

Coal Tit

Periparus ater

Bird · Resident · here all year



Photo by Alexis Lours, CC BY 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

A small, neat, subdued tit: black cap and bib, white cheeks, and a distinctive white stripe running down the back of the head that separates it from every other garden tit. The body is buff and grey rather than yellow and blue. Coal tits are strongly associated with conifers, so they are numerous in the plantations and shelterbelts around Dumfries and visit garden feeders nearby, especially in winter.

BEHAVIOUR

Coal tits rarely linger at a feeder. They dart in, take a single seed and fly off to eat or cache it — tucking food into bark crevices, moss and conifer needles to retrieve during hard weather. This hoarding lets them survive winters that would otherwise be too lean. Their song is a fast, high, repeated 'see-too see-too', thinner and quicker than a great tit's.

WHEN TO SEE IT

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Tits (Paridae)
SIZE	11.5 cm · smaller than a blue tit
UK STATUS	Green-listed

Photo by Alexis Lours, CC BY 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Natureville