

Birds of the Mar Menor

One bird which you can see near the Mar Menor all year round in this area is the Wagtail. There are actually three different varieties: Pied, Yellow and Grey. The Pied (or White) Wagtail is the most common and their distinctive black and white markings and long tails make them easy to spot. When they are on the ground they flick their tails up and down and hence have the name Wagtail.



Pied Wagtails normally live near water and they feed off insects. They feed on the ground rather than in flight, which also makes it easier to spot them. You will often see them sitting on the ground by the road or in a car park. The female and male have similar size but the female is grey and white rather than black and white. The juvenile is sooty grey all over.



The Yellow Wagtail is migratory and therefore we will see more here during the winter than the summer. During the summer months they travel further north where food is more plentiful and the temperature is less hot.

Yellow Wagtails are often found near grazing animals as they eat insects, which are disturbed by the cattle. Like Pied Wagtails, they tend to feed on the ground.

The female is less bright in colouring than the male and has a grey-green back and wings. The juvenile is grey and white and could be mistaken for a Pied Wagtail.

Grey Wagtails are often confused with Yellow Wagtails, as they also have yellow markings. Grey Wagtails however, have much longer tails and their yellow markings are only on their underbelly and are brightest near to their tail.



Grey Wagtails are much more dynamic when feeding and catch airborne insects as well as those on the ground. Like Pied Wagtails they are attracted to water. In the winter the chest is whiter with yellow markings towards the tail. (as in the picture). The Female has less bright yellow markings than the male. The juvenile is more grey and buff in colour.

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