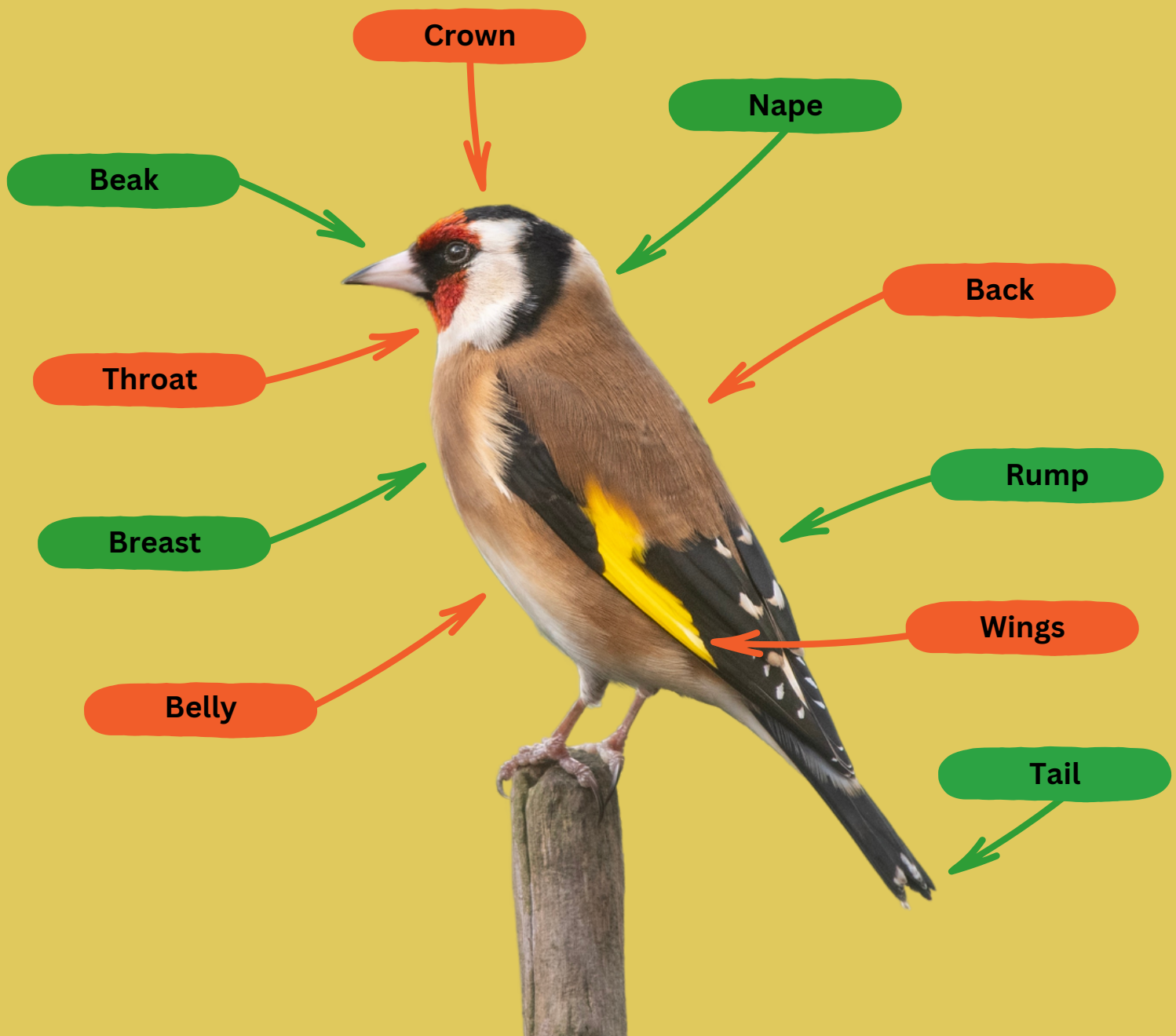


HOW TO IDENTIFY SIMILAR BIRDS

In this guide you will find lots of helpful information to help you tell the difference between similar-looking birds.



Visit www.bfbc.org.uk to find out more and take part in the count

HOW TO IDENTIFY CORVIDS

CARRION CROW

The 'standard' corvid, this is the species most will be familiar with. Carrion crows have a **sturdy black beak**, a **square-ended tail**, and a **93 to 104cm wingspan**.

Typically wary of people, they are **usually found alone** or in small groups.

Have a hoarse '**kraa**' call, usually repeated three times.



RAVEN

The largest of the corvids, ravens have an impressive **120 to 150cm wingspan** making them visibly bigger than crows.

With a strong, **heavy-looking beak**, ravens have thick necks with **shaggy throat feathers**, and a **diamond-shaped tail** which can be seen during flight.

Have a harsh '**kronk-kronk-kronk**' call.



ROOK

Best known for their ghostly, **bare grey-white faces**, rooks are crow-sized with an **81 to 99cm wingspan**, long **feathery 'trousers'**, and a **thinner beak** than other corvids.

Often found with jackdaws, rooks are **very sociable** and can gather in 40,000-strong flocks throughout winter.

Generally very noisy with a distinctive '**caw-caw**' call.



JACKDAW

The UK's smallest crow, jackdaws have a modest **70cm wingspan**, a **silver sheen** across their head and chest, and striking **pale-coloured eyes**.

Very sociable and often found with rooks, flocks of jackdaws are regularly seen performing aerial acrobatics together.

Have a loud '**kya**' call.



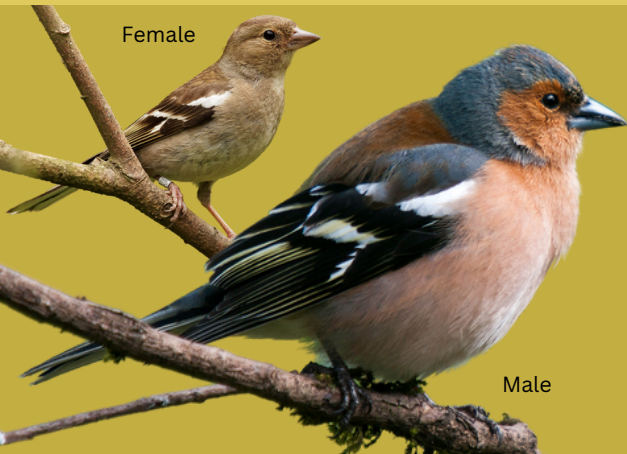
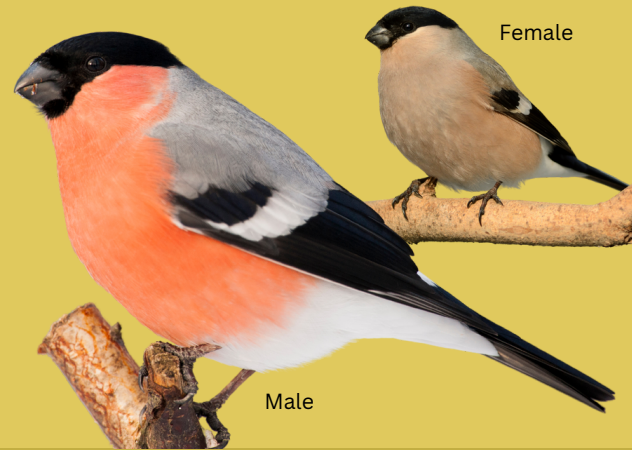
HOW TO IDENTIFY *FINCHES*

BULLFINCH

Males have a **vibrant pink-red underside** and a **black crown** and tail. Females are **brown-grey** in comparison, with both sexes having a **bright white rump** and a **22 to 26cm wingspan**.

They remain in **pairs all year round**, so if you are lucky enough to spot a male chances are a female will be nearby.

Have a quiet rusty-hinge-like song with soft **'deu-deu'** calls.



CHAFFINCH

Though not as vibrant as its relatives, the chaffinch cannot be ignored. Males have a **blue-grey crown**, **pink face and breast**, and a **brown back**, with females being **green-brown** in colour.

Both sexes have **bright white patches** on their wings, a longer thinner beak than other finches, and a **25 to 29cm wingspan**.

Have a short, metallic **'fink-fink'** call.

GOLDFINCH

A colourful finch easily identified by its light **orange-brown back**, **yellow wing patch**, **black crown**, and **bright red face**.

With a **21 to 26cm wingspan**, they are often seen travelling in flocks and visiting bird feeders. They are also avid seed-eaters and have **powerful beaks** well adapted to this diet.

Have a **melodic, twittering** call.



GREENFINCH

A distinctive and **stocky** bird, the greenfinch can be identified by its **olive-green** colour and **flash of yellow** on the wings.

Females are **duller** in colour, but both sexes have a **26cm wingspan** and **strong, large beaks** designed for seed-eating.

They are often **found in flocks** with other finches over winter.

Have a twittering song which features a **drawn-out 'wheeze'**.

HOW TO IDENTIFY RAPTORS

BARN OWL

With a **heart-shaped face**, **soft white undersides**, and a **mottled golden-brown back**, the barn owl is distinctive.

They have an **80 to 95cm wingspan** with **comb-like edges** to their large wings, allowing them to fly slowly and silently while searching for prey.

Have a shrill, often repeated '**shreeee**' shriek.



BUZZARD

Commonly seen in both rural and urban areas, buzzards can be identified by their **brown colour**, **broad wings** with **dark finger-like tips**, **yellow legs**, and **1.2m wingspan**.

Males put on an impressive '**rollercoaster**' **display flight**, and can often be seen gliding on warm thermal air currents.

Best known for their high-pitched '**key-yaaa**' call.



SPARROWHAWK

One of the smaller birds of prey with a **55 to 70cm wingspan**, females can be up to **25% larger** than males.

Males have a **blue-grey back and wings** with **orange stripes** down their front, whereas females are **brown** in colour. Both sexes have **bright yellow eyes**, **yellow legs**, and a **narrow tail**.

Have a '**kek-kek-kek**' call.



Male

Female

KESTREL

With **pointed wings**, a **71 to 80cm wingspan**, and a **fanned black-tipped tail**, kestrels also have a **pale, spotted underside**.

Males have a **grey head** and **chestnut-brown back**, whereas females are more **dull brown** in colour.

Often seen demonstrating their **characteristic hovering flight**.

Have a shrill, urgent-sounding '**kee-kee-kee**' call.



HOW TO IDENTIFY LITTLE BROWN JOBS

HOUSE SPARROW

Males have a **streaky brown back**, **grey head and underside**, and a **black throat**, whereas females are mostly **light brown**. They have **short and chunky beaks** with a **21 to 26cm wingspan**.

Noisy and social birds, they **roost communally** and are often seen in flocks.

Have a '**chelp-chrup**' call, making a range of chattering sounds.



TREE SPARROW

The smaller and more active relative of the house sparrow. Tree sparrows have a **chestnut brown head**, a **white collar**, and distinctive **black cheek spots**, with a **20 to 22cm wingspan**.

Not usually associated with human activity, they are more often found in **open farmland** with mature deciduous trees.

Have a cheery, two-syllable '**tsu-witt**' call.



DUNNOCK

A shy **brown bird** with a **grey head and breast** and **dark streaks** on its wings. Similar to a house sparrow, but with a **thinner**, **more pointy beak**, and a **19 to 21cm wingspan**.

Often seen **on their own** or **in pairs**. Nicknamed the '**hedge sparrow**' because it is often seen underneath hedges.

Have a persistent, high-pitched '**tseep**' call.



WREN

Have **rounded wings**, a **13 to 17cm wingspan**, and a **short narrow tail** which is often raised in a **distinctive vertical pose**.

Mostly **brown** in colour, they have **dark streaky wings**, a **pale eye stripe**, a **thin beak**, and a **pale underside**.

Known to be extremely **loud** compared to their small size, wrens have a scolding '**tik-tik-tik-tik**' call.

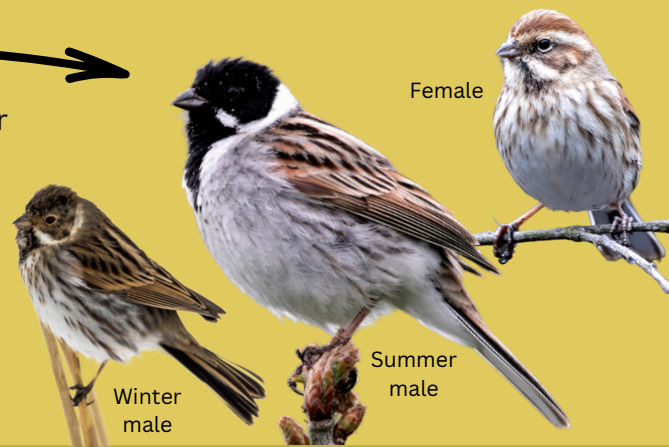


REED BUNTING

Streaky brown with a notched, white-edged tail. In the summer males have a **black head (streakier and browner in winter)** with a **white collar, drooping white moustache**, and a **21 to 28cm wingspan**. Females are lighter in colour.

Often found in flocks with **buntings, finches, and sparrows**.

Males make a distinctive **three-note buzzing** call.



CORN BUNTING

A **stout, pale streaky brown** bird with a **thick but pale beak** and a **26 to 32cm wingspan**. Looks most similar to a skylark, but has a **thicker beak** and **lacks a crest** on the top of its head.

Its tail lacks white edges, and it **dangles its legs** during flight.

Have a rapidly repeated **‘tuck-tuck-zick-zick’** call, with a song that sounds similar to jangling keys.



SKYLARK

A **small, dull streaky brown** bird about the size of a starling, with a **30 to 36cm wingspan**. Has a **distinctive crest** on the top of its head, and both the wings and tail have a **white edge**.

Have an **unmistakable display flight**, flying up to 300m in the air and **hovering** before parachuting back down to the ground.

Sing **long, complicated songs** while flying, with a **‘preet’** call.



MEADOW PIPIT

A small **yellow-brown streaky** bird, with a **22 to 25cm wingspan**, **pale pink legs**, and a **white-edged tail**.

Has a fluttering **‘parachute’** display flight.

Most similar to a skylark but is **smaller** in size and **lacks a crest** on the top of its head.

Known for their high-pitched, piping **‘sip-sip-sip’** call.



LINNET

Small and **slim** with **dull streaky brown plumage**, a **grey beak**, and **brown streaky wings** with black edges. Males have **crimson red foreheads and breasts** in summer, females are **browner**.

Have a **21 to 25cm wingspan** and an **undulating flight**, twittering as they fly.

They have a **‘tett-ett-ett’** song.



HOW TO IDENTIFY PIGEONS & DOVES

WOODPIGEON

The UK's **largest** and **most common** pigeon species, they are mostly **blue-grey** in colour with **white patches** on the wing and neck, a **grey-pink underside**, **yellow eyes**, and a **red and yellow beak**. Have a **75 to 80cm wingspan**.

Have a familiar cooing '**hoo-hroo**' call and makes a loud clatter with its wings when it flies away.



STOCK DOVE

Mostly **blue-grey** in colour with a **pink check** and **iridescent green band** on the back of the neck. Has **dark edges** to its wings with a **60 to 66cm wingspan**.

Lacks the white neck and wing patches seen in a woodpigeon, and the pale rump generally seen in feral pigeons.

Have a one-note '**whoo**' call.



FERAL PIGEON

The wild ancestors of once domesticated pigeons. Can be found in **all shades** of blue, grey, black, brown, and red, with some darker and some lighter, and a **63 to 70cm wingspan**.

Look most similar to a rock dove, a species which is only found on sea cliffs in parts of Scotland and Ireland.

Have a '**crooo**' call.



COLLARED DOVE

Pale grey-brown in colour with **red legs and eyes**, a **51cm wingspan**, and a distinct **black collar** - giving the bird its name.

Often seen in **pairs** or in **flocks** where food is plentiful.

Less colourful than a turtle dove, which has a purring 'turr-turr-turr' song.

Have a soft, familiar '**hoo-hoooo-hoo**' cooing call.



HOW TO IDENTIFY THRUSHES

MISTLE THRUSH

Have pale **grey-brown wings**, a plump **pale belly**, and **yellow-brown legs**, with **thorn-like spots** on the throat and **rounded spots** on the belly. Noticeably **larger and paler than song thrushes**, with a longer, white-edged tail and a more upright stance. Have a **42 to 48cm wingspan**.

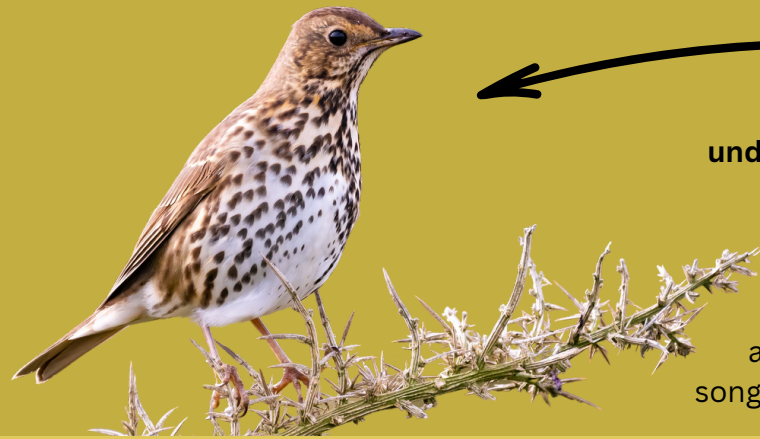
Seen **alone**, in **pairs**, or in **small family groups**. Generally more boisterous than song thrushes with **sharp, chattering** calls.



SONG THRUSH

Males and females look similar, having a mostly **white underbelly** with dark, **upward-pointing arrowhead markings**. Smaller than a mistle thrush, with a **shorter tail**, **warmer brown colour**, and a **33 to 36cm wingspan**.

Have a **'zit'** call similar to the click of a bicycle wheel, and a complex **'seoo-seoo-seoo-tidic-tidic-tidic-tew-tew-tew'** song often heard first thing in the morning and as it gets dark.



FIELDFARE

A larger thrush with a **39 to 42cm wingspan**. Has a **blue-grey head**, **yellow beak**, **chestnut brown back**, speckled yellow breast, and a black tail. Moves around with **purposeful hops** and **stands very upright**. **Lacks an eye stripe**.

Often spends winter in **large mixed flocks** with other thrushes.

Sings constantly in flight with a **'schack-schack-schack'** call.



REDWING

A small thrush with a **33 to 35cm wingspan**, a **cream line above the eye**, and **orange-red flanks** under the wings - giving the bird its name. Have a **dark brown head, wings, and tail**, with a **creamy-white chest** which is covered in **dark spots** in a similar fashion to a song or mistle thrush.

Migrates at night, often heard making a short, high-pitched **'tsee'** or **'seeip'** noise. Commonly seen in flocks with fieldfares.



HOW TO IDENTIFY WATERBIRDS

COMMON GULL

A **medium-sized** gull commonly found both inland and around the coast, often associated with human activity. Has a **silver-grey back**, **black wing tips**, a **plain yellow beak**, and **yellow-green legs**. In winter its white head becomes **streaky**.

Generally looks like a **smaller version of a herring gull** with a **110 to 130cm wingspan**, but lacks the herring gull's distinctive red spot on the beak.



HERRING GULL

Large, noisy gulls commonly found both inland and around the coast, often associated with human activity.

Have **light grey backs**, **black wing tips**, a **white underside**, and **curved yellow beaks** with a **distinctive red spot**. They also have **pink legs** and webbed feet.

Larger than the common gull with a **130 to 150cm wingspan**.



COOT

Has an **entirely black body** with a **white beak**, and a **white 'shield'** on its face.

Has a **70 to 80cm wingspan** and is **noticeably larger** than the similar-looking moorhen.

Can be found in most wetland areas and waterbodies, mostly being found on the water and **diving** for invertebrates.



MOORHEN

Have a **brown-black colour** with a **red and yellow beak**, **white stripes on the flanks**, **green legs**, and a **blue-black belly**.

Has a **50 to 55cm wingspan**, making it **noticeably smaller** than the similar-looking coot.

Can be found by almost any body of water, and spend more of their time out of the water than coots do.

