# Pied Wagtail Habitat Hero





Common Name: Pied Wagtail / Willy Wagtail

Irish Name: Glasóg shráide

Scientific Name: Motacilla alba yarrellii

### Seen in Ireland:

All year round. Common throughout Ireland.





A small, black and white, long-tailed, active bird approximately 18cm in length. It weighs 17-25g.



The Pied Wagtail lives in a wide variety of habitats, often close to water, and including urban areas in Ireland. It is not common in upland areas or bogs. These birds often visit school yards and car-parks!



They feed mainly on insects caught on the ground or in flight.



They live around 2 years, but the oldest recorded age is over 11 years, (wildlifetrusts.org).

## Pied Wagtail Life Cycle



In Autumn and Winter,

females and first-winter males feed together in flocks. Adult males establish feeding territories on their own.

In **Spring**, birds find a suitable mate and nest site and start to build their nest. They like tree hollows and log piles; but prefer to nest in holes.



Outside the breeding season, birds roost in reed beds, bushes and trees; sometimes in city centres!











Around mid-May they lay 5-6 eggs. Eggs are incubated by the female. Chicks will hatch after about 2 weeks.



Parents will look after their young for about two weeks after leaving the nest. And then they will go on to have a second family if it's not too late in the **summer**.



Chicks are fed mainly on flying insects, and they grow quickly. They are ready to leave the nest after about 2 weeks.

## **Pied Wagtail**





### Some more Facts:

- A small, black and white, long-tailed, active bird.
- It is often seen standing whilst busily wagging its tail up and down, and that is where it got the name wagtail.
- It dashes about over grassland, lawns and car parks in search of food.
- It often calls out during its somewhat bobbing flight.
- During the winter, pied wagtails form large groups at night to keep warm and safe.
- In the UK these roosts have had as many as 4000 birds huddled together! That must be one noisy sleep-over





