

Vocalizations

In larger pipits, the song is often simple and repetitive, consisting of only a few notes that are given in a measured phrase, the quality and tone of the notes being very similar to that of the closely related sparrows. Callnotes are generally simple, mono- or disyllabic, high-pitched and sibilant. In the 'Small pipits' as well as the Striped Pipit song is more complex and melodious. Larks generally have more varied and complicated songs, with extended aerial displays often accompanying song bouts.

Some larks exhibit elaborate mimicry of the calls and songs of other birds (Melodious and Sabota Larks and sometimes Eastern Clapper, Rufous-naped and Red-capped Larks), delivered either from a perch or during an aerial display flight. Larks also produced mechanical sounds such as the audible wing-clapping of the Clapper Lark complex and the Flappet Lark. In several lark species however, the song is short and simple much like in the pipits.

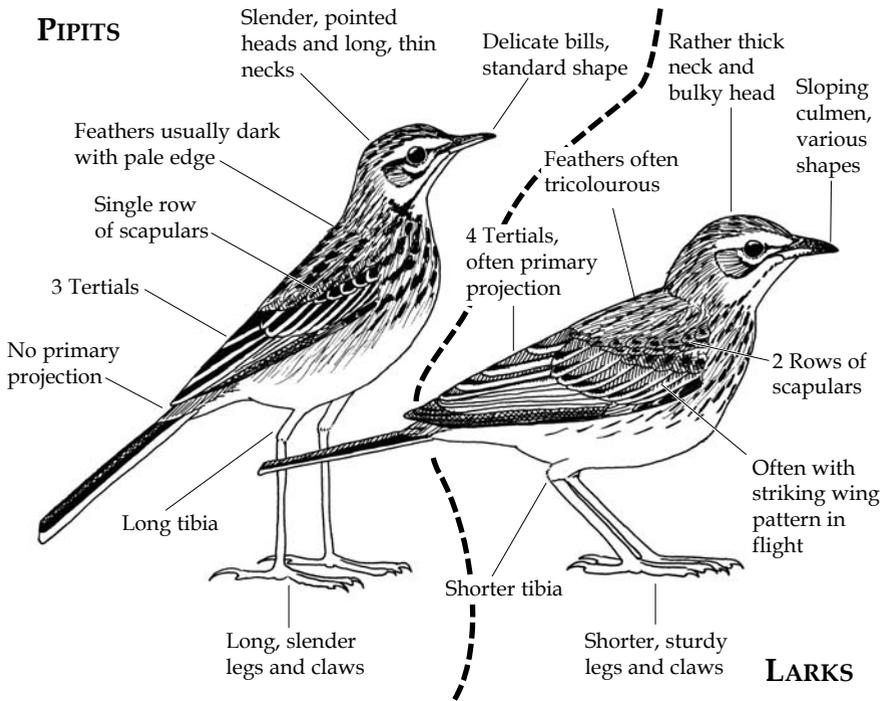


Fig. 33. Pipit and lark comparison. Although there is much variation in the body shapes of larks (right), they are generally heavier & less elongated than pipits (left), with shorter legs (especially tibia), shorter, thicker necks and proportionately shorter tails. In addition larks' wings appear shorter and rounder and they tend to fly in a straighter line (mostly without the characteristic undulations exhibited by pipits). Many larks show bold and characteristic patterns on the upperwing in flight, while pipits' wings are more uniform in flight.