

Cinclus cinclus (Linnaeus, 1758)

White-throated Dipper

Family: Cinclidae

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A medium sized passeriforme with a short tail, held erect. The adult has a distinctive **white chest with a russet head and belly**, and dark brown/black wings, tail and back.



(Photo Wolfgang Kruck, Fotolia)

It **prefers mountainous environments** and usually lives along water courses, especially clear and fast-flowing mountain torrents with sparse aquatic vegetation.

It feeds on aquatic insects and their larvae, molluscs and worms, including small fish, which it catches by diving into the water, remaining under the surface for a few seconds, swimming and

walking underwater, even against the current.

All its senses are very sharp, in particular sight and hearing. It flies low along the surface of the water along the torrent that falls into its territory, which it defends pugnaciously from possible invasions by individuals from the same species.

It is easy to observe resting on stones on the bank or in the centre of the watercourse while waiting to hunt, with an erect posture and nervous downward flicks of the feet and tail. While resting and waiting, it dedicates itself to cleaning and making its **plumage waterproof**, thanks to a particular water-resistant substance created by a gland and spread over the feathers using its beak.

The species is **territorial and solitary**, nesting in rock crevasses or buildings close to the water.

Bio-Montagne - Réseau d'éducation sur la biodiversité dans les zones alpines - Programma di cooperazione transfrontaliera Italia-Svizzera 2007-2013