

MAR LODGE ESTATE

From the high mountain tops to the Caledonian pinewoods, rolling moors and cascading burns, Mar Lodge Estate is home to some of Scotland's rarest birds, as well as a host of more common species. In fact, over 80% of the estate is protected by international designations for its birdlife. This leaflet tells you about some of the birds that you might see on your visit.

At Mar Lodge Estate we are restoring ecosystems, creating a place where wildlife can flourish and people can reconnect with nature.



Scotland's National Nature Reserves



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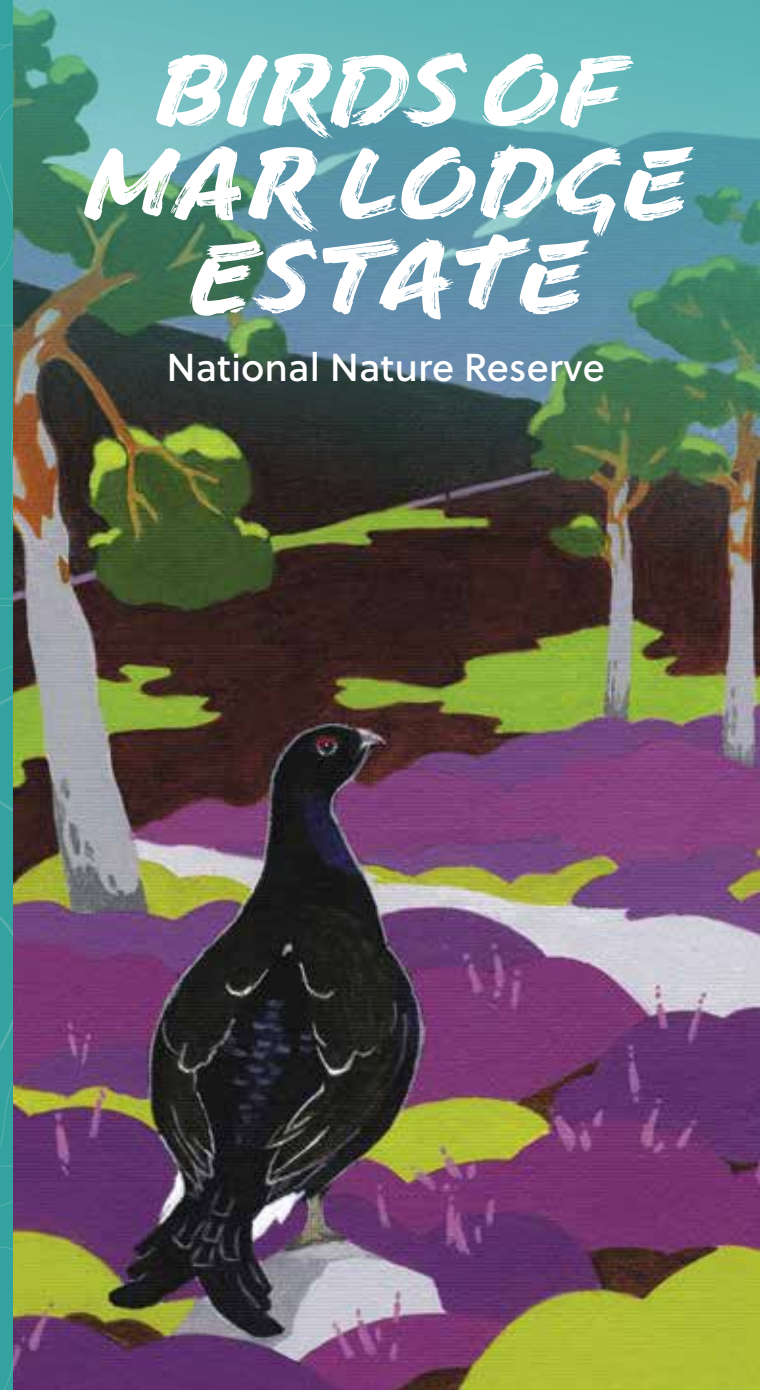
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The National Trust for Scotland is a Scottish charity, SC007410

BIRDS OF MAR LODGE ESTATE

National Nature Reserve



Along the BURNS

GREY WAGTAIL April to October

A splash of tropical colour with bright yellows and whites, showy blues and smart greys. Look out for their ridiculously long tails which they can't stop wagging.



DIPPER March to October

Handsome, chestnut brown with a bold white bib. They think nothing of walking underwater in icy burns to find food. Their high-pitched call can be heard easily over the raging torrents.



COMMON SANDPIPER April to September

Small birds, olive brown and white, with sharp pointed bills. They make up for their subtle plumage with a noisy call. The Gaelic name fìdhleir bòrd an locha translates to 'the fiddler of the lochs'.



OYSTERCATCHER March to September

Unmistakable: black and white with a long red bill. They nest on shingle banks in noisy colonies, and feed in grassy fields. Be careful not to trample their delicately camouflaged eggs!



Illustrations © Jane Milloy

In the MOUNTAINS

GOLDEN EAGLE

All year

Always bigger than you expect them to be: twice the size of a buzzard! Look out for white on the tail and upperwings of young birds. They can live for over thirty years!



SNOWBUNTING

All year



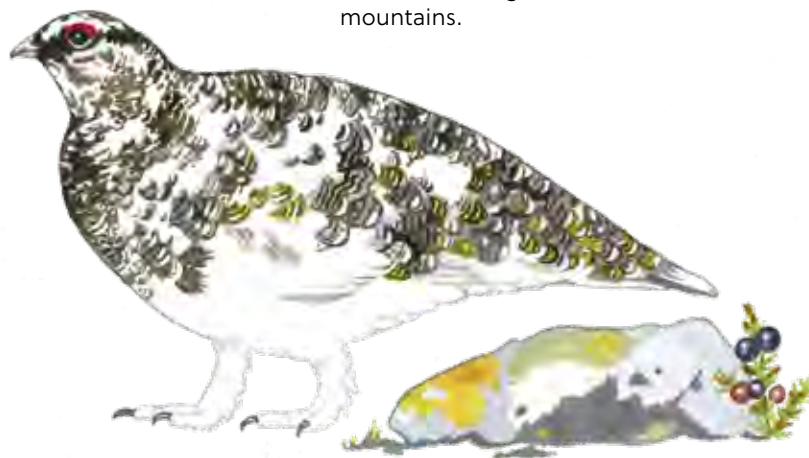
A fluffy ball of black, white and buff, often seen searching for crumbs around the summit cairns. A high arctic bird, there are just a handful of breeding pairs in Scotland's highest, coldest mountains.

DOTTEREL

May to September



Elegant, rare, and remarkably easy to miss. The females lay the eggs and then leave the males to rear the chicks. They are threatened by climate change and are declining in Scotland.



PTARMIGAN

All year

Brilliant white in winter, dapper grey in summer, master of disguise all year round. Often given away by their croaking calls. Most at home on the highest hills, even during the harshest winters.



BLACK GROUSE

All year

Shy and retiring most of the time, but the males are famous for their spectacular, swaggering mating behaviour. Declining across the UK, but common enough around the edges of the woodlands here.

In the WOODS

TREECREEPER

All year

Find them climbing up trees with the help of their stiff tails, snapping up insects with a sharp, curved beak, moving more like a mouse than a bird. Well camouflaged, brown and white.



CROSSBILL

All year

An icon of the pinewoods, with a special bill for breaking open pine cones. Three species can be found here, including Scottish crossbills, which are found nowhere else in the world.



GOLDCREST

All year

Scotland's smallest bird species and a specialist of pinewoods. Easily identified by their smart gold head stripe. Breeding birds are joined by Scandinavian migrants in winter.



REDSTART

May to September

A bird of open woodland and fine summer days. The male is a showy bird with smart plumage and a beautiful song. The females are plain brown with a red tail.



WILLOW WARBLER

April to September

One of the commonest birds in the woods, with one of the sweetest songs. Dainty, delicate little birds of pale yellows and olive greens. They spend the winter in West Africa.



MEADOW PIPIT

March to November

If it's small and brown and on a moor, it's probably a meadow pipit. Their lovely song and showy display flight brightens up the spring.



STONECHAT

All year

Named after their call, which sounds like two stones being knocked together. Males are handsome, clad in black, reds, whites and browns. Females are less showy, but just as charismatic.



On the MOORS

MERLIN

March to October

Exquisite, manoeuvrable little killing machines, capable of catching meadow pipits mid-flight. Our smallest raptor, they punch above their weight, happily picking fights with eagles!



GOLDEN PLOVER

March to September

Often hard to spot: their gorgeous golden backs and dark black fronts make for excellent camouflage. Listen out for their evocative, mournful call in the boggiest bits of the moors.



WHEATEAR

April to September

Easy to recognise by their showy white rumps. Among our earliest returning migrants, despite flying in from wintering grounds in West Africa! Common on the moors, they like the rocky bits best.

RED GROUSE

All year

The Gaelic coileach-fraoich translates to 'heather grouse', which is where they're most often found. Chestnut and red, the males have bright red eyebrows.

