



Meadow pipit *(Anthus pratensis)*

Habitat

During the breeding season meadow pipits prefer moorland, heaths, rough grazing, unimproved grassland, salt marshes and dune systems. High densities are found when there is a mosaic of habitats, especially grassland and heather. They will vacate upland areas in September and October, returning in March and April. During the winter they reside in lowland winter stubbles, marshes and unimproved grassland.

Food

Meadow pipits mainly feed on invertebrates, especially flies, beetles, caterpillars, small worms and spiders. They will feed on some seeds in autumn and winter.

Nesting

They will typically nest on the ground, concealed in vegetation such as a tussock on a small slope. During the breeding season adults are noticeable by their 'parachuting' display flight.

Song/call

Call when rising with a springy flight, a few small, short notes.

Beneficial management

- Aim for moderate stocking rates on pastures to increase structural variety of the sward, increasing both feeding and nesting opportunities.
- Where possible, opt for naturally regenerated stubbles and fallow, as this provides a rich source of seeds for overwintering birds and a nesting opportunity in spring.

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