

Take a walk along the Bridewell river and tick off the birds you spot

BIRDS OF THE BRIDEWELL

Spotters Sheet



Grey Heron *Corr réisc*

- You may know the Heron as *Johnny/Judy the Bog*, do you know any other nicknames? Bandon's iconic bird is one of the largest in Ireland.
- Herons build their nests in tall trees. They like to nest in groups called heronries and some of these are known to be in use for over a 100 years.
- Easy to spot, you'll often see them standing motionless near a river waiting to grab a quick snack. They like to eat fish and frogs.



Dipper *Gabha dubh*

- This stout bird is easy to recognise - dark with a smart white bib.
- Dippers are the only songbird in Ireland that feeds underwater.
- They have the amazing ability to walk on the riverbed using their wings to stay steady.
- They catch caddis and mayfly larvae in fast flowing rocky streams and rivers. These larvae are a sign that the river is in good health.



Pied Wagtail *Glasóg shráide*

- The Pied Wagtail, also known as *Willie Wagtail*, is a pretty bird that is easy to spot as their tail 'wags' up and down as they dash around looking for food.
- These are an important bird because they eat insects, likes midges, helping to keep their numbers under control (which is good for us).
- The reason Pied Wagtails like to be near rivers is because that is where many tasty insects spend their time e.g. midges, mayfly etc.



Grey Wagtail *Glasóg liath*

- The Grey Wagtail is a cousin of the Pied Wagtail. The name is a little confusing because the Grey Wagtail has a yellow chest and tummy.
- Grey Wagtails are friendly neighbours and like to nest near Pied Wagtails and Dippers. They nest on bridges, ledges and even in drainpipes along streams and rivers.
- They are shallow water specialists mainly feeding on aquatic insects.



Mallard *Mallard*

- The Mallard is our best known duck, the males, called drakes, are instantly recognisable by their green heads.
- They are a 'dabbling' duck, which means they can go upside down in the water to eat food from the riverbed.
- Mallards have a varied diet which includes snails, vegetation and insect larva. Bread is a big no-no for ducks and can make them ill.



Kingfisher *Cruidín*

- Our BONUS bird is the Kingfisher. They are hard to spot despite their beautiful bright orange and turquoise colouring.
- They breed in tunnels dug into banks along streams and rivers. They prefer slower moving clear water so you are more likely to spot one along the Bandon river than the Bridewell.
- They eat small fish which they catch by 'plunge' diving into the river.

Each bird species has a **conservation status** depending on how well they are doing: **Green** means their numbers are healthy e.g. Heron, Dipper and Pied Wagtail. **Amber** means they are facing some difficulties e.g. Mallard and Kingfisher. **Red** means they are in trouble and need our help e.g. Grey Wagtail