

IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

Birds of Open Country in the North Pennines



Lapwing

Birds of the High Moors

Red grouse ★



10cm

Low, fast flight with quick bursts and glides. Explosive 'go-back, go-back' call. Always in or near heather.

Height: 40cm.

Dunlin ★★★

Found on blanket bog. Tiny. Fast, twisting flight, with shrill 'tsee' call.

Height: 18cm.



10cm

Golden plover ★★★



10cm

Found on moors and upland grassland. Often stands on a small mound, alert to danger. Liquid 'pyou' call. Fast flight with regular wing beats.

Height: 27cm.

Merlin ★★★

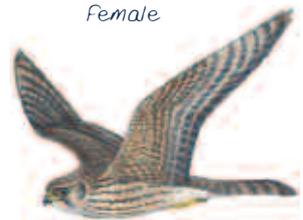
Small, dashing falcon with quick wing beats. Hunts larks and pipits in twisting flight. Perches on rocks and on ground. Call 'wik, wik, wik'.

Height: 28cm.



male

10cm



Female

Short-eared owl ★★

Day-flying, low over heather and rough grassland, with stiff, slow wing-beats. Often sits on fence posts. Round face with fierce, piercing eyes.

Height: 38cm.



10cm

Black grouse ★★

Large, sturdy bird with strong, fast flight. All black male has characteristic lyre-shaped tail and white 'bar' on wings. Found on moorland edge and upland fields. 80% of the English population is found here.

Height: 48cm.



Largest of our waders. Long, down-curved bill. Wild, bubbling call. Heavy, but strong flight on long wings. When displaying, often soars with wings arched, almost 'airplane-like.'

Height: 55cm.



Lapwing ★

Tumbling flight on black and white 'floppy' wings. Tilts forward when feeding. Prominent crest. 'Pee-wit' call. Always on the ground or in the air, rarely on posts or walls.

Height: 29cm.



Grey partridge ★★

Round, short-tailed gamebird associated with taller vegetation. Fast, whirring flight with short glides. Harsh call. Often seen in small groups or with young on roadside verges.

Height: 29cm.



Snipe ★★

Bill as long as body. Found on moors and wet fields, Often stands on walls or posts. Strange whirring sound made by tail feathers as it flies up and plunges down during 'drumming' display.

Height: 26cm.



Redshank ★★

Often perches on posts and walls calling loudly. Orange-red legs ['shanks']. Generally seen flying away, showing prominent white 'bar' along wing edge. Piping call.

Height: 28cm.



Wheatear ★★



Associated with short turf. Often perches on small boulders giving 'wheet tack tack' call. Commonly seen flying away showing prominent white rump.

Height: 15cm.

Ring ouzel ★★★

Shy. White 'necklace' on all black bird. Favours short turf near moorland edge, typically in areas with crags and scree. Often calls or sings from isolated tree or bush. Winters in North Africa.

Height: 23cm.

male



Meadow pipit ★



Small, streaky bird. Tends to make short flights between patches of vegetation. Often perches on walls. Common on moors and rough grazing. Calls 'seet, seet, seet' and 'pip-it'.

Height: 14cm.

Skylark ★★

Often heard but not seen, hovering high above singing continuously. Found on upland grassland. Short crest.

Height: 18cm.



Yellow wagtail ★★★

Bright yellow. May be seen walking on walls giving fluting 'tu-lip' call. Nests in hay meadows.

Height: 17cm.



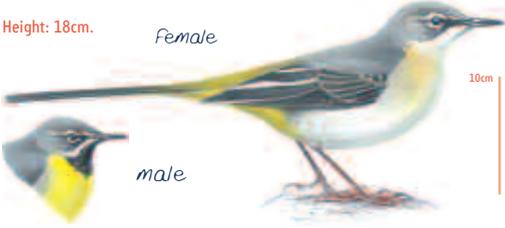
Birds of Rivers and Streams

Grey wagtail ★★

Found almost exclusively at the water's edge. Wags long tail and flutters up to snap insects from the air. High pitched call.

Height: 18cm.

Female



male

Dipper ★

Found exclusively on upland rivers and streams, generally 'bobbing' on a rock. Walks into and under water in search of food.

Fast, whirring flight and high-pitched squeaking call.

Height: 18cm

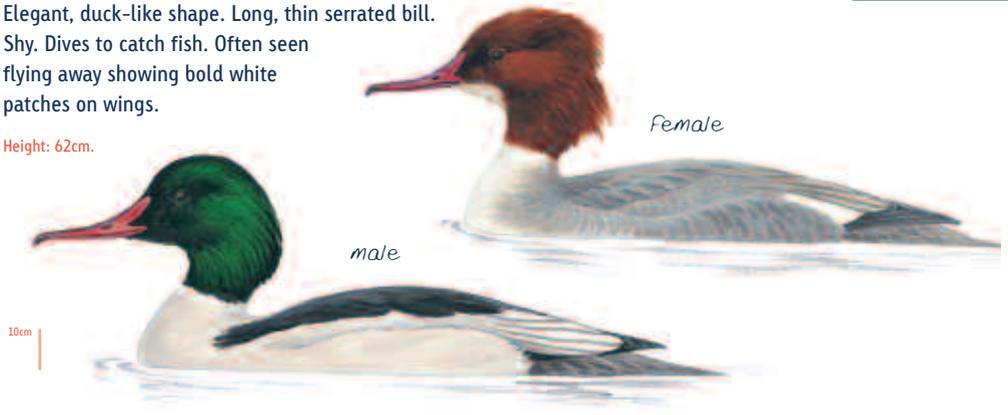


Goosander ★★

Elegant, duck-like shape. Long, thin serrated bill. Shy. Dives to catch fish. Often seen flying away showing bold white patches on wings.

Height: 62cm.

Female



male

Common sandpiper ★★

Associated with stony waterside margins. Regularly 'bobs' and 'wags' tail. Flies with stiff, arched wings. High pitched repetitive call.

Height: 20cm.



Oystercatcher ★

Long, bright red bill. Fast, direct flight, with wings held low. Loud 'peep peep' call. Often near reservoirs.

Height: 42cm.



The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The North Pennines is among the finest landscapes in the country. Stretching across large parts of County Durham, Cumbria and Northumberland, it was designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1988. At almost 2,000 square kilometres, it is the second largest of the 41 AONBs and is one of the most peaceful and unspoilt places in England. AONBs were established with the purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty and are given the same protection as National Parks.

In June 2003 the North Pennines was awarded UNESCO European Geopark status in recognition of its world-class geological heritage. In April 2004 it became a founding member of the UNESCO Global Geoparks Network.

This map gives an indication of the relative ease of seeing different species illustrated



Some birds are much easier to see than others. The following star rating system gives an indication of how easy it is to see the different species illustrated

How easy it is to see different species

KEY - ★ easy ★★ moderate ★★★ difficult



This identification guide is a companion to the North Pennines AONB Partnership's book 'Birdwatching in the North Pennines' which can be purchased from Tourist Information Centres and other outlets across the AONB or directly by contacting the address below.

Illustrations: Mike Langman

This project received funding from ONE North East.



We can provide the information contained in this publication in large print, different formats and other languages on request. Please call 01388 528801 for details.

NORTH PENNINES AONB PARTNERSHIP

Working together for the North Pennines

North Pennines AONB Partnership
Weardale Business Centre
The Old Co-op Building, 1 Martin Street
Stanhope, Co. Durham DL13 2UY

Tel: 01388 528801

Email: info@northpenninesaonb.org.uk

Website: www.northpennines.org.uk

12/05/5000