

Golden Plover

Pluvialis apricaria

In summer the adults are black at front and below, speckled in yellow and dark colours above. The black area stretches from around the eyes down to behind the legs. A white band separates the black front from the yellow-flecked plumage on the back. The black and white colours fade in autumn and the birds belly and front become a pale colour. The bill is black and short, the eyes are dark and the feet are dark grey.

The Golden Plovers fly fast and run rapidly. Their song is an identifying feature, they have a fluting “dirrindee” in flight and on the ground. They nest mainly in dry locations. They breed in Iceland but also in the British Isles, Scandinavia and Russia. Outside breeding season they are mostly found on seashore on heathland with berries and grassland. In late summer they gather together and depart for winter to Western Europe, they go to Ireland, France, Spain and Portugal. They are occasionally seen in Iceland during winter.

The Golden Plover’s song has been regarded as a harbinger of spring in Iceland. So when you hear their “dirrindee” you’ll know that spring is here.



Jóhann Óli Hilmarsson. (2005). *Icelandic bird guide*. Reykjavík: Iðunn.

Image: Daníel Bergmann, taken from <https://www.ni.is/node/27154>