

Greylag Goose

Anser anser

Bird · Resident · here all year



Photo by Diliff, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

A large, bulky, pale grey-brown goose with a heavy orange bill and pink legs, showing very pale forewings in flight. Greylags are the ancestors of domestic geese, which is why they sound so familiar. Around Dumfries there are both wintering birds from Iceland and a resident population that breeds locally on lochs and quiet waters, so greylags can be found in the area in any month.

BEHAVIOUR

Greylags graze grass, stubble and root crops in flocks, and are noisy in the air — the loud clattering cackle is exactly the farmyard sound. They fly in loose skeins and Vs, lower and less tidy than pink-footed geese. Pairs are long-lasting, and goslings from several broods often gather into a crèche looked after by a few adults while the others feed.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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

QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Ducks, geese and swans (Anatidae)
SIZE	74-91 cm · our largest goose
UK STATUS	Amber-listed

Photo by Diliff, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Natureville