



Color the
VIOLIN!

The highest pitched member of the string instrument family. It has a shallow wooden body, four strings that are tuned with pegs, and it is played with a bow.



Skylark Eggs

Skylark Nest



The Eurasian skylark (*Alauda arvensis*) is a small passerine bird species. This lark breeds across most of Europe and Asia and in the mountains of north Africa.

It is mainly resident in the west of its range, but eastern populations are more migratory, moving further south in winter. Even in the milder west of its range, many birds move to lowlands and the coast in winter. Asian birds appear as vagrants in Alaska; this bird has also been introduced in Hawaii, Canada, United States, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, the Falkland Islands, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. The Japanese skylark is now usually considered a subspecies.

The bird is the subject of poems by Percy Bysshe Shelley (*To a Sky-Lark*), George Meredith (*The Lark Ascending*), Ted Hughes (*Skylarks*), and numerous others; and of pieces of music including *The Lark Ascending* by Ralph Vaughan Williams (inspired by the eponymous poem).

Color the
Skylark!

SKYLARK



Find the words!



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POEM
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SCOTT
VIOLIN
MEREDITH
MATIN
SYMPHONY
ESTERHAZA
BRITAIN

The Lark Ascending

Work by **Vaughan Williams**
Written by: **Betsy Schwarm**

courtesy Britannica.com

The Lark Ascending, tone poem by English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams, first performed in London on June 14, 1921. The piece was scored for solo violin and piano in 1914 and revised by the composer for solo violin and orchestra in 1920.

Vaughan Williams composed *The Lark Ascending* in 1914, in the early days of World War I, when a pastoral scene of a singing bird on the wing seemed far removed from reality. The war so occupied public attention that the premiere of *The Lark Ascending* was delayed seven years, until the violinist Marie Hall, for whom the piece had been written, gave the first performance of the orchestral version.

Vaughan Williams supplements the title's image of a bird ascending skyward by prefacing the score with excerpts from the George Meredith poem that served as his inspiration:

*He rises and begins to round,
He drops the silver chain of sound,
Of many links without a break,
In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake...*

*For singing till his heaven fills,
'Tis love of earth that he instils,
And ever winging up and up,
Our valley is his golden cup,
And he the wine which overflows
To lift us with him as he goes...*

*Till lost on his aerial rings
In light, and then the fancy sings.*

Vaughan Williams's *The Lark Ascending* is a gentle, introspective work. The solo violin flutters and soars, evoking the lark of Meredith's poem. The winds and supporting strings float peacefully beneath the solo part in long and languid lines.

