

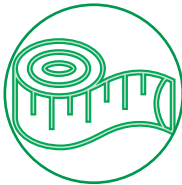
Blue Tit

Habitat Hero



Common Name: Blue Tit
Irish Name: Meantán gorm
Scientific Name: Parus caeruleus

Seen in Ireland:
Year-round



The blue tit is 12 cm long, with a wingspan of 18cm. They weigh around 11g.



They are common in woodland, hedgerows, parks, school grounds and gardens. And are widespread across Ireland. The blue tit's favorite habitat is broad-leaved woodland.



During summer, Blue tits eat small insects, caterpillars, spiders and millipedes. In urban and rural areas, blue tits will continue to feed in gardens where food is provided. In the spring blue tits will also feed on tree buds, often causing damage to fruit trees.



Blue Tits usually live for three years, but the oldest age recorded from bird ringing is 10 years.

Blue Tit Life Cycle

The parents help the young for a few weeks. Then they all move away from each other to live separately over **autumn and winter**.

In February / early **spring** the birds start to look for a good nest site and a suitable partner for the year ahead.

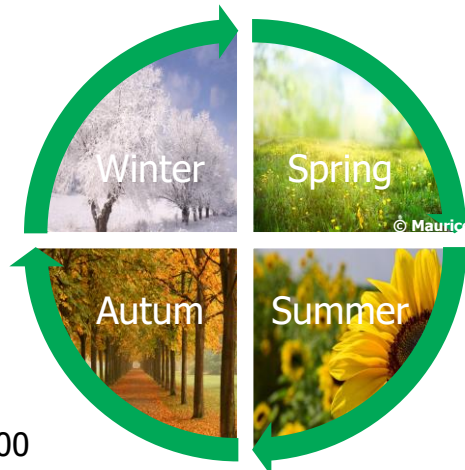
The young fledge at about 20 days old (in early to mid June). Their main predators are sparrow hawks, magpies and cats.

The female does most of the nest-building from April for 1-2 weeks using mostly moss, and wool for lining.

Each chick can eat up to 100 caterpillars per day! So, the adults need to work really hard to feed them all!

Mid-May eggs are laid; one per day for usually 8-10 days. Then the female sits on top and starts incubating them.

At the end of May/ early **summer**, the chicks hatch. The timing of hatching coincides with the abundance of caterpillars!



Blue Tit



Some more Facts:

- A mix of blue, yellow, white and green makes the blue tit one of our most easily recognisable birds.
- The females can be duller in colour than males, but it is hard to tell the difference.
- Only 1 of 3 young Blue Tits will live past 1 year old.
- Blue tit eggs are white with red flecks, which hatch after 14 days.
- The young Blue tit chicks leave the nest at 18 days old and are fully independent after 4 weeks.
- Blue tits have one or two **broods** (a family of birds made in one hatching) each year depending on the availability of food.
- Blue Tits have one of the largest **clutch** (A clutch is the total eggs a bird lays) sizes of all birds – up to 16 eggs! However, most clutches contain 8–12 eggs
- The juveniles have a more yellowish face than the adults.
- Back when 'the milkman' delivered bottles of milk to our doorsteps, Blue Tits discovered that if they pierced the top of the milk bottle, they could get a drink of the cream which always rose to the top of the milk. Clever (or cheeky!?) birds!!

