GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER

The Latin name for this bird is Dendrocopos major.

The great spotted woodpecker ranges over most of Europe and northern Asia except for Ireland and Iceland.

It is a handsome black-and-white bird with a red rump. The male also has a red patch at the back of the head. Its average body length is 22-24cm. This bird has a thick, pointed bill, graduated tail, 'reverse' toes and undulating flight.

Great spotted woodpeckers have an explosive, excited 'chick' call, mainly given in flight, and in spring have a very loud 'drum'-tapping on a tree at a rapid rate.

They lay 4 to 7 eggs in mid-May, which are white and glossy. They live in a hole bored into a tree trunk, usually 10-12ft above ground but often higher.