

CHAMBERS, S. 2009.

Birds of New Zealand - Locality Guide. 3rd edn.

Arun Books, Orewa, New Zealand.

Greenfinch: pp 260-261.



GREENFINCH

Family Fringillidae

Species *Carduelis chloris*

Common name Greenfinch

Status Introduced

Abundance Common

Size 150 mm (cf sparrow 145 mm, Chaffinch 150 mm)

Habitat Found everywhere from suburban gardens to rural pastureland, and especially in areas which are hedged. It does not penetrate heavy forest.

Worldwide range Europe to western Asia.

New Zealand range Found throughout New Zealand and on some offshore islands.

Description – male

Face Grey, a black marking going from the upper bill to behind the eye. **Eyebrows** Bright yellow. **Upperparts** Olive-green. **Wings** Primaries are black on outer feathers, grey on inner feathers, with a bright yellow bar in middle of wing. **Underwings** Grey and yellow. **Breast** Yellowish-green above with yellow patch on belly. **Underparts** Olive-green. **Rump** Yellowish. **Tail** Greyish inner feathers, yellowish outer feathers, with a dark tip. **Undertail** Yellow on outer feathers and grey on the inner feathers. **Eye** Brown.

Description – female

Upper and underparts Similar to the male bird but much duller.

Conspicuous features

- Dark eye.
- Green head and back.
- Yellow leading edge of wing.

Conspicuous characteristics

- Sings from high in conifers.
- Flocks in winter and spring with other finches.
- During the breeding season, singing males will fly from perch to perch assuming bat-like flight with wings beaten in a staccato fashion.
- Tail is slightly forked and slightly splayed in flight.

Call Song delivered by the male bird is a drawn out “tuusweet”. Also a melodious “chichichichi – tuu tuu tu” warble. Songs are uttered from high perches especially from conifer trees. Note that its song is often mistaken for that of the Long-tailed Cuckoo. The Greenfinch though, has notes arranged on a descending scale while the cuckoo has notes arranged on an ascending scale. Song period starts in September and continues into February.

Nest A bulky cup-like structure of twigs, leaves and moss, lined with fine dry grass, wool or feathers, placed near the top of a bush, in a fork or on a branch. Up to 5 pale blue, brown-blotched eggs are laid.

Where to find

Common in most areas away from tall forest. Likely on the edge of forests only. They prefer conifer trees.