

# Species of the Month Dec/Jan

## Brambling

Fringilla montifringilla

The Brambling is a winter visitor to Britain, occurring usually between October to April. It is very similar to the much commoner Chaffinch and is often found feeding among them.

### What to look for

- Size and shape of a Chaffinch but with more forked tail.
- Orange breast and across the shoulders
- A white rump, usually seen in flight.
- White underside
- Mottled head and back (in Winter)
- Dark spots on flank
- Does *not* have white outer tail feathers



This photo illustrates the Bramblings' white rump with mottled head and back. Also note the dark spots on the birds flank and the striking yellow beak.

If you see any brambling don't forget to let us know. Remember we need the what, where, when and how many so that we can report to GMEU.

Email [fnspublicity@gmail.com](mailto:fnspublicity@gmail.com) or bring your results to the next indoor meeting.

### Did you know?

The Brambling, in common with most birds, moults after breeding and so in autumn its feathers are at their newest but also drabbest. As winter progresses the colours become brighter and a male bird in spring time is particularly stunning. Its head and back will be shiny black instead of the winter mottled look.

Females are harder to distinguish from Chaffinch but do have the white rump.

Chaffinch and Brambling also have very different calls.

They can be seen in open woodland and farmland, and in the garden.

Brambling in the UK are closely associated with the Chaffinch, often seen flocking together in large gatherings on agricultural land. In winter the Brambling is widespread throughout Europe, frequently gathering in flocks of several thousand to feed, however only relatively low numbers visit the UK. It arrives on the East coast before spreading throughout most of the UK, apart from N and W of Scotland.

In winter they feed on seed but in summer eat insects.

They breed in Northern Europe and Scandinavia, although they are known to have bred in the UK.