

Black Woodpecker (*Dryocopus martius*) 45–55 cm

The crow-sized black woodpecker is Japan's largest woodpecker species and is found almost exclusively in Hokkaido. It favors mixed coniferous and deciduous forests and can most easily be found by its loud call or when it is tapping loudly on wood in search of food. Males have completely red crowns, while females have black crowns with some red at the back.

White-backed Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos leucotos*) 25–30 cm

The white-backed woodpecker is Japan's second-largest woodpecker. It has white bars across its wings and a white lower back. It often forages on fallen logs or around the base of old trees, searching for insects that live in dead or dying wood. This is its typical contact call.

Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*) 20–24 cm

The great spotted woodpecker is found throughout Japan and is common in Hokkaido. Like other woodpeckers, pairs excavate nest cavities in the trunks or large branches of trees by using their heads and bills as hammers and chisels. This is their typical contact call.

Brown-eared Bulbul (*Hypsipetes amaurotis*) 27–29 cm

The brown-eared bulbul is a common bird in forests, parks, and gardens throughout Japan. In Hokkaido, it is more common in summer than winter. It is grey with a distinctive chestnut patch on its cheeks. This long-tailed, thrush-sized bird is a short-distance migrant and an important dispersal agent for the seeds of forest shrubs and trees. It is very vocal, typically giving rasping *weesp-weesp* calls in flight.

Eurasian Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*) 32–37 cm

The Eurasian jay is a member of the crow family that dwells in woodlands and forests. Its typical calls (heard here) are harsh, but it also mimics the calls of other birds, including birds of prey. The Eurasian jay of Hokkaido, with its attractive cinnamon-colored head and darker eye color, is distinct from that of Honshu. It migrates

seasonally from northeast Hokkaido to the southwest of the island.

Siberian Rubythroat (*Calliope calliope*) 14–16 cm

The Siberian rubythroat, named for the male's bright-red throat feathers, is a small songbird that visits Hokkaido only in summer. It usually sings from an exposed perch on a low tree or bush top. When it sings, its ruby-red throat bulges and pulsates.

Goldcrest (*Regulus regulus*) 9–10 cm

The goldcrest is Japan's smallest resident bird and can be found year-round in Hokkaido despite the low winter temperatures. The male has a bright crest of golden feathers, which it shows off only during display behavior. Its extremely high-pitched sibilant song, usually given from high in conifer trees, is a test for human hearing (and microphones!).

Varied Tit (*Sittiparus varius*) 14–16 cm

The varied tit is scarce in east Hokkaido, though it is widespread in Japan. It is primarily insectivorous in spring and summer, but in autumn and winter it prefers seeds and nuts, which it pecks open while holding them between its feet against a branch. Its call is a repetitive *pee-tsu-tsu-pee*.

Japanese Tit (*Parus minor*) 14–15 cm

The Japanese tit is widespread throughout Japan, including Hokkaido, occurring in gardens, parks, and woodlands. Like other members of its family, it nests in cavities previously excavated and used by woodpeckers. It is a common bird in mixed-species flocks in winter. You can hear its simple, repetitive call here, though the species has a range of other calls and songs.

Hazel Grouse (*Tetrastes bonasia*) 36 cm

The hazel grouse ranges widely from Scandinavia to Japan, where it is confined to Hokkaido and favors mixed coniferous-deciduous forests. It usually forages on the

ground for food but also eats berries and buds from shrubs and trees. Though its typical song is a thin, high-pitched whistle, in this recording you can hear an unusual call given by an adult, perhaps calling to its chicks.

Eurasian Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) 9–11 cm

The Eurasian wren is Japan's second-smallest resident bird and seems to survive well even in the harsh Hokkaido winter. It lives in wooded areas beside streams and rivers and in areas of damp forest, where it feeds on invertebrates. Despite its small size, its song is astonishingly loud and can be heard over the sound of rushing water.

Eurasian Nuthatch (*Sitta europaea*) 12–17 cm

The pale blue-grey Eurasian nuthatch of Hokkaido is white on its underparts with a bold black stripe across the side of its face and a tiny patch of chestnut beneath its tail. It runs up and down tree trunks and hangs upside down beneath branches as it forages for seeds, nuts, and insects in mixed evergreen and deciduous forests, parks, and gardens. Its loud, repetitive contact call is given frequently.

Japanese Pygmy Woodpecker (*Yungipicus kizuki*) 13–15 cm

The Japanese pygmy woodpecker, Japan's smallest woodpecker, inhabits most of Japan including all of Hokkaido. Unlike most woodpeckers, the males and females appear the same. Males have a red spot on the side of the head, but it is almost always hidden. This common species often joins mixed-species flocks in winter and announces itself with a distinctive buzzing call. A Japanese bush warbler can also be heard singing in the recording.

Masked Bunting (*Emberiza personata*) 13–16 cm

The masked bunting (previously known as the black-faced bunting) is a very common summer songster in Hokkaido's forests. It feeds on seeds for most of the year, but during the breeding season its diet consists mainly of insects so it can provide protein to its growing young. In the autumn, it can be found across Hokkaido in almost any wooded or vegetated habitat.

Narcissus Flycatcher (*Ficedula narcissina*) 13–14 cm

The plumage of the beautiful narcissus flycatcher is black, white, yellow, and orange. It is a fairly common summer visitor to open woodlands and forests in Hokkaido. A prolific singer with a richly varied vocabulary, it sings a wide range of songs, often repeating phrases and imitating other birds.

Common Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*) 32–36 cm

The common cuckoo is a summer visitor to Hokkaido occurring in lowland grasslands, coastal meadows, and high-altitude grasslands. Its name is onomatopoeic in both English and Japanese, replicating the distinctive call of the male. Males typically call from a prominent perch. Female cuckoos produce an unusual bubbling sound (heard at the end of the recording), often in flight. The cuckoo is a brood parasite: the female lays her eggs in the nests of other birds.

Eurasian Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*) 14–18 cm

The bullfinch that inhabits Hokkaido, sometimes called the grey-bellied bullfinch, differs from bullfinches elsewhere in Japan by its coloration: instead of having entirely pink underparts, the males have bright pink cheeks with grey underparts, and the females and young have brown cheeks with brown underparts. It feeds quietly on leaf and flower buds, but sometimes gives a simple, melancholic whistled call, typically while hidden in dense foliage.

Japanese Grosbeak (*Eophona personata*) 22–24 cm

The Japanese grosbeak is Japan's largest finch, and a summer visitor to Hokkaido. It is secretive, typically foraging quietly among dense foliage, where it eats insects and seeds. When singing, however, it commonly sits high in a treetop.

Spotted Nutcracker (*Nucifraga caryocatactes*) 32–38 cm

The spotted nutcracker is a member of the crow family commonly found in mountainous regions of Hokkaido, where it favors cone-bearing trees. It feeds mostly on nuts and seeds, and in autumn stores excess food, burying it to eat later. Amazingly,

it remembers where it has buried most nuts. Its call is loud and grating.

White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*) 18–21 cm

The white wagtail can be found along coasts and waterways, near lakes, and in open country. It forages exclusively on the ground, hunting for invertebrates. In colder regions of Hokkaido, it is mostly a summer visitor. While the bird is walking, its tail is almost constantly in motion, hence its name.