The Skylark - *Alauda arvensis* - is a small bird (17 to 19 centimetres), males are slightly larger. Upper parts are pale brown with strong black shaft streaks on feathers giving a mottled look. There is a small crest on the head. There is a thin, buff line over the eye. Throat, lower breast and belly are cream; upper breast and flanks are dull brown with black streaks. Eye is dull brown, bill and feet are buff-horned. Bill is similar to a sparrow's. The wing has a pale trailing edge; outer tail feathers on both sides are edged white. The hind claw is noticeably longer than other, similar, species.

Skylarks are birds of temperate, moist pastures and paddocks with short-grass. They have followed the spread of these habitats in Australia since their introduction in the mid to late 1800s. Earliest introductions at Geelong in 1850 or 1854 and Melbourne, Adelaide, Sydney and in Tasmania between 1855 and 1866 were successful. Later introduction in Queensland and Western Australia failed.

They are now found in Tasmania, most of Victoria, the south-east corner of New South Wales and south-east South Australia.

Skylarks forage, roost and nest on the ground. Alone, in pairs, or in loose groups of 10 to 30 or more after breeding they walk through the grass picking up seeds, shoots, insects and other invertebrates. If disturbed they may freeze in a crouch or flush before dropping into cover or fly long distance to escape. They moult a few months after breeding; flight feathers are lost and regrown over two months.

Breeding takes place from September to January in dispersed pairs. Males produce their famous song during a song-flight rising almost vertically, often so high they can no longer be seen from the ground, singing continuously, for many minutes before dropping silently to the ground. On the ground the male displays to the female with wings drooped and tail and crest raised, she responds with quivering wings and spread tail.

The nest is cup-shaped, made of dried grass and built on the ground in grass; usually under a small tussock. Three to five eggs are laid; dull white, thickly speckled with brown; tapered-oval, about 24 by 17 millimetres. Incubation takes 11 to 13 days by the female; both parents feed the chicks which leave the nest after about eight days and fly after 16 days but are cared-for by the parents for up to 10 days after fledging. Two to three broods may be raised in a season.
Similar species: Australasian Pipit, Horsfield's Bushlark.
Also known as Eurasian Skylark, English Skylark, Common Skylark.