south during colder months in northern regions.



Male



Female

Common Chiffchaff

Zilpzalp · Phylloscopus collybita



DESCRIPTION

The common chiffchaff is a small bird with greenish-brown upperparts and off-white underparts. Its name reflects its distinctive, repetitive chiff-chaff song.

IDENTIFICATION

The common chiffchaff is best identified by its unique song pattern and lack of distinctive markings such as wing bars or a yellow rump, which distinguishes it from similar species like the willow warbler. Male and female birds are generally indistinguishable in appearance.

OBSERVATION TIP

Common chiffchaffs can be observed during spring and summer months when they breed in open woodlands. They migrate to southern regions for winter.

BEHAVIOUR

This migratory species travels to warmer climates during winter months, feeding primarily on insects found in woodland areas. The female takes charge of building the nest and caring for the young while the male defends his territory against rivals and predators.



Male



Female

Sparrowhawk

Sperber · Accipiter nisus



DESCRIPTION

The Eurasian sparrowhawk is a small bird of prey with distinctive plumage that varies by sex and age. Adult males exhibit bluish grey upperparts and orange-banded underparts, whereas females and juveniles are brown above with brown barring below.

IDENTIFICATION

Eurasian sparrowhawks are easily identifiable by their size difference between sexes, with females being up to 25% larger than males. Additionally, adult males display bluish grey upperparts and orange-banded underparts, while females and juveniles have brown plumage with brown barring throughout.

OBSERVATION TIP

Observing Eurasian sparrowhawks is most likely in any habitat where there are trees and small birds. They can be spotted year-round in temperate regions, though some northern populations migrate south during winter.

BEHAVIOUR

This species thrives in various habitats, from dense woodland to urban gardens, where it hunts small birds such as tits, finches, sparrows, thrushes, and starlings. The female sparrowhawk is significantly larger than the male and can take down prey up to 500 grams or more.



Male



Female

Western Jackdaw

Dohle · Coloeus monedula



DESCRIPTION

The western jackdaw is a small crow species measuring 34–39 centimetres (13–15 in) long, with distinctive grey nape and neck patches contrasting against its otherwise black plumage. It stands out for its striking pale blue or greenish eyes, an unusual trait among corvids.

IDENTIFICATION

The western jackdaw can be easily identified by its distinctive pale grey nape and neck patches that contrast with the rest of its black plumage. Both males and females share similar physical characteristics, making it difficult to distinguish between them based on appearance alone.

OBSERVATION TIP

Western jackdaws are commonly observed in farmland, open woodland, coastal cliffs, and urban settings throughout their range. They can be spotted year-round but may become more visible during the breeding season when they build nests in cavities of trees or buildings.

BEHAVIOUR

Western jackdaws are highly social birds that live in small groups within a larger community structure. They communicate through a variety of calls and vocalizations, often seen scavenging on plant material, insects, and human food waste in urban areas. These birds are mostly resident but some northern populations migrate south during winter.



Male



Female

Serin

Girlitz · Serinus serinus



DESCRIPTION

The European serin is a diminutive bird measuring 11-12 cm with a short tail. Its upper parts are marked with dark streaks and have a greyish green hue, while the rump displays vibrant yellow. The breast and belly are also streaked in yellow and white, creating a striking contrast against its surroundings.

IDENTIFICATION

Male European serins exhibit brighter yellow coloring on their faces and breasts compared to females, along with distinctive yellow wing bars and tail sides. This coloration makes it easier to distinguish males from females in the field.

OBSERVATION TIP

European serins are typically observed in open woodland areas or cultivated regions that include some conifers. They breed across southern and central Europe and North Africa during spring and summer, while northern populations migrate further south for winter.

BEHAVIOUR

This species is an active bird that often forms flocks outside of breeding season, sometimes mixing with other finches. During the breeding period, it feeds primarily on seeds supplemented by insects. Its song, a buzzing trill, can be heard frequently in Mediterranean regions and serves as a familiar sound during spring and summer.



Male



Female

Goldcrest

Wintergoldhänchen · Regulus regulus



DESCRIPTION

The goldcrest is Europe's smallest bird, measuring 8.5 to 9.5 cm in length with a wingspan of 13.5 to 15.5 cm and weighing between 4.5 and 7 grams. It has olive-green upper-parts, buff-white underparts, two white wing bars, and a plain face with black irises and a bright crest that is orange and yellow in males and entirely yellow in females.

IDENTIFICATION

The goldcrest can be distinguished by its distinctive crest colouration; males have an orange centre to their yellow crown, while females display entirely yellow crests. Both sexes share similar plumage otherwise, with olive-green upper-parts and buff-white underparts marked by two white wing bars. Juveniles may appear slightly duller but are indistinguishable from adults in winter.

OBSERVATION TIP

The goldcrest is typically observed during spring and summer when it breeds in coniferous woodlands or gardens. In winter, it can be found alongside flocks of tits as they forage together.

BEHAVIOUR

The goldcrest is constantly on the move as it searches for insects to eat, often found in coniferous woodlands or gardens. In winter, it frequently associates with flocks of tits. Its flight consists of rapid wing-beats interspersed with sudden directional changes, and its voice includes a series of high-pitched notes that are slightly higher than those of the common firecrest.



Male



Female

Egyptian Goose

Nilgans · Alopochen aegyptiaca

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DESCRIPTION

The Egyptian goose is a distinctive bird with a ruddy brown back and white wing patches that are visible only when the wings are spread during flight or display. Both sexes have identical plumage but males tend to be larger in size, weighing up to 2,348 grams.

IDENTIFICATION

A key identification feature is the white wing patches that become visible during flight or aggressive displays. Additionally, males can be distinguished by their larger size and distinct courtship display involving honking and neck stretching, whereas females are more vocal with a noisy quack when protecting their offspring.

OBSERVATION TIP

These geese are commonly spotted in open habitats near freshwater bodies where they spend most of their time swimming or resting on the shore. They can often be observed during early morning and late afternoon hours engaging in feeding activities.

BEHAVIOUR

Egyptian geese are non-migratory birds that reside year-round in their habitats near freshwater sources such as rivers and lakes. They feed on a variety of plant matter including seeds, leaves, and grasses. The vocalizations differ between males and females: males produce a hoarse quack and a steam-engine-like call, while females emit a loud raucous quack when defending their young.

BIRDING SITE • DRESDEN

Großer Teich: A Haven for Waterbirds Near Dresden

LOCATION & DISTANCE

approx. 17 km • nature reserve



approx. 17 km

DESCRIPTION

The Großer Teich, located approximately 16.9 kilometers from Dresden, is a protected nature reserve within the Moritzburg Teichgebiet. This scenic area supports diverse birdlife and serves as an essential resting spot for thousands of migratory birds during their journeys.

BEST TIMES

Spring and early autumn are ideal seasons to visit Großer Teich due to the abundance of migratory waterbirds stopping by. Early morning is particularly rewarding, offering quieter conditions and better visibility for spotting various species.

TIP

Bring binoculars and a camera with a telephoto lens to capture the vibrant birdlife. Adhere to local regulations and respect the natural habitat to ensure minimal disturbance.

BIRDING SITE • DRESDEN

Nasswiese am Dippelsdorfer Teich: A Tranquil Spot for Birdwatching

LOCATION & DISTANCE

approx. 11 km · protected area



approx. 11 km

DESCRIPTION

Nasswiese am Dippelsdorfer Teich is a protected nature reserve located north of Dresden, managed by the NABU Naturschutzstation Moritzburg. The area is known for its diverse wildlife and serves as an important habitat for various bird species, including Höckerschwäne.

BEST TIMES

The best times to visit Nasswiese am Dippelsdorfer Teich are during spring and autumn when migratory birds pass through, making it a prime location for observing Zugvogel. Early morning is ideal for spotting active bird species as they begin their daily routines.

TIP

Ensure you bring binoculars and a field guide to enhance your birdwatching experience. Remember that swimming and boating are prohibited in the area to protect wildlife.

BIRDING SITE • DRESDEN

Dippelsdorfer Teich: A Tranquil Oasis Near Dresden

LOCATION & DISTANCE

approx. 12 km • nature reserve



approx. 12 km

DESCRIPTION

The Dippelsdorfer Teich is a protected nature reserve located north of Dresden, part of the Moritzburger Teichgebiet. It serves as an important site for fish farming and conservation while offering recreational opportunities to visitors. The area attracts numerous migratory birds making it a prime spot for birdwatching.

BEST TIMES

Spring and autumn are ideal times to visit Dippelsdorfer Teich due to the high number of migratory birds passing through. Early morning is particularly recommended as many species become active at dawn.

TIP

Remember that swimming and boating are prohibited in this nature reserve to protect wildlife. Bring binoculars and a camera for spotting and photographing the diverse birdlife.

BIRDING SITE • DRESDEN

Hoher Stein: A Geological Marvel Overlooking Dresden

LOCATION & DISTANCE

approx. 4 km · protected area



approx. 4 km

DESCRIPTION

The Hoher Stein is a prominent rock formation in the Plauen district of Dresden, featuring a historic observation tower that offers panoramic views of the city and surrounding landscapes. The site is renowned for its geological significance, including fossilized remains from the Cretaceous period.

BEST TIMES

Spring and early autumn provide ideal conditions for birdwatching at Hoher Stein, with numerous species migrating through the area during these seasons. Early morning and late afternoon are particularly rewarding times to observe birds in their natural habitat.

TIP

Visitors should wear comfortable footwear as there are several trails leading around the rock formation. Bringing binoculars will enhance your experience of observing both birds and distant views.

BIRDING SITE • DRESDEN

Wesenitzhang und -aue: Scenic Bird-watching Paradise Near Pirna

LOCATION & DISTANCE

approx. 16 km • nature reserve



approx. 16 km

DESCRIPTION

The Wesenitzhang und -aue nature reserve, located between Pirna-Liebenthal and Pirna-Copitz near Dresden, is a serene habitat along the Wesenitz River. Known for its diverse flora and fauna, this area features scenic landscapes and offers numerous hiking trails.

BEST TIMES

Spring and early summer are ideal times to visit, as birds are more active during breeding season. Early morning provides excellent opportunities to observe various species as they begin their daily activities.

TIP

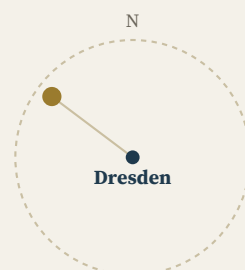
Wear comfortable footwear for the hiking trails and bring binoculars and a field guide to enhance your birdwatching experience.

BIRDING SITE • DRESDEN

Elbtalhänge zwischen Rottewitz und Zadel: A Hidden Gem Along the Elbe

LOCATION & DISTANCE

approx. 26 km · nature reserve



approx. 26 km

DESCRIPTION

The Elbtalhänge zwischen Rottewitz und Zadel is a protected nature reserve in Saxony, Germany, covering an area of 31.1 hectares along the right bank of the Elbe River. Established in 2002, this habitat management area preserves diverse ecosystems and serves as a sanctuary for various bird species.

BEST TIMES

The best time to visit is during spring when migratory birds are arriving, or early morning hours when local avian residents are most active and vocal.

TIP

Wear comfortable footwear and dress in layers suitable for changing weather conditions. Bringing binoculars and a field guide will enhance your birdwatching experience.

BIRDING SITE • DRESDEN

Sächsische Schweiz: A Rock Climber's Paradise for Birds

LOCATION & DISTANCE

approx. 33 km · protected area



approx. 33 km

DESCRIPTION

The Sächsische Schweiz, located near Dresden in Saxony, Germany, is renowned for its unique Elbsandsteingebirge landscape and dramatic rock formations such as the Schrammsteine. This national park offers diverse habitats that support a variety of bird species, including peregrine falcons, eagle owls, and black storks.

BEST TIMES

Spring and early summer are ideal for birdwatching in Sächsische Schweiz, when migratory birds return and breeding activities peak. Early morning is particularly rewarding due to increased vocalization and activity.

TIP

Wear comfortable hiking shoes and layered clothing as the terrain can be rugged and weather unpredictable. Carry binoculars and a field guide specific to Central European bird species.

BIRDING SITE • DRESDEN

Dresdner Heide: A Birdwatcher's Paradise Near Dresden

LOCATION & DISTANCE

approx. 4 km · nature reserve



approx. 4 km

DESCRIPTION

The Dresdner Heide, located just a short distance from the heart of Dresden, is a sprawling forested area covering over 6133.2 hectares and offers a rich habitat for diverse wildlife. This protected landscape since 1969 features scenic trails that wind through dense woodlands and picturesque wetland areas, making it an ideal spot for nature observation.

BEST TIMES

Spring is the best time to visit Dresdner Heide as migratory birds return and nesting activity peaks, while early morning and late afternoon provide optimal lighting conditions for birdwatching.

TIP

Take advantage of the educational resources provided by NABU-Naturschutzstation Dachsenberg nearby, which offers guided tours and workshops to enhance your understanding of local wildlife.

BIRDING SITE • DRESDEN

Zschornaer Teichgebiet: A Waterbird Haven Near Dresden

LOCATION & DISTANCE

approx. 24 km · nature reserve



approx. 24 km

DESCRIPTION

The Zschornaer Teichgebiet, a nature reserve of 314.74 hectares located northwest of Dresden, is an important habitat for waterfowl and other wetland birds. It comprises two significant bodies of water, the Großteich Zschorna and Breiter Teich, along with their surrounding shore areas.

BEST TIMES

The best times to visit are during spring and autumn migrations when a diverse array of waterbirds can be observed. Early morning is particularly recommended for spotting active bird behavior.

TIP

Maintain a respectful distance from the birds and use binoculars or a telescope for observation. Be aware of the area's conservation status and avoid disturbing the wildlife.

BIRDING SITE • DRESDEN

Elbinseln Pillnitz und Gauernitz: Birdwatching Oasis on the Elbe

LOCATION & DISTANCE

approx. 2 km · nature reserve



approx. 2 km

DESCRIPTION

Elbinseln Pillnitz und Gauernitz is a protected nature reserve in Saxony, Germany, consisting of two river islands in the Elbe. Covering an area of 23.5 hectares, this habitat-rich site offers diverse ecosystems including riparian forests and open meadows, making it an ideal spot for birdwatchers.

BEST TIMES

Spring is a particularly rewarding time to visit as migratory birds pass through, while early morning hours offer the best opportunities for spotting a variety of species.

TIP

Wear comfortable walking shoes and consider binoculars or a spotting scope to enhance your viewing experience. It's also advisable to check local weather conditions before heading out.

BIRDING SITE • DRESDEN

Waldbestand Neuländer Straße: A Hidden Gem of Dresden

LOCATION & DISTANCE

approx. 6 km · protected area



approx. 6 km

DESCRIPTION

The Waldbestand Neuländer Straße is a protected mixed forest located in the Pieschen district of Dresden. This 3.6-hectare nature reserve, classified since 1996, offers a tranquil setting for birdwatchers and nature enthusiasts alike. The area features a diverse mix of oak and pine trees, providing habitat for various bird species.

BEST TIMES

Spring and early summer are ideal times to visit the Waldbestand Neuländer Straße, as this period is marked by increased avian activity and breeding behaviors. Early morning hours provide excellent opportunities to observe birds in their natural habitats.

TIP

Wear comfortable footwear and dress appropriately for the weather conditions. The area has a barrierefreie Gehweg (barrier-free path), making it accessible for visitors of all abilities.

BIRDING SITE • DRESDEN

Biotop als Gehölzinsel: A Wooded Oasis Near Dresden

LOCATION & DISTANCE

approx. 10 km · protected area



approx. 10 km

DESCRIPTION

Nestled about 10.3 km from the heart of Dresden, Biotop als Gehölzinsel is a protected wooded island that serves as a sanctuary for diverse bird species and other wildlife. The area is part of a larger conservation effort managed by organizations like NABU Dresden-Meißen, which organizes guided birdwatching tours to help visitors explore the rich biodiversity.

BEST TIMES

Spring and early summer are ideal times to visit Biotop als Gehölzinsel for birdwatching, as migratory birds return and breeding activity is at its peak. Early morning hours provide excellent opportunities to observe birds in their natural behaviors.

TIP

Join a guided tour organized by NABU Dresden-Meißen to maximize your experience and learn about the unique habitats within Biotop als Gehölzinsel from knowledgeable guides.

BIRDING SITE • DRESDEN

Dresdner Elbtalhänge: A Haven for Birdwatchers Near Dresden

LOCATION & DISTANCE

approx. 11 km • nature reserve



approx. 11 km

DESCRIPTION

The Dresdner Elbtalhänge is a protected nature reserve in Saxony, known for its diverse flora and fauna. Spanning over 195 hectares within the city of Dresden, this area offers scenic views and unique habitats that attract various bird species.

BEST TIMES

Spring and autumn are ideal seasons to visit Dresdner Elbtalhänge due to the increased migratory activity of birds. Early morning is particularly recommended for observing a wide variety of avian life as they begin their daily activities.

TIP

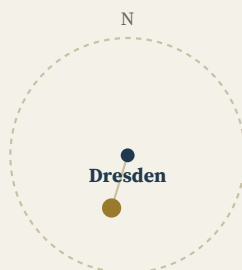
Wear comfortable walking shoes and layered clothing, as the terrain can be uneven and weather unpredictable. Bring binoculars and a field guide to enhance your birdwatching experience.

BIRDING SITE • DRESDEN

Dippoldiswalder Heide: A Hidden Gem for Birdwatchers Near Dresden

LOCATION & DISTANCE

approx. 14 km · protected area



approx. 14 km

DESCRIPTION

The Dippoldiswalder Heide, a sprawling forest area of about 12 square kilometers north of Dippoldiswalde, offers diverse habitats including woodlands and wetlands. This protected site is part of the Osterzgebirge region and features historical landmarks like the Einsiedlerstein and Steinernes Messer.

BEST TIMES

Spring and early summer are ideal for birdwatching in the Dippoldiswalder Heide, as migratory birds return and breeding activities peak. Early morning is particularly recommended to catch the dawn chorus of various species.

TIP

Join guided tours organized by local groups such as the Verein Sächsischer Ornithologen e.V., which provide insights into bird behavior and conservation efforts in the area.

BIRDING SITE • DRESDEN

E+E Projekt Bergwiesen: A Haven for Montane Grassland Birds

LOCATION & DISTANCE

approx. 29 km • nature reserve



approx. 29 km

DESCRIPTION

The E+E Projekt Bergwiesen near Dresden is a vital conservation area focused on restoring and expanding montane grasslands. This project aims to reconnect fragmented habitats, enhance biodiversity, and engage local farmers in sustainable land management practices.

BEST TIMES

Spring and early summer are ideal for birdwatching at E+E Projekt Bergwiesen, as migratory birds return and breeding activities peak during this period. Early morning is particularly rewarding due to increased bird activity.

TIP

Wear appropriate footwear and clothing suitable for uneven terrain and variable weather conditions. Carry a field guide or app to help identify the diverse range of grassland species you might encounter.

BIRDING SITE • DRESDEN

Königsbrücker Heide: Germany's First International Wilderness Area

LOCATION & DISTANCE

approx. 33 km • nature reserve



approx. 33 km

DESCRIPTION

The Königsbrücker Heide, located about 30 km north of Dresden, is a vast nature reserve and the first internationally recognized wilderness area in Germany under IUCN Category Ib. This expansive landscape features diverse habitats including deciduous forests, mixed woodlands, and wetlands.

BEST TIMES

Spring and early summer offer the best birdwatching opportunities with migratory birds returning and breeding activity at its peak. Early morning is particularly rewarding for observing a variety of species.

TIP

Due to strict conservation measures, visitors should respect designated trails and viewing areas to minimize impact on the natural environment.

BIRDING SITE • DRESDEN

Pappelwäldchen Loschwitz: A Hidden Gem for Bird Lovers

LOCATION & DISTANCE

approx. 6 km · protected area



approx. 6 km

DESCRIPTION

The Pappelwäldchen Loschwitz is a protected nature reserve located near Dresden, Germany. Covering an area of approximately 4.4 hectares, this unique site was designated as a Flächennaturdenkmal in 1996 and currently serves as a habitat for various bird species. Efforts are underway to transform it into a natural auwald, enhancing its biodiversity.

BEST TIMES

Spring is the best time to visit Pappelwäldchen Loschwitz, when migratory birds arrive and the forest comes alive with activity. Early morning hours provide optimal conditions for spotting a variety of species as they begin their daily routines.

TIP

To ensure a successful birdwatching experience at Pappelwäldchen Loschwitz, it is advisable to wear comfortable footwear and dress in layers due to varying weather conditions. Additionally, bring binoculars and a field guide to enhance your observations.

BIRDING SITE • DRESDEN

Birkwitzer Graben: A Hidden Gem for Birdwatchers Near Dresden

LOCATION & DISTANCE

approx. 14 km · protected area



approx. 14 km

DESCRIPTION

The Birkwitzer Graben, a protected nature reserve near Dresden, is a haven for bird enthusiasts and nature lovers. Spanning approximately 5 hectares, this site supports over 80 recorded bird species and is part of a larger conservation initiative by NABU-FG Ornithologie Dresden.

BEST TIMES

Spring and autumn are ideal seasons to visit Birkwitzer Graben due to the high migratory activity of birds. Early morning hours offer the best opportunities for observing a variety of species as they become active with dawn.

TIP

Wear comfortable footwear and dress in layers, as the weather can change rapidly. Bring binoculars and a field guide to enhance your bird-watching experience.

PRACTICE

Attracting birds to your garden

With a few simple steps, your garden or balcony becomes a magnet for birds all year round.

OFFER FOOD

Provide quality food year-round – sunflower seeds, peanuts and fat food. Keep the feeding station clean and dry to prevent disease.

PUT UP NEST BOXES

Hang nest boxes with the right hole size in quiet, cat-safe spots, out of direct sun. Clean them in late winter.

NATIVE PLANTS

Native shrubs and perennials provide berries, seeds and insects. An unmown corner, hedges and climbers offer food, cover and nesting sites.

PROVIDE WATER

A shallow water dish for drinking and bathing is used all year. Place it raised and cat-safe, and change the water regularly.

TO TAKE ALONG

Observation checklist

Tick off the species you have seen.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| ☐ | Great Tit | <i>Parus major</i> |
| ☐ | Eurasian Blue Tit | <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i> |
| ☐ | Eurasian Blackbird | <i>Turdus merula</i> |
| ☐ | House Sparrow | <i>Passer domesticus</i> |
| ☐ | Great Spotted Woodpecker | <i>Dendrocopos major</i> |
| ☐ | Woodpigeon | <i>Columba palumbus</i> |
| ☐ | Common Chaffinch | <i>Fringilla coelebs</i> |
| ☐ | Robin | <i>Erithacus rubecula</i> |
| ☐ | Nuthatch | <i>Sitta europaea</i> |
| ☐ | Carrion Crow | <i>Corvus corone</i> |
| ☐ | Greenfinch | <i>Chloris chloris</i> |
| ☐ | Magpie | <i>Pica pica</i> |
| ☐ | Starling | <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> |

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| ☐ | Jay | <i>Garrulus glandarius</i> |
| ☐ | Mallard | <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> |
| ☐ | Goldfinch | <i>Carduelis carduelis</i> |
| ☐ | Green Woodpecker | <i>Picus viridis</i> |
| ☐ | Tree Sparrow | <i>Passer montanus</i> |
| ☐ | Eurasian Buzzard | <i>Buteo buteo</i> |
| ☐ | Common Chiffchaff | <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i> |
| ☐ | Sparrowhawk | <i>Accipiter nisus</i> |
| ☐ | Western Jackdaw | <i>Coloeus monedula</i> |
| ☐ | Serin | <i>Serinus serinus</i> |
| ☐ | Goldcrest | <i>Regulus regulus</i> |
| ☐ | Egyptian Goose | <i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i> |

TO TAKE ALONG

My observations

Record your sightings – date, place, species and what you noticed.

DATE	PLACE	SPECIES	NOTES

TERMS

Glossary

RESIDENT

A bird that stays in the area all year round.

MIGRANT

A bird that travels to warmer regions to overwinter.

PARTIAL MIGRANT

A species where some birds migrate and some stay.

MOULT

The regular renewal of the plumage.

TERRITORIAL SONG

Song with which males mark their territory.

INTRODUCED SPECIES

A non-native species established in the wild.

REFERENCE

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