

Fieldfare

Turdus pilaris

Bird · Winter visitor · Oct–Apr



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A large, upright, handsome thrush: blue-grey head and rump, chestnut back, and a heavily spotted yellow-buff breast. Fieldfares arrive in Dumfries from October, often in loose flocks alongside redwings, and work the hedgerows, orchards and stubble fields around the town. In a hard winter they move into gardens for windfall apples. They leave again through March and April, and none stay to breed.

BEHAVIOUR

Fieldfares feed in restless, mobile flocks, moving down a hedge and stripping haws and rowan berries as they go, with a constant hard 'chack-chack' contact call. When berries run out they switch to open grassland and playing fields, hunting worms in a series of upright hops. They are noticeably bolder than redwings and will see off other thrushes from a good fruit tree.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Thrushes (Turdidae)
SIZE	25–26 cm · blackbird-sized
UK STATUS	Red-listed

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