



Linnet (*Carduelis cannabina*)

Habitat

Linnets use a varied habitat including areas of scrub, wasteland, heath and urban areas. On farmland, linnets can be found wherever there is a plentiful supply of seeds.

Food

Linnets and their chicks rely almost entirely on seeds throughout the year. During the winter, adults will favour stubbles and field margins where weed seed and spilt grains are abundant. Dandelion seeds in pasture are particularly important. Chicks feed on weed seeds and unripe oilseed rape grains.

Nesting

Linnets typically nest in thorn hedges. They are usually 0 to two metres up in thick, well-maintained thorn hedges, bramble patches and areas of scrub. Gorse bushes are also a favoured nesting site.

Song/call

“Tett-ett-ett” - their song is a mixture of short rattling syllables and their call is bouncing and nasal.

Beneficial management

- As linnets are particularly reliant on seeds, wild bird seed crops are extremely beneficial.
- Where possible, tolerate a few weeds such as dandelions in improved pastures and aim to maintain all areas of unimproved grassland.
- Allow a naturally regenerated green cover to develop on overwintered stubbles. Leave the green cover as late as possible into the summer before you cultivate.
- Retain areas of rough grass and bramble around the farm. Avoid being ‘over tidy’, as this will reduce feeding and nesting opportunities.
- Establish extended field margins in arable and grassland fields and manage these with a rotational cut to allow grasses and broadleaves to set seed and carry them through the winter.

