

Bird cards

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| For whom: All grades | Where: Indoors |
| Wilderness passport section: Game management | When: All seasons |
| Learning outcomes: Learning to recognise game birds found in Finland and discovering how they live. | What you need: Bird cards (print and cut out) |
| Duration: 15 min | Personnel resources: 1 |

BACKGROUND

In this assignment the pupils learn to identify 18 bird species found in Finland that are classified as game birds (there are 26 game bird species in total in Finland). Both the female and the male of some species are shown, whereas only one of the sexes is presented of others. If there are major differences in the plumage of the male and the female and the image only shows one of them, the bird cards indicate the sex of the pictured bird. If there are no noticeable differences in appearance between the sexes, the sex is not mentioned.

You can print out five types of cards, which can be used in many ways:

- bird names only
- bird pictures only
- bird pictures and names
- identifying features and behaviour of birds
- identifying features and behaviour of birds with no names



Please only print the pages that you need. If necessary, you can print the cards with pictures and the ones with text directly on both sides. When printed on A4 size paper, the text is relatively small, so you can enlarge the printouts to A3 if you wish. Below, instructions are given for four different species identification games. Select the most suitable one, or come up with your own way of using the bird cards!

INSTRUCTIONS

Memory game

Print out the cards (options **a & b**, **b & c**, **c & d** OR **c & e**) ON A SINGLE SIDE of thick paper, preferably in colour. Cut the cards apart. Place the cards face down on the table.

The players take turns flipping over two cards. If the two cards match, the player can keep them and have another go. If the cards do not match, the next player gets a turn. The player with the highest number of card pairs at the end is the winner. If you play the memory game with cards that do not show the name of the bird species (options **b** and **e**), you should also print out the correct answers so that the pupils can check them (options **c** and **d**).

Identification game A

On the reverse side of the cards with the bird's name and picture (option **c**), print the identifying features and habits of the species without their names (option **e**). Print directly ON BOTH SIDES. Cut the cards apart and divide them to pairs of pupils.

The pairs stack the cards face down. They then take turns guessing the name of the bird based on its identifying features. After guessing, the cards are turned over. If the player guessed right, they get to keep the card (and receive one point). The winner is the one who identifies the most species.

You can also give each pupil making up the pair an equal number of cards. One of them reads the information and the other tries to guess the species. If the guess is right, they turn over the picture to see what the bird looks like.

Identification game B

On one side of bird pictures without names (option **b**), print the identifying features and information on the behaviour of the birds (option **d**). Print directly ON BOTH SIDES. Cut the cards apart and divide them to pairs of pupils.

Each pair places the stack of cards face up. Both pupils get to guess the name of the species, its food source and its range. The person who gets more of the information right keeps the card and receives a point. They check the correct answers on the reverse side of the card. When all cards in the deck have been used, the player who ends up with the most cards is the winner.

Identification game C

Print out the handout with bird pictures but no names (option **b**) for each pupil ON A SINGLE SIDE. Also print out one enlarge copy of option **c** (bird picture + name cards) and cut the cards apart. The enlarged images make completing the task easier.

Hide these cards, for example on the walls of the hallway. The pupils must find each card in the hallway (one at a time) and memorise the bird's image and name. Each time they find a card, the pupil returns to the classroom to write down the name of the bird in the right slot of the handout. The task has been completed when all birds have been named correctly.



QUESTIONS TO REFLECT ON

1. In some bird species, the female and the male look different. What types of differences do you notice between females and males?

a) How does the female benefit from her brownish plumage?

b) Why, in some species, the male bird is more colourful than the female?

2. What are migratory birds? Why do some birds migrate up to thousands of kilometres every autumn and spring?

3. Why is the colour of the plumage not always a good identifying feature for all species?

4. What behaviours do sedentary birds (species that do not migrate long distances as seasons change) shown on the cards have for surviving the winter? The sedentary birds shown on the cards are the willow grouse, the rock ptarmigan and the wood grouse.

ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS

1. In some bird species, the female and the male look different. What types of differences do you notice between females and males?

a) How does the female benefit from her brownish plumage?

- The female blends better into its surroundings, making it more difficult for predators to spot it, especially when she is sitting on eggs.

b) Why, in some species, the male bird is more colourful than the female?

- Bright plumage that is in good condition is a sign of vitality in the male. The female bird prefers to mate with a male who is in good condition. Magnificent plumage is particularly important for species that, rather than mating for life, find a new partner every spring.

2. What are migratory birds? Why do some birds migrate up to thousands of kilometres every autumn and spring?

- Typically, migratory birds nest close to polar areas, for example here in Finland, and migrate closer to equatorial areas for winter. Migrating makes sense because fighting for territory and food would be too difficult in the zone of eternal summer. In the north, on the other hand, there is less competition in summer: enough insects are available for insect eaters, plant parts for herbivores and ice-free waters for fish eaters. The longest migration is completed by the Arctic tern, which nests near the Arctic Circle and migrates close to the Antarctic for the northern hemisphere's winter. The migrations of some birds nesting in Finland are much shorter, as they spend the winter on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea.

3. Why is the colour of the plumage not always a good identifying feature for all species?

- Some birds may change their plumage four times a year (such as the willow grouse and northern shoveler). The plumage of juvenile birds may also often be different in colour from the plumage of adults. To identify species, you should also pay attention to their calls and the shape of their bodies, wings and heads and, for example, behaviour or flying technique.

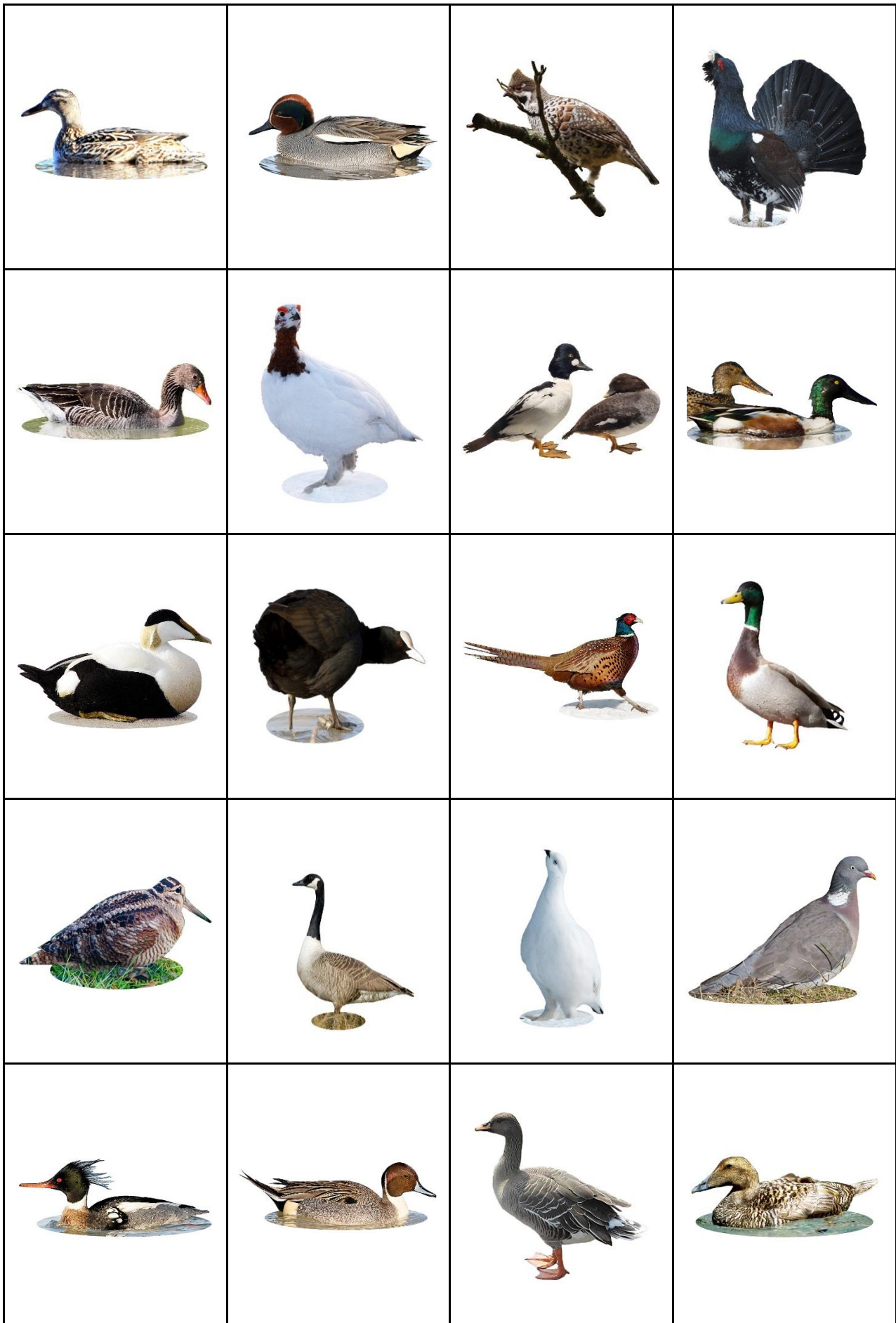
4. What behaviours do sedentary birds (species that do not migrate long distances as seasons change) shown on the cards have for surviving the winter? The sedentary birds shown on the cards are the willow grouse, the hazel grouse, the rock ptarmigan and the wood grouse.

- Their plumage turns white and works as camouflage against predators
- Their feet are covered with feathers that keep them warm and make it easier to walk in the snow
- A thick layer of fat protects them against the cold
- Such birds as the willow grouse, the rock ptarmigan and the wood grouse make snow burrows. The snow acts as insulation and keeps them warm in the lowest temperatures.
- These birds eat foods that are also available in cold weather, such as tree and shrub parts or pine needles (the wood grouse)





















Printing option a

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|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| WOOD GROUSE male | HAZEL GROUSE | COMMON TEAL male | MALLARD female |
| NORTHERN SHOVELER | COMMON GOLDENEYE | WILLOW GROUSE | GREYLAG GOOSE |
| MALLARD male | PHEASANT male | EURASIAN COOT | EIDER male |
| COMMON WOOD PIGEON | ROCK PTARMIGAN | CANADA GOOSE | EURASIAN WOODCOCK |
| EIDER female | BEAN GOOSE | NORTHERN PINTAIL | RED-BREASTED MERGANSER male |

Printing option b (for the sources of the photographs see the last page)



Printing option c (for the sources of the photographs, see the last page)

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| <p>MALLARD, female</p>  | <p>COMMON TEAL, male</p>  | <p>HAZEL GROUSE</p>  | <p>WOOD GROUSE, male</p>  |
| <p>GREYLAG GOOSE</p>  | <p>WILLOW GROUSE</p>  | <p>COMMON GOLDENEYE</p>  | <p>NORTHERN SHOVELER</p>  |
| <p>EIDER, male</p>  | <p>EURASIAN COOT</p>  | <p>PHEASANT, male</p>  | <p>MALLARD, male</p>  |
| <p>EURASIAN WOODCOCK</p>  | <p>CANADA GOOSE</p>  | <p>ROCK PTARMIGAN</p>  | <p>COMMON WOOD PIGEON</p>  |
| <p>RED-BREASTED MERGANSER, male</p>  | <p>NORTHERN PINTAIL</p>  | <p>BEAN GOOSE</p>  | <p>EIDER, female</p>  |

Printing option d

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| <p>WOOD GROUSE <i>Tetrao urogallus</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: large areas of forest</p> <p>Size: around 4 kg</p> <p>Food: leaf buds, shoots, seeds, berries and grains</p> <p>Description: The male is mostly shiny black with a fan-shaped tail. Red 'eyebrows' above the eyes. The female is brown. Sedentary bird.</p> | <p>HAZEL GROUSE <i>Tetrastes bonasia</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: dense forests, especially spruce forests</p> <p>Size: 250 to 450 g</p> <p>Food: leaf buds, shoots, catkins and berries</p> <p>Description: Small round head, a dainty beak. Grey, white, brown and black plumage. The male has a short crest on the top of its head. The legs are covered with feathers.</p> | <p>COMMON TEAL <i>Anas crecca</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: the whole country, water bodies and wetlands</p> <p>Size: 270 to 330 g</p> <p>Food: invertebrates, plants</p> <p>Description: The male has a brown head with broad green stripes on the cheeks. The female's plumage is mottled brown. Gather in dense flocks. Migratory bird</p> | <p>MALLARD, female <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: the whole country, near water bodies</p> <p>Size: 500 to 1,100 g</p> <p>Food: invertebrates</p> <p>Description: The male and the female have a blue wing stripe. The female is mottled brown, and the male is brown and black with a green head. A dabbling duck. The most common duck in Finland. Migratory bird, but some individuals overwinter in cities.</p> |
| <p>NORTHERN SHOVELER <i>Anas clypeata</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: Southern and Central Finland, shallow and nutrient-rich lakes</p> <p>Size: 490 to 740 g</p> <p>Food: invertebrates, plants</p> <p>Description: The best identifying feature is the large, shovel-like bill. The male and female change their plumage with the seasons.</p> | <p>COMMON GOLDENEYE <i>Bucephala clangula</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: the whole country, near water bodies</p> <p>Size: 500 to 1,100 g</p> <p>Food: invertebrates</p> <p>Description: The side profile of the head is characteristically triangular, and the eyes have yellow irises. The male has a white abdomen, mottled black back and green head. The female is brown and pale grey. Migratory bird.</p> | <p>WILLOW GROUSE <i>Lagopus lagopus</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: not found in Southern Finland, in other parts of the country in mires and fell forests</p> <p>Size: 500 to 800 g</p> <p>Food: leaf buds, shoots and leaves, berries</p> <p>Description: The female changes its plumage three times and the male four times a year from mottled brown to white with the seasons. Sedentary bird</p> | <p>GREYLAG GOOSE <i>Anser anser</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: Baltic Sea archipelagos and coasts</p> <p>Size: 3 to 4 kg</p> <p>Food: mainly grass but also seaweed and grain</p> <p>Description: Adults have an orange-red bill and pink feet. The back is blue and grey. Migratory bird.</p> |
| <p>MALLARD, male <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: The whole country, close to water bodies</p> <p>Size: 500 to 1,100 g</p> <p>Food: invertebrates</p> <p>Description: Both the male and the female have a blue stripe on their wings. The female is mottled brown and the male is brown and black with a green head. A dabbling duck. The most common duck in Finland. Migratory bird, but some individuals overwinter in cities.</p> | <p>PHEASANT <i>Phasianus colchius</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: close to human settlements. First introduced in 1901.</p> <p>Size: around 1 kg</p> <p>Food: invertebrates, seeds</p> <p>Description: The male is reddish brown and has a long tail and a red patch against a shiny green background on its head. The grey-brown feet have spurs. The female is yellowy brown and has a shorter tail. Sedentary bird.</p> | <p>EURASIAN COOT <i>Fulica atra</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: Coastal areas of Southern and Central Finland</p> <p>Size: 600 to 1,200 g</p> <p>Food: invertebrates, water plants</p> <p>Description: Stocky build. Black throughout except for a white forehead shield and bill. Older coots have red eyes. Migratory bird.</p> | <p>EIDER, male <i>Somateria mollissima</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: sea areas</p> <p>Size: 1,200 to 2,600 g</p> <p>Food: bay mussels</p> <p>Description: The male has a white back, dark flight feathers and a black head. Green areas on the back and sides of the neck. White patches on the wings. The legs are green and yellow. Migratory bird.</p> |
| <p>COMMON WOOD PIGEON <i>Columba palumbus</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: the whole country except in Fell Lapland</p> <p>Size: 400 to 600 g</p> <p>Food: seeds, grain, peas</p> <p>Description: Generally pale blue and grey, a white stripe around the neck. The legs are red and the bill yellow, red and white. Migratory bird</p> | <p>ROCK PTARMIGAN <i>Lagopus muta</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: high and treeless fell areas</p> <p>Size: 450 to 600 g</p> <p>Food: leaf buds, shoots and leaves</p> <p>Description: The winter plumage is white and the summer plumage mottled brown. The male has a black stripe between the eye and the bill. The legs are covered in feathers, and the bill is black. Sedentary bird.</p> | <p>CANADA GOOSE <i>Branta canadensis</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: All types of water bodies. Introduced in the 1960s</p> <p>Size: 2 to 6 kg</p> <p>Food: many types of plants</p> <p>Description: Black neck, top of the head, forehead and front of the cheek. The back of the cheek and the throat are white. Otherwise brown and white. Migratory bird.</p> | <p>EURASIAN WOODCOCK <i>Scolopax rusticola</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: Moist forests in Southern and Central Finland. Rare in the Bay of Bothnia and Kainuu.</p> <p>Size: 225 to 370 g</p> <p>Food: invertebrates</p> <p>Description: Mottled brown, black and white plumage. Extremely long bill. Migratory bird.</p> |
| <p>EIDER, female <i>Somateria mollissima</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: sea areas</p> <p>Size: 1,200 to 2,600 g</p> <p>Food: bay mussels</p> <p>Description: The main colour of the plumage is mottled brown, with a brown stripe on the wing. A feather-covered stripe on the side of the bill. The legs are green and grey. Migratory bird.</p> | <p>BEAN GOOSE <i>Anser fabalis</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: sea areas</p> <p>Size: 1.2 to 2.6 kg</p> <p>Food: water and shoreline plants</p> <p>Description: Plumage mainly grey and brown, with a darker back. The bill is orange in the middle and black in the base and tip. The legs are orange and yellow. Migratory bird</p> | <p>NORTHERN PINTAIL <i>Anas acuta</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: the whole country on marshy shores, with the strongest population in the north</p> <p>Size: 900 to 1,100 g</p> <p>Food: invertebrates, plants</p> <p>Description: Thin and rather long neck. The male has long tail feathers, a brown head and white neck, and the rest of its body is grey. The female's plumage is uniformly grey and brown. Migratory bird.</p> | <p>RED-BREASTED MERGANSER <i>Mergus serrator</i></p> <p>Range in Finland: the whole country in nutrient-poor water bodies.</p> <p>Size: 225 to 370 g</p> <p>Food: fish and invertebrates</p> <p>Description: The female is brown. The male has a black head, mottled brown breast and a black and white back. Both sexes have a shaggy crest on the neck and a white patch on the wing. Migratory bird.</p> |

Printing option e

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| <p><i>Tetrao urogallus</i> Range in Finland: large areas of forest Size: around 4 kg Food: leaf buds, shoots, seeds, berries and grains Description: The male is mostly shiny black with a fan-shaped tail. Red 'eyebrows' above the eyes. The female is brown. Sedentary bird.</p> | <p><i>Tetrastes bonasia</i> Range in Finland: dense forests, especially spruce forests Size: 250 to 450 g Food: leaf buds, shoots, catkins and berries Description: Small round head, a dainty beak. Grey, white, brown and black plumage. The male has a short crest on the top of its head. The legs are covered with feathers. Migratory bird.</p> | <p><i>Anas crecca</i> Range in Finland: the whole country, water bodies and wetlands Size: 270 to 330 g Food: invertebrates, plants Description: The male has a brown head with broad green stripes on the cheeks. The female's plumage is mottled brown. Gather in dense flocks. Migratory bird</p> | <p><i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> Range in Finland: the whole country, close to water bodies Size: 500 to 1,100 g Food: invertebrates Description: The male and the female have a blue wing stripe. The female is mottled brown and the male is brown and black with a green head. A dabbling duck. The most common duck in Finland. Migratory bird, but some individuals overwinter in cities.</p> |
| <p><i>Anas clypeata</i> Range in Finland: Southern and Central Finland, shallow and nutrient-rich lakes Size: 490 to 740 g Food: invertebrates, plants Description: The best identifying feature is the large, shovel-like bill. The male and female change their plumage with the seasons.</p> | <p><i>Bucephala clangula</i> Range in Finland: the whole country, near water bodies Size: 500 to 1,100 g Food: invertebrates Description: The side profile of the head is characteristically triangular, and the eyes have yellow irises. The male has a white abdomen, mottled black back and green head. The female is brown and pale grey. Migratory bird.</p> | <p><i>Lagopus lagopus</i> Range in Finland: not found in Southern Finland, in other parts of the country in mires and fell forests Size: 500 to 800 g Food: leaf buds, shoots and leaves, berries Description: The female changes its plumage three times and the male four times a year from mottled brown to white with the seasons. Sedentary bird</p> | <p><i>Anser anser</i> Range in Finland: Baltic Sea archipelagos and coasts Size: 3 to 4 kg Food: mainly grass but also seaweed and grain Description: Adults have an orange-red bill and pink feet. The back is blue and grey. Migratory bird.</p> |
| <p><i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> Range in Finland: the whole country, near water bodies Size: 500 to 1,100 g Food: invertebrates Description: Both the male and the female have a blue stripe on their wings. The female is mottled brown and the male is brown and black with a green head. A dabbling duck. The most common duck in Finland. Migratory bird, but some individuals overwinter in cities.</p> | <p><i>Phasianus colchicus</i> Range in Finland: close to human settlements. First introduced in 1901. Size: around 1 kg Food: invertebrates, seeds Description: The male is reddish brown and has a long tail and a red patch against a shiny green background on its head. The grey-brown feet have spurs. The female is yellowy brown and has a shorter tail. Sedentary bird.</p> | <p><i>Fulica atra</i> Range in Finland: Coastal areas of Southern and Central Finland Size: 600 to 1,200 g Food: invertebrates, water plants Description: Stocky build. Black throughout except for a white forehead shield and bill. Older coots have red eyes. Migratory bird.</p> | <p><i>Somateria mollissima</i> Range in Finland: sea areas Size: 1,200 to 2,600 g Food: bay mussels Description: The male has a white back, dark flight feathers and a black head. Green areas on the back and sides of the neck. White patches on the wings. The legs are green and yellow. Migratory bird.</p> |
| <p><i>Columba palumbus</i> Range in Finland: the whole country except in Fell Lapland Size: 400 to 600 g Food: seeds, grain, peas Description: Generally pale blue and grey, a white stripe around the neck. The legs are red and the bill yellow, red and white. Migratory bird</p> | <p><i>Lagopus muta</i> Range in Finland: high and treeless fell areas Size: 450 to 600 g Food: leaf buds, shoots and leaves Description: The winter plumage is white and the summer plumage mottled brown. The male has a black stripe between the eye and the bill. The legs are covered in feathers, and the bill is black. Migratory bird.</p> | <p><i>Branta canadensis</i> Range in Finland: All types of water bodies. Introduced in the 1960s Size: 2 to 6 kg Food: many types of plants Description: Black neck, top of the head, forehead and front of the cheek. The back of the cheek and the throat are white. Otherwise brown and white. Migratory bird.</p> | <p><i>Scolopax rusticola</i> Range in Finland: Moist forests in Southern and Central Finland. Rare in the Bay of Bothnia and Kainuu. Size: 225 to 370 g Food: invertebrates Description: Mottled brown, black and white plumage. Extremely long bill. Migratory bird</p> |
| <p><i>Somateria mollissima</i> Range in Finland: sea areas Size: 1,200 to 2,600 g Food: bay mussels Description: The main colour of the plumage is mottled brown, with a brown stripe on the wing. A feather-covered stripe on the side of the bill. The legs are green and grey. Migratory bird.</p> | <p><i>Anser fabalis</i> Range in Finland: sea areas Size: 1.2 to 2.6 kg Food: water and shoreline plants Description: Plumage mainly grey and brown, with a darker back. The bill is orange in the middle and black in the base and tip. The legs are orange and yellow. Migratory bird.</p> | <p><i>Anas acuta</i> Range in Finland: the whole country on marshy shores, with the strongest population in the north Size: 900 to 1,100 g Food: invertebrates, plants Description: Thin and rather long neck. The male has long tail feathers, a brown head and white neck, and the rest of its body is grey. The female's plumage is uniformly grey and brown. Migratory bird.</p> | <p><i>Mercus serrator</i> Range in Finland: the whole country in nutrient-poor water bodies. Size: 225 to 370 g Food: fish and invertebrates Description: The female is brown. The male has a black head, mottled brown breast and a black and white back. Both sexes have a shaggy crest on the neck and a white patch on the wing. Migratory bird.</p> |

Sources of photographs

- Wood grouse, male, Jouko Haatainen, Metsähallitus. The original image has been cut off from its background.
- Hazel grouse, Mikko Rautiainen, Metsähallitus. The original image has been cut off from its background.
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- Mallard, male, Markku Pirrtimaa. The original image has been cut off from its background.
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- Common wood pigeon, Markku Pirrtimaa. The original image has been cut off from its background.
- Rock ptarmigan, Markku Pirrtimaa. The original image has been cut off from its background.
- Canada goose, Markku Pirrtimaa. The original image has been cut off from its background.
- Eurasian woodcock, Markku Pirrtimaa. The original image has been cut off from its background.
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