

Treecreeper

Certhia familiaris

Bird · Resident · here all year

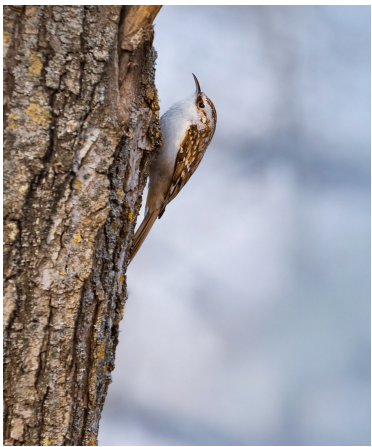


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The treecreeper is a small, well-camouflaged bird built for a very particular job: working its way up tree trunks in search of food. Mottled brown above and silvery white below, it can look almost invisible against bark until it moves. It typically lands near the base of a tree, then spirals upward in short hops, probing crevices with a fine, curved bill for spiders, insects and their eggs, before flying down to the foot of the next tree to start again. Present in Dumfries and Galloway's woodlands all year round, it's a genuinely resident bird, but it's easiest to spot in autumn and winter, when bare branches strip away the leaf cover it normally hides behind. Listen for its thin, high-pitched call — often the first clue that one is nearby, working its way steadily up an unremarkable trunk.

BEHAVIOUR

It relies on a stiff, spine-tipped tail as a built-in prop, bracing itself against the bark much as a woodpecker does while it climbs. This lets it work every crevice methodically on the way up before gliding down to restart lower on the next tree. At night it often roosts pressed into a soft depression in bark, sometimes a purpose-chosen dip in a soft-barked tree such as a giant redwood.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Treecreepers (Certhiidae)
SIZE	12.5 cm · smaller than a sparrow
UK STATUS	Green-listed

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