



Identify 100 Species – Garden Birds

10 species you are likely to find in Leicestershire and Rutland

How easy is it to identify?

Easy



Care needed



Target species

[Blue Tit - *Cyanistes caeruleus*](#) ●

ID: All-yellow front, black eye-stripe, blue head cap.

Similar species: [Great Tit](#) (larger, black breast stripe).

Where to look: Common on feeders / trees.

About: Hole-nester with a large brood (average 12). Breeding is timed to coincide with tree leaf emergence when there are plenty of caterpillars to feed to the young.

Recording: Without a photo, add a brief description to the comment box.



[Great Tit - *Parus major*](#) ●

ID: Yellow front with black mid-line, black head cap.

Similar species: [Blue tit](#) (no breast stripe)

Where to look: Common on feeders / trees.

About: Another hole-nester, but needs a larger hole! More aggressive than other tits and will chase these away from feeders.

Recording: Without a photo, add a brief description to the comment box.



[Robin - *Erithacus rubecula*](#) ●

ID: Orange (not red!) breast and head (both male and female). Juveniles lack the orange and have a spotty breast.

Similar species: None.

Where to look: Feeds mainly on the ground.

About: Follows large animals (including human gardeners) looking for disturbed food

Recording: Photo not required.



Other common Leicestershire garden birds to check out:

[Chaffinch](#), [Greenfinch](#), [Magpie](#), [Wren](#), [Collared Dove](#)

[Dunnock – *Prunella modularis*](#) ●

ID: Brown/grey, sparrow-sized, thin beak.

Similar species: [House Sparrow](#) (thick beak)

Where to look: On the ground, close to cover.

About: Misleadingly called the Hedge Sparrow when it isn't a sparrow but the only UK member of the 'accentor' bird family.

Recording: Without a photo, add a brief description to the comment 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.

House Sparrow - *Passer domesticus* ●

ID: Male (main image) - grey front, black bib, grey cap. Female (inset) - brown cap, pale eye-stripe.

Similar species: [Dunnock](#) (thin beak).

Where to look: Bushes but commonly feeds on the ground.

About: Red-listed due to huge population crash. The reasons are not fully understood. Might be due to short distance dispersal from the nest site.

Recording: Without a photo, add a brief description to the comment box.



Starling - *Sternus vulgaris* ●

ID: Oily black, purple/green sheen, spots in winter. Juveniles are plain brown.

Similar species: None.

Where to look: Feeding on grass, usually in flocks of 20-40 birds.

About: The feeding flocks all gather at communal roosting sites, forming spectacular flocks of thousands of birds. The massed flight patterns are called murmurations. In the 1980's around 3 million Starlings roosted in Abbey Park, Leicester.

Recording: Without a photo, add a brief description to the comment box.



Blackbird - *Turdus merula* ●

ID: Males all black with a yellow bill. Females (and juveniles) are dark brown.

Similar species: [Song Thrush](#) (cream front with spots).

Where to look: feeds mainly on the ground.

About: Many of the Blackbirds we see in winter are migrants from north-eastern Europe

Recording: Without a photo, add a brief description to the comment box.



Woodpigeon - *Calumba palumbus* ●

ID: Grey back and head, pink breast, white neck patch. Juveniles lack the white patches.

Similar species: [Collared Dove](#) (black neck collar), [Feral Pigeon](#) (lacks white neck patches), [Stock Dove](#) (sandy brown, green neck patch, paired black wing bars).

Where to look: Trees, fences, rooflines.

About: Can breed at all times of year where there is plenty of food, builds twiggy nests in trees.

Recording: Without a photo, add a brief description to the comment box.



Goldfinch - *Carduelis carduelis* ●

ID: Ginger-brown, red face, black/yellow wings. Usually in small flocks.

Similar species: None.

Where to look: Tops of trees, feeders. Visits flower heads such as thistles and Teasel searching for seeds.

About: Has a very fine beak adapted for extracting flower seeds. Goldfinches used to be kept as caged pet birds (now illegal).

Recording: Without a photo, add a brief description to the comment box.



Long-tailed Tit - *Aegithalos caudatus* ●

ID: Tiny, pink & white with black markings, a tiny bill and a very long tail. Usually in family groups.

Similar species: None.

Where to look: Trees and feeders. The flock is often dispersed, each working through the trees search for food and making regular contact calls.

About: Breeding pairs build a globe nest using lichens and spider silk, usually hidden well such as in Brambles.

Recording: Without a photo, add a brief description to the comment box.

