Birds

Black Grouse - *coileach-dubh*

The black grouse is one of Scotland's iconic species however they are in serious decline in the UK. The males (pictured) are blue-black with a red marking above the eye, a fan tail and white stripes on the wings. Females are slightly smaller and are grey-brown in colour. There are black grouse in the moorlands around Callander and as part of Callander’s Landscape we are helping to improve the habitat for black grouse working in partnership with local landowners.

Greater Spotted Woodpecker - *snagan-daraich*

The greater spotted woodpecker is roughly the same size as a blackbird and has striking black and white markings. The male (pictured) is identifiable by the red patch on the back of its head. Listen out for the woodpeckers distinctive drumming sound when in the woods around Callander. The woodpecker uses its powerful beak to hammer holes in tree bark and then extracts beetle larvae. They will also eat caterpillars, spiders, eggs / chicks of smaller birds, nuts and seeds.

Pied Flycatcher - *breacan glas*

The pied flycatcher visits the UK every summer, migrating from West Africa to breed. It is slightly smaller than a house sparrow and is black and white in colour. Look out for the pied flycatcher sitting patiently, waiting for a chance to fly out and catch insects mid-air. As part of Callander's Landscape a number of nest boxes have been installed in the woods to hopefully attract different species including the pied flycatcher and redstart so let us know if you see any.

Blue Tit - *cailleachag cheann-ghorm*

Blue tits are very common and frequent visitors to gardens, although their favoured habitat is broadleaf woodland. They are easy to identify from other species of tit, due to their colourful plumage; which is a mix of blue, yellow, white and green. They nest in holes in trees, but will happily use nest boxes as well. Blue tits eat insects, caterpillars, seeds and nuts. The Gaelic name *cailleachag cheann-ghorm* means Wee Old Lady of the Blue Head.

Siskin - *gealag bhuidhe*

Siskins are a relatively small bird, somewhere between the size of a robin and blue tit. Male siskins (pictured) have a bright yellow breast and cheeks and a black cap. Females are paler with dark streaks and some dull yellow streaks. Both males and females have yellow and black striped wings. Their diet consists predominately of tree seeds, including alder, birch, spruce and pine. Look for siskins flitting around in the tops of trees as they search for food.

Red Kite - *clamhan gobhlach*

The red kite is one of the easier birds of prey to identify in flight, due to its deeply forked tail. The Gaelic name *clamhan gobhlach* means forked buzzard. It has a reddish-brown body, angled wings and a wingspan of approx 185cm. Red kites are scavengers and eat mostly carrion, road kill and worms. They were persecuted to near extinction but they are recovering thanks to reintroduction programmes. You will see red kites around Callander and you can view them at the nearby Argaty feeding station.