

Chaffinch

As our climate changes, gardens are becoming even more vital to wildlife and people. They can provide shade, absorb carbon, soak up flood water and help to cool buildings. A well managed network of gardens stretching across the Sussex would also help wildlife to move more freely and adapt to climate change enabling us to create a living landscape

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Nest-site necessities

The chaffinch builds one of the neatest nests of all British birds. It is usually in a fork of a tree beside the trunk and is decorated on the outside with lichens so as to make it almost, if not quite, invisible.



Chaffinch / Alan Price,
Gatehouse

Building materials

Grasses, roots and moss form the main bulk and the exterior camouflage is sometimes uncanny. Wool or dog hairs may be used as lining.

Chick care

The chicks are fed insects, mainly caterpillars, therefore a territory with a varied



Emperor moth larva / Graeme Lyons

habitat with some native trees in it can offer good feeding opportunities.

Special dietary requirements

Seeds put out in the breeding season may be taken by the adults, allowing all the natural foods to be fed to the chicks. Just before they fledge, and while they are being cared for out of the nest, the young may be fed seeds by their parents.

Night shelter

Resident pairs may roost in their territories throughout the year – the hen on the nest during breeding season. The fledged young may join the immigrant birds during the winter in communal roosts in dense, prickly cover.

The ideal territory

Chaffinches thrive in areas that have two or three song-posts for display in areas such as woodland, farmland with a good network of hedges or mature gardens. The pair will live within it all year round – if it's not good, in winter, they'll still be nearby.



Chaffinch / Alan Price, Gatehouse

When it's all happening

Eggs are usually laid in late April or early May, and young fledged by early June.



Chaffinch / Paul Stevens

Breeding Starts: April

Number of Clutches: 1-2

Number of Eggs: 2-8

Incubation Days: 10-16

Fledge Days: 11-18

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