

RFNS Frequency of Bullfinch Records 2009-2017

A few years ago, in an article by Simon Barnes, the Times journalist and Birdwatcher, it was stated that you would be lucky to get a good sighting of a bullfinch as they shoot off as soon as you approach, only showing their white rump before disappearing into deep shrubbery. They are easily overlooked in summer as they are quiet and unobtrusive.

I thought at the time that he ought to visit some of our Rochdale gardens where bullfinches were becoming a common sight and where they were definitely not skulking in the bushes but were clearly visible on our bird tables and feeders throughout the year!

The B.T.O. says:

Population decline

The UK population is currently 36% lower than in 1967. It is believed that deteriorating habitat quality, caused by agricultural intensification and reduced diversity in woodlands have played a part in these declines.

Conservation concern

Bullfinch is currently listed as an 'amber' species of conservation concern because of its recent breeding population decline.

Bullfinch numbers declined steeply during 1977–82 especially in farmland. The decline eased during the mid-1980s and has upturned since 2000. However, the UK numbers are currently 36% lower than in 1967.

All records of Bullfinches from all sites in Rochdale and Surrounding Area, including RFNS Observers' gardens:										
Taxon	Vernacular	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Pyrrhula pyrrhula	Bullfinch	47	69	64	74	82	85	105	101	113
All records of Bullfinches from RFNS Observers' gardens:										
Pyrrhula pyrrhula	Bullfinch	43	64	55	63	75	80	94	92	100
Difference i.e. Bullfinches seen in non- garden sites		4	5	9	11	7	5	11	9	13

Perhaps our gardens are helping to halt the decline - though in interpreting the records, remember that each garden Record may be the same bird(s) seen every month over the year. 24 gardens have recorded Bullfinches at least twice - some many more times.