

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.