

Bird Books – a Bibliography: Di Stagg

These are books I own and have used in some way for the Fact Sheets I've written.

*The star system: *fair; **good; ***my favourites: personal comments in italics.*

- ****Birds of Britain and Europe; Photographic Field Guide**; Jim Flegg & David Hosking; New Holland 1990, 1997; ISBN 1 85368 263 2. *All photographs: good if you don't like drawings, but only one per bird; description + map + Months Circle to show you its frequency (dark blue most frequent) – time of year and rarity. Good idea.*
- *****Birds of Europe**; Lars Jonsson (Swedish); A&C Black Ltd 1992, 1996; ISBN 0-7136-4422-2. *Always an excellent birding expert. Very comprehensive Field Guide, drawings large and clear. As concentrates on all European birds, you need to check the maps to see if the bird comes to Britain and when. (Same goes for 'Britain & Europe' books in general, as compared to 'Britain & Ireland' books. Though with people travelling frequently on holiday, nowadays, most books include Europe.)*
- *****British Birds: their Folklore, Names and Literature**; Francesca Greenoak; Christopher Helm 1979 (as *All the Birds of the Air*), 1997; ISBN 0-7136-4814-7. *A fascinating book for background literary information you don't find elsewhere. Illustrations minimal – not a field guide.*
- ***** BTO Garden Birds and Wildlife: garden birdwatch edition**; Mike Toms & Paul Sterry; AA Publishing 2008, 2009; ISBN 978-1-9062-0442-6. *Although this is obviously concentrated on garden birds, the pictures and set-up are excellent. Very good overall introduction in wild flowers, trees, shrubs, birds' eggs (very good), nests, bird behaviour, feeding birds and types of seeds and cleanliness, what plants to grow for wildlife, making nestboxes, ponds, mammals and reptiles, butterflies and moths, insects flying and crawling; then the birds: a very good Identity Parade that would make easy work for bird tables, followed by a double-page spread on each bird, full of photographs, and 'Power-packed with fascinating facts' from the People Who Know – the British Trust for Ornithology it is an excellent book for everyone from beginner adults to young people, and a lot that would interest the more experienced naturalist. Highly recommended – it is too large to take on a walk, but a must for every house – beautiful, kept with a pair of 'bins' by the window!*
- *****Collins: Bird Songs & Calls – including 3 CDs**; Geoff Sample; Collins 2010; ISBN 978-0-00-733976-1. *For those who like to study bird song. Not many photos but detailed discussion on each bird's songs and calls. The three CDs are also excellent.*
- *****Collins Bird Guide: 'The most complete Field Guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe**; Lars Svensson & Peter Grant; HarperCollins 1999, 2001 ISBN 0 00 7113323. *Another Field Guide similar to Hamlyn Guide. Probably one of the best. Clear drawings, all details shown, detailed description + map.*
- ****Collins Nature Guides: Birds on Britain & Europe**; J. Nicolai, D. Singer, K. Wothe; HarperCollins 1993, 1994; ISBN: 0 26 167402 1. *Narrow Pocket Field Guide, easy to carry. Only one photographic example of each bird. Colour-coded thumb prints: Birds that live in and on the water; Birds of Prey; Birds that live on shore, marshes, mountains; Game birds and larger birds; perching birds. Photographs opposite description – some confusion at times. Female not always given.*
- *****The Crossley ID Guide Britain and Ireland**; Richard Crossley & Dominic Couzens; Crossley Books 2014; ISBN 978-0-691-15194-6. *Just out and my favourite (together with Bird Jizz) to take with me. One full page for most birds: 3/4 page photograph with every possible view of the bird. Close-up, flying, distance, m&f, good description of the details that will identify it from similar birds. Recommended.*
- ****The FSC (Field Studies Council) AIDGAP CHARTS**, updated regularly. ISBN: 978 1 85153 886 7. *Publications supported by the WWT (The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust): over 30 different subjects of Wildlife, many very specialised. Example: Guide to Wetland Birds (DUCKS, GEESE, SWANS, WADERS, WATER BIRDS). Six concertina pages with clear illustrations on one side; descriptions on the other. Light to carry a number of them in daysack. Can just take what you need for the visit. Good.*
- *****The Hamlyn Guide to Birds of Britain and Europe**; Bertel Bruun, Hakan Delin & Lars Svensson; Hamlyn 1970, 1989; ISBN 0 600 55702 2. *A good Field Guide. Pictures are drawn, not photographed, but they include every colour variation and marking variant. Short detailed descriptions + Europe Map for most birds to show when and where they are around. All books by Lars are good for detail.*
- *****The Pocket Guide to British Birds**; RSR Fitter; Collins 1952, 1955; ISBN – none I can find. *My first bird book and still a favourite as it does what others don't: gives an Identity Key (COLOUR; MARKINGS;*

STRUCTURE – bill, tail, etc; FLIGHT; BEHAVIOUR) to eliminate other birds until you come to the one you saw. It's description pages put birds into Environment (LAND; WATERSIDE; WATER) and into Size (HUGE; down to VERY SMALL). Pictures all together in two groups: colour and b&w for silhouettes, complete with silhouetted sparrow for size comparison. Probably unavailable – except maybe on EBay. If you go to second-hand bookshops, such as the one at Blickling, there is a good chance it might turn up.

- *****RSPB Birds: Their Hidden World**; Peter Holden; Bloomsbury 2012; ISBN 978-1-4081-5262-1. *Again a most interested 'different' book. It covers all aspects of bird behaviour with some good photographs. 'How birds work'. Not a Field Guide.*
- *****RSPB Discovering Birds (The RSPB Guide to finding and enjoying birds in any patch of countryside anywhere in Europe)**; Rob Hume; RSPB 1992; ISBN 0 903138 53 0. *A book of environments – I used it for the Environment Fact Sheet. Beautiful photographs of the different environments with coloured drawings of the birds you could find in each. Again, not a field Guide for bird recognition. Some good pages on Fieldcraft.*
- *****RSPB: Secret Lives of British Birds**; Dominic Couzens; Pub Christopher Helm 2006; ISBN-10: 0-7136-7513-6 or ISBN 13: 978-07136-7513-9. *Another very good book with a difference. A mixture of photos and full-sized environmental paintings by Peter Partington. Loads of fascinating and 'different' information on bird comparisons. Not a Field Guide.*
- *****RSPB: Birds of Britain and Europe; New Audio Edition – over 100 bird songs and calls**; Rob Hume; Dorling Kindersley 2002, 2006, 2011; ISBN-13: 978-1-40537-336-4. *An excellent Field Guidebook but heavy (see below for smaller version). Traditional classification (unlike book below); some environment information. Photographs of birds and more than one picture per bird. Specific features to look out for are arrowed onto the pictures. Lacking silhouettes of the smaller book, but specific measurements given. A useful CD of birdsong included.*
- *****RSPB: Pocket Birds; A Unique Photographic Guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe**; Jonathan Elphick & John Woodward; Dorling Kindersley 2003; ISBN-10: 0-7513-3678-5. *An excellent narrow Field Guidebook to take with you as it will fit in the pocket. Very similar to its larger cousin, it possesses most of the same material and photographs of the larger book, just more compact. As it says photographic and more than one picture per bird. Specific features to look out for are arrowed onto the pictures. Silhouette of the bird standing with shadow silhouette of one of four familiar birds to compare: Swan, Mallard, pigeon, sparrow: quite clever as long as you have read the first page. Different (colour-coded) order: Passerines (Perching Birds); Gamebirds; Waders; Waterfowl (ducks etc); Seabirds; Birds of Prey (+Owls): probably easier to find than above). Flip pictures of bird in environment at the top corners of the page. 'Tip' boxes.*

APPS FOR IPad, phone or computer:

- *A very good simple APP, PARTICULARLY FOR LEARNING BIRDSONG is: **CHIRP!** It has a BROWSE (with many ways to sort, including Commonness, habitat, favourites, song style), SLIDESHOW (with sounds and voiceover options), WHERE (For YOUR European country), and an excellent QUIZ: at Level 1 (10 birds); Level 2 (25 birds); Level 3 (50 birds); Custom Quiz (where you choose which birds to include (easy & hard levels). It doesn't quite have every bird but most of the birds for UK and Europe are included and it is so easy to use.*
- **Birds of Britain: A Pocket Guide: by ISpiny** (same as above) great review. Just bought.
- **Birds of Britain: A field Guide: v2.1.4:** By iSpiny: *It has Browse Birds (under bird groups – the bird then appears on the same page with options to hear it, star it as favourite and record it), Bird Finder (where you fill in details and it suggests what you might have seen), Record a Sighting (keep your own record that is emailed to your computer), List of Sightings (shows your records), Map of Sightings.*
- **Birds of Britain Pro**
- **Big Garden Birdwatch Log HD**