



# NatureSpot

Recording the Wildlife of Leicestershire & Rutland

## Identify 100 Species – Countryside Birds

10 species you are likely to find in Leicestershire and Rutland

How easy is it to identify?

Easy



Care needed



Target species

### Buzzard – *Buteo buteo*



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

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

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

**About:** Now our commonest bird of prey. Breeds in woodland but hunts over open land and also scavenges.

**Recording:** Often heard before being seen (tip: learn the call). If a photo isn't possible, briefly describe what you saw/heard in the comments box.



### Magpie – *Pica pica*



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

**Similar species:** None.

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

**About:** Like other crows it is an intelligent bird and able to recognise itself in a mirror.

**Recording:** If a photo isn't possible, add a brief description in the comments box.



### Black-headed Gull – *Chroicocephalus ridibundis*



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

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

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

**About:** Roosts in large numbers on water overnight.

**Recording:** If a photo isn't possible, add a brief description in the comments box.



### Other Leicestershire countryside birds to check out:

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

### Jackdaw – *Coloeus monedula*



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

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

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

**About:** Noisy and acrobatic. Roosts communally overnight in woodland.

**Recording:** If a photo isn't possible, add a brief description in the comments box.



To find out more about the [100 Species Challenge](#), how to submit records of your sightings and lots more about the wildlife of Leicestershire and Rutland, visit [www.naturespot.org.uk](http://www.naturespot.org.uk).

### Red Kite – *Milvus milvus*

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

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

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

**About:** Once the most threatened bird in the UK, now doing well.

**Recording:** If a photo isn't possible, add a brief description in the comments box.



### Crow – *Corvus corone*

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

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

**Where to look:** Everywhere!

**About:** Wary of humans but can become confident if fed regularly.

**Recording:** If a photo isn't possible, add a brief description in the comments box.



### Pheasant – *Phasianus colchicus*

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

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

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

**About:** Millions of birds are released each year – more biomass than all other birds put together.

**Recording:** Photo not necessary.



### Swallow – *Hirundo rustica*

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

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

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

**About:** Builds a cup-shaped nest from mud – often in outbuildings.

**Recording:** If a photo isn't possible, add a brief description in the comments box.



### Green Woodpecker – *Picus viridis*

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

**Similar species:** None.

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

**About:** Breeds in tree holes but doesn't 'drum'.

**Recording:** Often heard rather than seen (tip: learn the call). If a photo isn't possible, briefly describe what you saw/heard in the comments box.



### Chaffinch – *Fringilla coelebs*

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

**Similar species:** None.

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

**About:** The UK's second most common breeding bird. Nests in shrubs and dense vegetation.

**Recording:** If a photo isn't possible, add a brief Description in the comments box.

