



## Great Spotted Woodpecker

### Dendrocopus major

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### Species information

**i** **Common name**  
Great Spotted  
Woodpecker

**Latin name**  
Dendrocopus major

**Category**  
Birds  
Woodpeckers, cuckoo  
and kingfisher

**Statistics**  
Length: 21-23cm  
Wingspan: 36cm Weight:  
85g Average Lifespan: 2  
years

**Conservation status**  
Common.

### About

The great spotted woodpecker is a medium-sized woodpecker, about the same size as a blackbird. Great spotted woodpeckers nest in holes which they excavate in trees in woodlands (mainly broadleaved), large parks and gardens. They have a distinctive, bouncing flight but are mostly likely to be heard 'drumming' away at a tree trunk, performing their breeding displays. Great spotted woodpeckers probe tree trunks for insects and larvae to eat; they have extremely sticky tongues enabling them to extract the insects from their nests. In autumn and winter they will switch to eating berries and nuts and will visit peanut feeders hung in the garden.

### How to identify

The great spotted woodpecker is black and white with white shoulder patches and red underneath the tail. Males have a red patch at the back of the head. Only likely to be confused with the lesser spotted woodpecker which is much smaller.

### Where to

## Habitats



## When to find it



## How can people help

You can help to look after great spotted woodpeckers and many more of our common and rarer garden birds by providing food and water for them - it doesn't matter if you have a big garden or live in a high-rise flat, there are plenty of feeders, baths and food choices out there to suit all kinds of situations. To find out more about encouraging wildlife into your garden, visit our Wild About Gardens website: a joint initiative with the RHS, there's plenty of facts and tips to get you started. To buy bird food or feeders, visit the Vine House Farm website - an award-winning wildlife-friendly farm which gives 5% of all its takings to The Wildlife Trusts.

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