

Lesser Black-backed Gull

Larus fuscus

Bird · Resident · here all year



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A large gull with a dark slate-grey back and upperwings, yellow legs and a yellow bill with a red spot — distinguished from the herring gull by the much darker back and the leg colour, and from the great black-backed gull by size. Lesser black-backs breed on the Solway coast and increasingly on rooftops, and feed on the estuary, farmland and refuse sites around Dumfries.

BEHAVIOUR

Opportunistic feeders, taking fish, invertebrates, carrion, refuse and the eggs and young of other seabirds. Historically almost all British breeders migrated to Iberia and North Africa for the winter, but many now stay, and the species is present here in every month — a change linked to milder winters and reliable food from towns and landfill. Roof-nesting pairs are strongly defensive of their young.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Gulls and terns (Laridae)
SIZE	48-56 cm
UK STATUS	Amber-listed

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