

# Common Countryside Birds

*A series of ID guides to help you discover more of Leicestershire's wonderful wildlife*

These birds are some of the species most commonly encountered when out in the countryside. Some may also be seen in suburban areas and even gardens. What you will see depends on how hard you look! It also varies on the habitat and the season. All the birds shown below, except the Swallow, are resident and can be found all year, but many more species migrate here in the summer and others just for the winter. See the [Garden Birds ID guide](#) for more common bird species.

*When viewing online, simply click on the species name to find out more.*

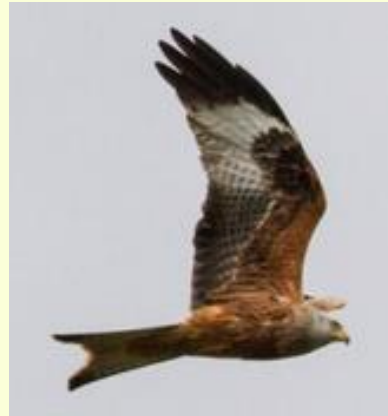


**Buzzard – *Buteo buteo***

**ID:** Large. Broad wings with 'fingered' tips. Pale patches underneath the wings. Call similar to a cat's meow.

**Where:** Soaring, not flapping. Wings in shallow 'V'.

**Similar:** [Red Kite](#) (forked tail).



**Red Kite – *Milvus milvus***

**ID:** Large. Red-brown with grey head. Long, forked tail.

**Where:** Near roads, open countryside. Following reintroductions, expanding from east Leicestershire.

**Similar:** [Buzzard](#) (tail rounded).



**Jackdaw – *Coloeus monedula***

**ID:** Small crow with grey neck and pale eyes. Loud and sharp 'tchack' call (from which it is named).

**Where:** Open fields. Around chimneys (in which it sometimes nest).

**Similar:** [Crow](#) (larger, all black).



**Crow – *Corvus corone***

**ID:** All black plumage with shiny black beak. Deep 'caw' call. Often in mixed flocks with Jackdaws and Rooks.

**Where:** Everywhere!

**Similar:** [Rook](#) (grey/white face and beak base).

**Become a citizen scientist!** If you can spot any of these species, why not submit your sighting at [www.naturespot.org.uk](http://www.naturespot.org.uk) and contribute to our scientific knowledge of local wildlife. Record data submitted by the public is vital to conservation. Simply register online then follow the guidance on the Submit Records page.

**Other Leicestershire countryside birds to check out:**

[Grey Heron](#), [Rook](#), [Wren](#), [Great Spotted Woodpecker](#), [Redwing](#), [Chiffchaff](#), [Little Egret](#)



**Magpie – *Pica pica***

**ID:** Black and white with long tail. 'Black' reflects as blue-purple in good light.

**Where:** Everywhere. Builds dome-shaped nest in trees.

**Similar:** None.



**Pheasant – *Phasianus colchicus***

**ID:** Male is red-brown with a green neck and red face patches. Females are all pale brown. Long tail.

**Where:** Open fields. Reared and released each year.

**Similar:** None (other colour forms occasional).



**Chaffinch – *Fringilla coelebs***

**ID:** Male (right) – pink front, grey head. Female (left) brown. Both with white wing bars and stubby beaks.

**Where:** Trees, hedges. Ground feeders.

**Similar:** None.



**Swallow – *Hirundo rustica***

**ID:** Blue head, red throat, pale belly, tail streamers.

**Where:** Flying low over fields and water. Groups perching on wires in late summer. Apr-Oct.

**Similar:** House Martin (white rump, no tail streamers)



**Black-headed Gull – *Chroicocephalus ridibundus***

**ID:** White under, pale grey back/wings. Red legs. Dark brown head in summer, reduced to a dot in winter.

**Where:** Anywhere. Commonest gull, no longer a sea bird.

**Similar:** Common Gull (green legs).



**Green Woodpecker – *Picus viridis***

**ID:** Largest woodpecker. Green back, yellow rump (seen in flight), red head. Loud 'yaffle' call.

**Where:** Feeds on ants on lawns and grassland.

**Similar:** None.

Find more Leicestershire  
Wildlife ID Guides at:  
[www.naturespot.org.uk/IDguides](http://www.naturespot.org.uk/IDguides)



**Leicestershire  
County Council**

NatureSpot

