



INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE BIRDS TO LOOK OUT FOR IN THIS YEAR'S BFBC



BARN OWL

In winter, a barn owl can have a home range as big as 5,000 hectares

– that's more than a mind-boggling 7,000 football pitches! British barn owls also feed largely on field voles,



BLACKBIRD

Up to 15 million blackbirds winter in the UK each year, so we're expecting

plenty in this year's BFBC.

The breeding population of blackbirds in the UK rose by 26% between 1995 and 2008.



BULLFINCH

The colourful bullfinch – now amber-listed, but hoping for a recovery. A

quiet, secretive, heavily-built finch, you're likely to spot one among the branches or in dense undergrowth.



CHAFFINCH

One of the most widespread and abundant birds in Britain. The chaffinch is

also known as the 'Bachelor Finch': the males winter near to their breeding territories, while the females go south.



CORN BUNTING

Can you hear a jangling of keys in the sky? It's probably the

call of a male corn bunting. It can be identified by its brown streaked body, dark eye and yellowish bill.



CURLEW

Often seen on winter estuaries, the curlew's bill and call make it easy

to spot. Known as a 'whaup' in Scotland, the curlew is in decline, with only 300 pairs south of Birmingham.



GOLDFINCH

Black wings with a band of yellow make the goldfinch one of our most

identifiable birds. Its song is accompanied by a display where the male drops its wings and pivots side to side.



GREENFINCH

Ringling has shown that greenfinch will move as much as 2,000km, but

British breeding birds seldom move more than 20km from their birthplace. Also known as the green linnet.



HOUSE SPARROW

The UK house sparrow population fell by 71 % between

1977 and 2008 – let us know if you spot them. The house sparrow is seen as a symbol of loyalty in Japan.



KESTREL

Kestrels are distinguished by their hunting behaviour which is to

hover at 10–20 metres (35–65ft) over open country and swoop down on prey. Kestrels have brown plumage.



LINNET

After a rapid decline in the late '60s and mid-'70s, linnet numbers are

stable. It is a slim bird with a long tail. The upper parts are brown, the throat is sullied white and the bill is grey.



MEADOW PIPIT

Also known as a mippit, mosscheeper, or titlark, the

meadow pipit is common in the uplands. It likes open habitats, or pasture, bogs, and moorland.



MOORHEN

A top ID tip is that moorhens have red bills, while coots don't. Known

as the skitty coot, marsh hen and common gallinule, the moorhen is one of the world's most common birds.



REDWING

Look out for this small thrush with creamy strip above the eye and

orange-red flank patches – it's a redwing. Unlike many thrushes, redwings tend to nest on the ground.



REED BUNTING

As they spend winter in search of seeds, they're a regular on the BFBC. Reed

buntings love wild bird seed crops. If seed mixes are attracting them to your farm, be proud of it and take part.



SKYLARK

An inspiration for poets, the skylark is a much-loved feature of UK

farmland. It's a bird of open land and heath, known for the song of the male, which is delivered in hovering flight.



SONG THRUSH

Listen out for the repeated song phrases of a song thrush – it's an easy

way to distinguish them from blackbirds. So popular was the song thrush, that settlers took them to Australia to remind them of home.



STARLING

Confused with blackbirds, starlings are smaller, shorter tailed and when

close you can spot their vivid metallic colouring. They have strong feet, their flight is strong and direct, and they are very gregarious.



TREE SPARROW

The UK tree sparrow population fell by 93% between

1970 and 2008. Look out for its chestnut brown head and white cheeks and collar when you're out counting this February.



YELLOW-HAMMER

Its distinctive song is often represented as 'a little bit of

bread and no cheese'. The male yellowhammers boast a bright yellow head, brown back streaked with black, and chestnut rump.