



for birds
for people
for ever

Wild birds and the law **ENGLAND AND WALES**

A PLAIN GUIDE TO BIRD PROTECTION TODAY



Wild birds and the law – the RSPB's guide to bird protection in England and Wales

From time to time, members of the public want to know about the laws relating to wild birds. It may be that someone has been shooting or trapping birds and it is uncertain if they have been breaking the law; it is not always easy to be sure without a simple reference to help. That is what this booklet provides. It is a summary of parts of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 which relate to bird protection in England and Wales and has been updated to take account of legislative changes introduced since 1981. There have been significant changes to the legislation protecting wild birds in Scotland and this is now covered by a separate publication, *Wild Birds and the Law Scotland*, available from the RSPB's headquarters in Scotland (see page 40 for contact details). An outline of the legislation in Northern Ireland can be obtained from the Environment and Heritage Service (see page 38 for contact details).

We have put into plain language the basic information contained in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and related legislation. This allows anyone to check the legal status of a bird, whether or not an offence has been committed, or if a proposed action would be against the law, without being overwhelmed by 'legal language'. Inevitably, there are long lists of birds, which must be carefully checked to make sure of the exact position relating to a particular species.

We have arranged these alphabetically, for ease of reference, but urge that you use them with care. **The essential fact to remember is that *all* wild birds, their nests and their eggs are protected by law unless a special exception is made in the Act.** Remember that many of the rarer birds have additional protection, which means that they may not be disturbed at or around the nest during the breeding season.

We have also listed and answered some of the most frequent questions that people ask about birds and their legal status, so that most of what you want to know should be easily found within this booklet. It is not intended to be a substitute for the actual legislation nor the definitive listing of relevant licences. For further information, please consult the relevant government department. Contact details of relevant agencies and useful websites can be found on page 38.

Import and export

This booklet does not cover the regulations on the import and export of birds. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) Animal Health Division should be consulted for further information on licences to allow the import of birds. Certain species will require documentation under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) for entry into the EU and the Wildlife Trade and Licensing Branch of Defra will be able to provide the necessary assistance. E-mail wildlife.licensing@defra.gsi.gov.uk

NB As from 1 July 2007, the importation of all wild-caught birds from outside the EU is banned with very limited exceptions under EU health regulations. For further information, see <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/int-trde>

Contents

Introduction	2
Abbreviations	2
Definitions	2
Birds	4
Basic protection given to wild birds	4
Sale of live wild birds and their eggs	4
Sale of dead wild birds	4
Exhibition of wild birds	4
Prohibited methods of killing and taking wild birds	5
Captive birds: size of cage	5
Deliberate release of species into the wild	5
Attempting to commit an offence	5
Exceptions	5
Registration of birds kept in captivity	7
Powers of the Secretary of State and Welsh Assembly Government	7
Enforcement and penalties	7
Habitat	8
Areas of Special Protection	8
Protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest	8
Hedgerow Regulations 1997	9
High hedges	10
Cross compliance	10
How to report crimes against wild birds	11
The Wildlife Incident Investigations Scheme (WIIS)	12
The Schedules	14
Checklist of legal status of selected British birds	17
Licences	27
Trade in Endangered Species	32
The EU CITES Regulations	32
Control of Trade in Endangered Species (Enforcement) Regulations 1997 (COTES)	32
Use of lead in gunshot	33
Prohibition of shooting on Sundays	33
Table of Areas of Special Protection	34
Frequently asked questions about birds and the law	35
Useful addresses	38

Introduction

The primary legislation affecting wild birds in England and Wales is the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, hereafter referred to as 'the Act' (subject to a number of amendments including the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006). The basic principle of this Act is that all wild birds, their nests, and eggs are protected by law and some rare species are afforded additional protection from disturbance during the breeding season. There are certain exceptions to this notably in respect of wildfowl, game birds and various species that may cause damage.

The following serves to provide a straightforward means of checking the legality of any activity affecting wild birds. Before taking any action, the reader should check that the information presented here is up to date by going to the actual legislation or consulting the relevant government department. Copies of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (not updated) can be obtained from The Stationery Office (see 'Useful addresses', page 38). An updated version of the legislation can be found at www.statutelaw.gov.uk (although please note that this may not include the most recent amendments e.g. NERC Act).

The Police have the prime responsibility for enforcing this legislation and every Police Force now has at least one Wildlife Crime Officer (WCO) whose duties include dealing with wildlife issues.

If you have difficulty in interpreting any

part of the Act or believe you have witnessed an offence, then contact the RSPB's Investigations Section, The RSPB, The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL (Tel: 01767 680551; Fax: 01767 691052). The RSPB's Investigations Section has extensive experience of investigating offences against wild birds and regularly assists the Police and other agencies with these matters. The RSPB's Investigations Section also maintains a unique database of crimes against wild birds and would be grateful to receive any information of offences against wild birds (see more information on reporting offences on page 11). Alternatively offences can be reported via the RSPB website (www.rspb.org.uk/birdlaw).

Abbreviations

The following are used regularly throughout the text:

CCW	Countryside Council for Wales
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
NE	Natural England
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government
WCO	Wildlife Crime Officer

Definitions

The following list gives an outline of definitions included in the Act (1–3) and others (4–14), which may be helpful:

- 1 Wild bird:** means any bird of a species which is resident in or a visitor to the European territory of any Member State, in a wild state but does not include poultry, or any

game bird (except in certain sections dealing with prohibited methods and the issue of licences). Game birds include pheasant, partridges, black grouse, red grouse and ptarmigan. These species are covered by the Game Acts but details of their close seasons can be found in the checklist of legal status on pages 17–26.

- 2 **Occupier** (see Authorised person): includes any person having the right of hunting, shooting or fishing on any land other than the foreshore.
- 3 **Authorised person**: the owner or occupier of any land on which the action takes place or any person authorised by the owner or occupier. It can also be someone authorised in writing by a local authority, NE, CCW or local fisheries committee, a water authority or any other statutory water undertakers. Because such a person is authorised under the Act, does not confer right of entry on any land.
- 4 **Close season**: inclusive dates of a period when a bird is fully protected; outside that period it may be killed or taken.
- 5 **Licence**: issued by one of a number of authorities, including Defra, NE, CCW, WAG to permit an otherwise illegal act. The licence will specify precisely what action is permitted (see page 27).
- 6 **General Licence**: issued by NE or WAG to permit authorised persons to carry out an otherwise illegal act. Such licences need not be applied for (details on page 27).
- 7 **Schedule 1 birds**: rare species afforded additional protection,

which cannot be intentionally or recklessly disturbed when nesting (see page 14).

- 8 **Schedule 2, Part I birds**: sporting or quasi-sporting birds which may be shot for a limited period in the winter (see page 15).
- 9 **Schedule 2, Part II has now been deleted from the Act**. Control of some of the 13 species previously listed is now covered by General Licences (see page 27).
- 10 **Schedule 3, Part I birds**: species which may be sold alive at all times if ringed with an approved ring and bred in captivity (see page 15). The sale of most other captive-bred species is covered by General Licences (see page 27).
- 11 **Schedule 3, Part II birds**: species which may be sold dead at all times (see page 15).
- 12 **Schedule 3, Part III birds**: species which may be sold dead from 1 September to 28 February (see page 15).
- 13 **Schedule 4 birds**: birds which must be registered and ringed if kept in captivity (see page 16).
- 14 **Schedule 9 birds**: birds which are established in the wild in Britain and which cannot be released from captivity (see page 16).

There are over 600 species of wild bird recorded in the European Union (EU) but the Schedules only deal with a small number of these. Please remember that all birds except those listed on Schedule 2, Part I and game birds are fully protected throughout the year unless catered for by a licence.

Birds

Basic protection given to wild birds

All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law and it is an offence, with certain exceptions, to:

- a) intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird
- b) intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built (NB: The nests of white-tailed eagle, osprey and golden eagle are protected all year round)
- c) intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird
- d) have in one's possession or control any wild bird (dead or alive), part of a wild bird or egg of a wild bird which has been taken in contravention of the Act, the Protection of Birds Act 1954 or the law of any EU Member State (which implements the EU Birds Directive 1979)
- e) intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building or is in, on or near a nest with eggs or young; or disturb the dependent young of such a bird
- f) have in one's possession or control any birds of a species listed on Schedule 4 of the Act (see page 16) unless registered and ringed in accordance with the Secretary of State's regulations (contact Defra for details).

Sale of live wild birds and their eggs

It is an offence to sell, offer for sale, possess for sale, transport for sale or

advertise for sale any live wild bird, or the egg of any wild bird. Exceptions include:

- a) live wild birds listed on Schedule 3 Part I providing they are captive-bred and fitted with an approved close-ring in accordance with Statutory Instrument (SI) 1982/1220 and issued by the British Bird Council (BBC) or the International Ornithological Association (IOA)
- b) most other live wild birds providing they are captive-bred and covered by a General Licence, which will specify a number of conditions which must be complied with.

Sale of dead wild birds

The sale of most dead wild birds, other than those listed on Schedule 3, Part II or III, is permitted under the terms of General Licences (see page 27). These will usually require documentary evidence to accompany the sale to show that the bird was lawfully removed from the wild or bred in captivity. The seller must keep certain records concerning the sale of the bird, including the cause of death, and these must be sent to the specified agency by 31 December each year. Birds listed on Schedule 3, Part III may be sold dead from 1 September to 28 February. Game birds may only be sold dead during the open season and for a period of up to 10 days immediately after the end of that season. See checklist of legal status (pages 17–26) for details.

Exhibition of wild birds

It is an offence to show at any competition, or in premises in which a

competition is being held, any live wild bird unless listed on Schedule 3 Part I if captive-bred and fitted with an approved close-ring as defined by SI 1982/1220; or covered by a General Licence.

Prohibited methods of killing and taking wild birds

The following methods of killing, injuring or taking wild birds are normally prohibited, except under licence: any springe, trap, gin, snare, hook and line, electrical device, poisonous or stupefying substance, net, gas or smoke, baited board, bird lime or similar substance or chemical wetting agent. The use of any sound recording or live bird as a decoy if tethered, blinded or maimed is illegal as is the use of bows, crossbows, explosives (other than ammunition for firearms), automatic or semi-automatic weapons, guns with an internal muzzle diameter greater than 1¼ inches, artificial lights or dazzling devices and sights for night-shooting.

It is also illegal to use any mechanically propelled vehicle in immediate pursuit of a wild bird for the purpose of killing or capture. It is an offence to 'cause' or 'permit' any such prohibited method. This applies where a person directs another to commit an offence or knowingly allows it to happen.

It is illegal to have any part in any activity involving the release of birds as immediate targets for shooting.

Captive birds: size of cage

In addition to the registration requirements for certain Schedule 4 species (see page 16) it is illegal to keep any bird (excluding poultry) in a cage or other receptacle which is not of

sufficient size to permit the bird to stretch its wings freely. Exceptions to this are if the bird is undergoing veterinary treatment, is in the course of conveyance or is being exhibited; in the latter case the time the bird is so confined should not exceed a total of 72 hours.

Deliberate release of species into the wild

It is an offence to release or allow to escape into the wild any bird which (a) is not ordinarily resident in, or a regular visitor to, Great Britain in a wild state, or (b) is listed in Schedule 9 (see page 16). This is to prevent possible threats to native wildlife by introduced species.

Attempting to commit an offence

It is an offence to attempt to commit any offence or have in one's possession anything capable of being used to commit an offence.

Exceptions

a) **Sale and competitive exhibition**

Birds listed on Schedule 3, Part I may be sold or exhibited competitively provided they have been bred in captivity and ringed in accordance with SI 1982/1220. The sale and exhibition of most other captive-bred species are now covered by General Licences (see pages 30–31).

b) **Control of birds classed as problem species**

These were previously listed on Schedule 2, Part II which has now been deleted from the Act. Those species are now afforded full protection under the Act. Control of

some species is now under the terms of General Licences (see page 27).

c) Killing of sporting or quasi-sporting birds

Any person may take, kill or injure in attempting to kill a bird listed on Schedule 2, Part I provided this is done outside the close season (for dates see page 15), not in an Area of Special Protection (see pages 8 and 34) or in a prescribed area on Sunday (see page 33). Areas designated as SSSIs may also have restrictions on the killing of species on Schedule 2, Part I.

d) Preserving public health or safety or preventing serious damage

An authorised person (see page 3) may kill or injure a protected bird (except one on Schedule 1) if they can show that their action was necessary for the purposes of preserving public health or public or air safety or preventing spread of disease.

For the purpose of preventing serious damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing timber, fisheries or inland waters, the killing or injuring of protected birds (except one on Schedule 1) by authorised persons is permitted provided that:

- i) they can show that there was no other satisfactory solution
- ii) if the killing or injuring was foreseeable a licence had been applied for as soon as practicable or an application for such a licence had not yet been determined
- iii) as soon as reasonably

practical after the killing or injuring Defra or WAG had been notified.

e) Treatment of injured birds

A person may take a wild bird if they can show that the bird was injured other than by their own hand and that their sole purpose was to tend it and then release it when no longer disabled; or he may kill it if he can prove it was so seriously disabled as to be beyond recovery (eg badly oiled seabird). Sick and injured birds listed on Schedule 4 (see page 16) should be registered with Defra immediately or passed to a licensed person who may keep such a bird, under the terms of a General Licence, for up to 15 days without registering it providing that Defra is notified, in writing, within four days of the bird coming into their possession.

f) Incidental destruction

It is not illegal to destroy a bird, nest or egg if it can be shown that such an action was the incidental result of a lawful operation and could not reasonably have been avoided.

g) Trapping birds

An authorised person may legally use cage-traps or nets to take certain species as defined in the General Licences (see page 27). They may also be used for taking game birds for the purpose of breeding. A net may also be used to take wild ducks at certain decoys. The Larsen cage-trap has become very popular for trapping corvids, often using a decoy bird. These are legal for certain purposes providing the decoy birds are given adequate food, water,

shelter and a perch. All cage traps, including Larsen traps, must be checked daily and any non-target birds released. When not in use, they must be rendered incapable of catching birds. A licensed person may catch wild birds, normally using nets, to fit rings for scientific monitoring of wild birds.

Registration of birds kept in captivity

The main aim of registration is to monitor certain rare species kept in captivity to try to prevent the unlawful taking of these species from the wild. All species listed on Schedule 4 of the Act must be registered and ringed if kept in captivity. Provision is made in the Act for inspection of premises and registered birds. Full details of registration requirements may be obtained from Defra (see page 38).

Powers of the Secretary of State and Welsh Assembly Government

The Secretary of State or WAG has powers to add any bird to, or remove any bird from, any part of Schedules 1 to 4 for any area of England or Wales. However, where a close season is prescribed it shall commence on a date not later than 21 February and end on a date not earlier than 31 August. They may prescribe areas in England or Wales where the Sunday shooting of Schedule 2, Part I species is illegal (see page 15). They may also prescribe any period up to 14 days outside the close season where species on Part II Schedule 1 and Part I Schedule 2 cannot be killed; this is usually done during periods of extreme cold weather.

NB: Areas in which Sunday shooting is

made illegal by orders under the Protection of Birds Act 1954 remain in force under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Enforcement and penalties

If a Constable suspects with reasonable cause that any person is committing or has committed an offence involving a wild bird, then the Constable may without warrant:

- a) stop and search that person if the Constable suspects with reasonable cause that evidence of the commission of the offence is to be found on that person
- b) search or examine any thing which that person may then be using or have in their possession if the Constable suspects with reasonable cause the evidence of the commission of the offence is to be found on that thing
- c) seize and detain for the purpose of proceedings any thing which may be evidence of the commission of the offence or may be liable to forfeiture.

If the constable suspects with reasonable cause that any person is committing an offence relating to a wild bird, he may, for the purpose of exercising the powers listed above, enter any land other than a dwelling house.

Police and other persons authorised also have powers to request samples to be taken from birds in captivity to determine their identity or ancestry (eg DNA testing to check claims of captive-breeding).

A police officer may arrest a person for

any offence if certain conditions apply.

If a Justice of the Peace is satisfied there are reasonable grounds for suspecting offences under Part 1 of the Act have been committed, a warrant may be granted to any Constable (with or without other persons) to enter and search any premises for the purpose of obtaining that evidence.

Anyone found guilty of an offence is liable to a fine of up to £5,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months, or both. For releasing non-native species (see page 5) a person

shall be liable to a fine or two years imprisonment, or both.

Fines may be imposed in respect of each bird, nest, egg or thing. If more than one such item is involved then the total fine is determined as if the person had been convicted of a separate offence in respect of each bird, nest, egg or thing.

The Court must order the confiscation of any bird, nest, egg or other thing involved in the offence, and may order the confiscation of any vehicle, animal, weapon or other thing which was used to commit the offence.

Habitat

The damage or destruction of an area of habitat can have severe consequences for birds and other wildlife dependent upon it. This section describes the legislation relevant to the protection of habitats.

Areas of Special Protection

The Secretary of State may establish Areas of Special Protection (known as Sanctuaries under the former Protection of Birds Act) to which access may be restricted and in which all wild birds and eggs are protected at all times and may also be given protection against intentional (or reckless, in England and Wales only) disturbance. All Sanctuary Areas established under the Protection of Birds Act remain in force under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (see page 34).

Protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in England and Wales are

legally protected under Section 28 of the Act. There are over 5,000 SSSIs in England and Wales notified for their wildlife and geological features.

Offences

It is an offence:

- a) for an SSSI owner or occupier to carry out an operation listed within the SSSI notification without the written consent of NE or CCW
- b) for an SSSI owner or occupier not to comply with the terms of a management notice
- c) for a public body listed in the Act to carry out an activity on or affecting an SSSI without giving notice to NE or CCW
- d) for a public body not to consult NE or CCW when permitting, authorising or giving consents (under legislation that they are responsible for regulating) to other parties to carry out operations which are on an SSSI

- e) for any person to intentionally or recklessly destroy or damage any of the special interest features (for which the site was designated) of the SSSI, or intentionally or recklessly disturb the fauna. Doing so in the knowledge that the site is an SSSI incurs a greater penalty.
- f) to take down, damage, destroy or obscure a site notice or sign that has been placed on SSSI land by NE or CCW.

Reasonable excuse

It may be a reasonable excuse for not complying with the Act if:

- a) an operation is authorised by an appropriate planning permission or with certain consents which may be granted by some public bodies
- b) the operation was an emergency operation which was notified to NE or CCW as soon as practicable after the commencement of the operation.

Enforcement and penalties

NE and CCW are responsible for enforcing the Act when offences occur. Where they believe that an offence is being or has been committed, they can exercise a power of entry. In doing so a vehicle or a boat can be used to enter the land; a police constable can accompany them if they reasonably believe that they are likely to be obstructed; take with them equipment and materials needed for the purpose for which they are exercising the power of entry; take samples of the land and anything on it. Any person who intentionally obstructs a person acting in the exercise of this power shall be liable to a fine.

Anyone found guilty of an offence

listed above is liable to a fine ranging from £200 up to £20,000 at the Magistrates Court or an unlimited fine at the Crown Court (dependent on the offence).

Hedgerow Regulations 1997

The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 are intended to protect important countryside hedges from removal, ie uprooting or otherwise destroying a hedgerow. They are administered by the district councils in England, county councils or county borough councils in Wales, and by National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority. Consequently, suspected violation of the regulations needs to be reported to the appropriate authority.

It is illegal to remove most hedges without permission. Serious damage to the root system or over-maintenance resulting in the death of the hedgerow counts as removal. There are exceptions, including essential work carried out by the utility companies and emergency access. Proper maintenance, including drastic looking measures such as coppicing, severe pruning and laying is allowed without specific permission. A landowner who wishes to remove a hedgerow must serve a Hedgerow Removal Notice in writing on their local planning authority, who should assess the status of the hedge and whether or not it is protected from removal. Where the regulations apply, it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly remove a hedgerow, or to cause or permit its removal without giving notice, without acting in accordance with the terms of the notice given or without either having approval from the authority or

waiting 42 days from the date of the notice before starting work.

Landowners who are in receipt of agricultural subsidies will also have conditions regarding hedgerow protection put on them (see Cross compliance below).

For further information, please visit the RSPB's website at

http://www.rspb.org.uk/countryside/legalissues/hedge_protection/regulations.asp

High hedges

Part 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 gives local authorities powers to deal with complaints about high hedges bordering residential properties. The role of the local authority is to adjudicate on whether the hedge is adversely affecting the complainant's reasonable enjoyment of their property. If the authority decides that action is necessary, a formal remedial notice will be issued to the hedge owner which will set out what they must do to remedy the problem, and when by. Failure to carry out the order is an offence which could result in a fine of up to £1,000.

Garden hedges provide important nesting habitat for breeding birds. Both the authority issuing the notice and the hedge owner subject to it need to be aware of the potential for conflict with the Wildlife and Countryside Act, should the compliance period for carrying out remedial work on a high hedge fall within the nesting season. It is an offence to intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built (see page 4); therefore if a hedge owner is issued with a remedial notice

concerning a high hedge that contains active nests, that person cannot comply with the notice without committing a criminal offence. In this situation, the hedge owner should remind the local authority of their obligations under the Wildlife and Countryside Act and seek an extension to the compliance period. The RSPB recommends hedge-cutting should be avoided between March and August, when birds are nesting. For further information, contact Communities and Local Government at hedges@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Cross compliance

Since January 2005, farmers have had to comply with a set of environmental standards known as cross compliance in order to receive subsidies. Cross compliance consists of Statutory Management Requirements (SMR) and Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition standards (GAEC). The SMR encompass existing legislation, and require compliance with articles from 19 EC Directives/Regulations which address environmental, public, animal and plant health and animal welfare. The EU Birds Directive 1979 is one of these. SMR1 (in England) and SMR7 (in Wales) relate to wild birds and SMR5 (England) and SMR6 (Wales) relate to habitats. For further information, go to www.defra.gov.uk/farm/capreform/singlepay/crosscomply/index.htm

Any wildlife offence if subject to SMR controls could now result in loss of a subsidy payment in addition to legal action. In England, most inspections are carried out by the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) which can be contacted on 0856 603 7777. In Wales,

inspections are carried out by the Rural Inspectorate Wales, which can be

contacted on 01970 610216.

How to report crimes against wild birds

What you should do when you suspect someone is breaking the law depends greatly on the circumstances. If an offence is ongoing and if you are near a telephone, call the police at once or, alternatively, the RSPB's Investigations Section or, in cases of animal cruelty, the RSPCA, or for SSSI offences, NE/CCW. If a Police Wildlife Crime Officer (WCO) is not available to deal directly with an incident try to ensure they are made aware at some stage.

Incidents can also be reported on the RSPB website (www.rspb.org.uk/birdlaw) but this should not be the only method used if an immediate response to an incident is needed. The RSPB's Investigations Section has extensive experience of speaking to people with sensitive information and who may wish to remain anonymous and we will not pass your details to anyone without your consent. However, reporting information anonymously makes it significantly more difficult to investigate offences. If you wish to leave information on the website or on the RSPB out-of-hours answer phone, we would ask you to provide a point of contact in order that the matter can be discussed. If you still wish to remain anonymous or for your details to remain confidential with the RSPB, we will respect your wishes.

Where offences are ongoing, if you are alone and cannot call for immediate help, your actions should depend on the circumstances but it is important to ensure you do not put yourself or

others at risk. Incidents involving several possible offenders or the use of firearms will require particular care. If the person is being cruel or attempting to kill a bird illegally you could make them aware of your presence, which may be sufficient to stop them. If a bird appears seriously injured and no veterinary help is available consider trying to have it humanely killed. If safe, you could ask the offender for their name and address (however, they can refuse to give it to anyone except a Police Officer). If the person has a car it is very important to note the number plate and, if possible, the make. Note the person's description, paying attention to any distinctive characteristics about their appearance. Try to record or collect any evidence to support your contention that an offence has been committed. If the offender has not seen you, it may be appropriate to watch them and record their actions to make certain that you have really seen an offence being committed. If you have a friend with you, you could send them for the Police while you stay and watch what is happening. Try to make a written note of anything you see and ensure you keep these notes in a safe place.

In the case of suspected poisoned birds or animals, such as those lying next to a possible bait, again record and if possible photograph what is present. Ensure you record the exact location and if possible try to cover the items, perhaps with vegetation, to make them

safe. Do not handle anything as many poisons are extremely dangerous and can be absorbed through the skin. Defra has a freephone number for such incidents: 0800 321600 (see also WIIS below).

Certain spring-traps may be used legally to kill rats and weasels etc. These traps have to be set under cover to prevent injury to other animals. If a spring-trap is set out in the open, particularly if mounted on a pole, then make it inoperative by tripping it with a stick, keeping your fingers well away from the jaws of the trap. If you come across a spring-trap of any sort with a dead bird in it, leave it that way. If you have a camera, take a photograph of it in position and call the Police or the RSPB as quickly as possible.

Remember that certain cage-traps may be used legally to trap certain 'problem species' (see General Licences, page 27). These are legal providing any specified conditions are complied with. This normally includes a requirement for any decoy bird to be supplied with adequate food, water, shelter and a perch plus the trap needs to be

checked daily. You should not interfere with such traps, but if you are uncertain about their legality then contact the Police, NE/CCW or the RSPB's Investigations Section for advice.

Whatever the offence: armed with an accurate and detailed description of what you have seen, contact the Police or the RSPB. If you have contacted the Police in the first instance then please also inform the RSPB's Investigations Section at The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire (01767 680551) or one of the RSPB's country or regional offices. The RSPB will willingly assist if you or the Police require help.

In the case of damage to SSSIs, incidents should be reported to the local NE or CCW area team office (contact details available from www.naturalengland.org.uk or www.ccw.gov.uk) or contact the NE Enquiry Service (0845 6003078) or CCW (08451 306 229). You could also call the Police, who should pass the information to a WCO. When reporting the call ask for an incident number.

The Wildlife Incident Investigations Scheme (WIIS)

The Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme (WIIS) investigates the deaths of wildlife, including beneficial insects and some pets, throughout the UK where there is evidence that pesticide poisoning may be involved. The WIIS is used to monitor pesticide use after approval, so that product approvals can be revised if necessary. Evidence from the WIIS can also be used to enforce legislation on the use of pesticides and the protection of humans, food, the environment and

animals. There is a freephone number to report suspected wildlife poisoning incidents: 0800 321600.

In England, the WIIS is co-ordinated by the Pesticide Safety Directorate. In Wales, WIIS is run by the Rural Inspectorate Wales. A Wildlife adviser decides whether an investigation should be started; this permits the screening-out of incidents which may not involve pesticides. A field visit may be made to gather information

to help in identifying the cause of the incident and to secure evidence.

After acceptance of an incident, and a field visit, any carcasses are taken to a local Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA) Centre where a post-mortem examination may be undertaken. This may result in bacteriological or virological tests being undertaken to determine whether disease contributed to the deaths. In cases where the VLA believe poisoning to have occurred, post-mortem findings and relevant tissues from casualties are forwarded to the Wildlife Incident Unit at the Central Science Laboratory (CSL), York, where chemical analysis of the tissues is carried out. The results are collated and interpreted to assess the probable cause of the incident and whether any residues detected contributed to the death or illness of the animal.

The Schedules

Any species not mentioned in Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 is fully protected throughout the year (see checklist of legal status, pages 17–26)

Schedule 1 – Birds which are specially protected (see pages 3 & 6)

Schedule 1 – Part I

Specially protected birds

Avocet	Grebe, Black-necked	Sandpiper, Purple
Bee-eater	Grebe, Slavonian	Sandpiper, Wood
Bittern	Greenshank	Scaup
Bittern, Little	Gull, Little	Scoter, Common
Bluethroat	Gull, Mediterranean	Scoter, Velvet
Brambling	Harriers (all species)	Serin
Bunting, Cirl	Heron, Purple	Shorelark
Bunting, Lapland	Hobby	Shrike, Red-backed
Bunting, Snow	Hoopoe	Spoonbill
Buzzard, Honey	Kingfisher	Stilt, Black-winged
Capercaillie	Kite, Red	Stint, Temminck's
(Scotland only)	Merlin	Stone-curlew
Chough	Oriole, Golden	Swan, Bewick's
Corncrake	Osprey	Swan, Whooper
Crake, Spotted	Owl, Barn	Tern, Black
Crossbills (all species)	Owl, Snowy	Tern, Little
Divers (all species)	Peregrine	Tern, Roseate
Dotterel	Petrel, Leach's	Tit, Bearded
Duck, Long-tailed	Phalarope, Red-necked	Tit, Crested
Eagle, Golden	Plover, Kentish	Treecreeper, Short-toed
Eagle, White-tailed	Plover, Little ringed	Warbler, Cetti's
Falcon, Gyr	Quail, Common	Warbler, Dartford
Fieldfare	Redstart, Black	Warbler, Marsh
Firecrest	Redwing	Warbler, Savi's
Garganey	Rosefinch, Scarlet	Whimbrel
Godwit, Black-tailed	Ruff	Woodlark
Goshawk	Sandpiper, Green	Wryneck

Schedule 1 – Part II

Birds and their eggs specially protected during the close season, 1 February to 31 August (21 February to 31 August below high water mark) but which may be killed or taken at other times.

Goldeneye

Greylag goose (*in Outer Hebrides, Caithness, Sutherland and Wester Ross*)

Pintail

Schedule 2 – Birds which may be killed or taken

Schedule 2 – Part I

Birds which may be killed or taken outside the close season, 1 February to 31 August, except where indicated otherwise. NB: the close season for ducks and geese when below high water mark is 21 February to 31 August.

Capercaillie (<i>close season 1 February to 30 September</i>)	Goose, Pink-footed Goose, White-fronted	<i>season 1 February to 11 August</i>
Coot	Mallard	Teal
Duck, Tufted	Moorhen	Wigeon
Gadwall	Pintail	Woodcock (<i>close season 1 February to 30 September, except in Scotland where 1 February to 31 August</i>).
Goldeneye	Plover, Golden	
Goose, Canada	Pochard	
Goose, Greylag	Shoveler	
	Snipe, Common (<i>close</i>)	

Schedule 3 – Birds which may be sold (see also General Licences, page 27)

Schedule 3 – Part I

Birds which may be sold alive at all times if ringed and bred in captivity

Blackbird	Greenfinch	Siskin
Brambling	Jackdaw	Starling
Bullfinch	Jay	Thrush, Song
Bunting, Reed	Linnet	Twite
Chaffinch	Maggie	Yellowhammer
Dunnock	Owl, Barn	
Goldfinch	Redpoll	

NB: Most live birds can now be sold under the terms of General Licences (see page 27). Species on Schedule 4 are also required to be properly ringed and registered with Defra.

Schedule 3 – Part II

Birds which may be sold dead at all times.

Woodpigeon

Schedule 3 – Part III

Birds which may be sold dead from 1 September to 28 February

Capercaillie	Pintail	Snipe, Common
Coot	Plover, Golden	Teal
Duck, Tufted	Pochard	Wigeon
Mallard	Shoveler	Woodcock

Most dead birds can be sold (not for human consumption) under the terms of General Licences (see page 27).

NB: It is illegal to offer for sale at any time of the year any wild goose, moorhen, gadwall or goldeneye, although they are legitimate quarry species outside the close season.

Schedule 4

Birds which must be registered and ringed if kept in captivity.

Bunting, Cirl	Harrier, Montagu's	Serpent-eagle, Andaman
Bunting, Lapland	Hawk, Galapagos	Serpent-eagle, Madagascar
Bunting, Snow	Hawk, Grey-backed	Serpent-eagle, Mountain
Buzzard, Honey	Hawk, Hawaiian	Shorelark
Chough	Hawk, Ridgway's	Shrike, Red-backed
Crossbills (all species)	Hawk, White-necked	Sparrowhawk, New Britain
Eagle, Adalbert's	Hawk-eagle, Wallace's	Sparrowhawk, Gundlach's
Eagle, Golden	Hobby	Sparrowhawk, Imitator
Eagle, Great Philippine	Honey-buzzard, Black	Sparrowhawk, Small
Eagle, Imperial	Kestrel, Lesser	Tit, Bearded
Eagle, New Guinea	Kestrel, Mauritius	Tit, Crested
Eagle, White-tailed	Kite, Red	Warbler, Cetti's
Falcon, Barbary	Merlin	Warbler, Dartford
Falcon, Gyr	Oriole, Golden	Warbler, Marsh
Fieldfare	Osprey	Warbler, Savi's
Firecrest	Peregrine	Woodlark
Fish-eagle, Madagascar	Redstart, Black	Wryneck
Forest-falcon, Plumbeous	Redwing	
Goshawk	Sea-eagle, Pallas'	
Harrier, Hen	Sea-eagle, Steller's	
Harrier, Marsh	Serin	

Any bird, one of whose parents or other lineal ancestor was a bird specified in the above list.

Schedule 9

It is an offence to release or allow to escape into the wild any of the following species, or any bird which is not normally resident in or a regular visitor to Great Britain.

Budgerigar	Goose, Canada	Partridge, Rock
Capercaillie	Goose, Egyptian	Pheasant, Golden
Duck, Carolina Wood	Heron, Night	Pheasant, Lady Amherst's
Duck, Mandarin	Owl, Barn	Pheasant, Reeves'
Duck, Ruddy	Parakeet, Ring-necked	Pheasant, Silver
Eagle, White-tailed	Partridge, Chukar	Quail, Bobwhite

Checklist of legal status of selected British birds

This list indicates the legal status of all birds in the Schedules and many other common species of British birds. For a full checklist of British birds, please refer to *The Status of Birds in Britain and Ireland*, published by the Records Committee of the British Ornithologists' Union (Oxford 1971) and updated by reports in the BOU journal, *Ibis*.

Guide to terms used below:

'Protected at all times': (see pages 2–3)

'Specially protected': Schedule 1 birds (see pages 3 and 14)

'Must be registered and ringed if kept in captivity': (see page 16)

'General Licence': (see page 27)

'COTES 97': (see page 32)

Auk, Little	Protected at all times.
Avocet	Specially protected.
Bee-eater	Specially protected.
Bittern	Specially protected.
Bittern, Little	Specially protected.
Blackbird	Protected at all times. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with approved close-ring.
Blackcap	Protected at all times.
Bluethroat	Specially protected.
Brambling	Specially protected. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with approved close-ring.
Bullfinch	Protected at all times. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with approved close-ring.
Bunting, Cirl	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Bunting, Corn	Protected at all times.
Bunting, Lapland	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Bunting, Reed	Protected at all times. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with approved close-ring.
Bunting, Snow	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Buzzard	Protected at all times. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Buzzard, Honey	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.

Buzzard, Rough-legged	Protected at all times. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Capercaillie	Protected in close season. May be shot from 1 Oct–31 Jan. May be sold (dead) from 1 Sept–28 Feb.
Chaffinch	Protected at all times. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with an approved close-ring.
Chiffchaff	Protected at all times.
Chough	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Coot	Protected in close season. May be shot from 1 Sept–31 Jan. May be sold (dead) from 1 Sept–28 Feb.
Cormorant	Protected at all times.
Corncrake	Specially protected.
Crake, Spotted	Specially protected.
Crane	Protected at all times.
Crossbill (all species)	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Crow, Carrion	May be killed or taken (including destruction of nests/eggs) under the terms and conditions of some General Licences.
Crow, Hooded	Protected at all times.
Cuckoo	Protected at all times.
Curlew	Protected at all times.
Dipper	Protected at all times.
Divers (all species)	Specially protected.
Dotterel	Specially protected.
Dove, Collared	May be killed or taken (including destruction of nests/eggs) under the terms and conditions of some General Licences.
Dove, (all other species)	Protected at all times.
Duck, Long-tailed	Specially protected.
Duck, Tufted	Protected in close season. May be shot from 1 Sept–31 Jan (to 20 Feb in areas below high water mark). May be sold (dead) 1 Sept–28 Feb. General Licence permits sale of captive-bred birds and their eggs.
Dunlin	Protected at all times.
Dunnock	Protected at all times. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with approved close-ring.
Eagle, Golden	Specially protected. Nests protected all year round. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.

Eagle, White-tailed	Specially protected. Nests protected all year round. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Egret, Little	Protected at all times. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Eider	Protected at all times. General Licence permits sale of captive-bred birds and their eggs.
Falcon, Gyr	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Fieldfare	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Firecrest	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Flycatcher (all species)	Protected at all times.
Fulmar	Protected at all times.
Gadwall	Protected in close season. May be shot from 1 Sept–31 Jan (to 20 Feb in areas below high water mark). General Licence permits sale of captive-bred birds and their eggs.
Gannet	Protected at all times.
Garganey	Specially protected. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Godwit, Bar-tailed	Protected at all times.
Godwit, Black-tailed	Specially protected.
Goldcrest	Protected at all times.
Goldeneye	Specially protected during close season. May be shot from 1 Sept–31 Jan (to 20 Feb in areas below high water mark).
Goldfinch	Protected at all times. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with approved close-ring.
Goosander	Protected at all times.
Goose, Barnacle and Bean	Protected at all times. General Licence permits sale of captive-bred birds and their eggs.
Goose, Brent	Protected at all times.
Goose, Canada	Protected in close season. May be shot from 1 Sept–31 Jan (to 20 Feb in areas below high water mark). May be killed or taken (including destruction of nests/eggs) under the terms and conditions of some General Licences. General Licence permits sale of captive-bred birds and their eggs.

Goose, Greylag	Protected in close season. May be shot from 1 Sept–31 Jan (to 20 Feb in areas below high water mark). General Licence permits sale of captive-bred birds and their eggs.
Goose, Lesser white-fronted	Protected at all times. General Licence permits sale of captive-bred birds and their eggs.
Goose, Pink-footed	Protected in close season. May be shot from 1 Sept–31 Jan (to 20 Feb in areas below high water mark). General Licence permits sale of captive-bred birds and their eggs.
Goose, Snow	Protected at all times.
Goose, White-fronted	Protected in close season. May be shot from 1 Sept–31 Jan (to 20 Feb in areas below high water mark). General Licence permits sale of captive-bred birds and their eggs.
Goshawk	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Grebe, Black-necked	Specially protected.
Grebe, Slavonian	Specially protected.
Grebe, (all other species)	Protected at all times.
Greenfinch	Protected at all times. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with approved close-ring.
Greenshank	Specially protected.
Grouse, Black	Covered by Game Acts, which protect it in close season and allow it to be shot from 20 Aug–10 Dec.
Guillemot (all species)	Protected at all times.
Gull, Black-headed	Protected at all times. May be killed or taken (including destruction of nests/eggs) under the terms and conditions of the air safety General Licences.
Gull, Common	Protected at all times. May be killed or taken (including destruction of nests/eggs) under the terms and conditions of the air safety General Licences.
Gull, Great black-backed	May be killed or taken (including destruction of nests/eggs) under the terms and conditions of some General Licences. A General Licence also permits sale of eggs for human consumption in Wales.
Gull, Lesser black-backed	May be killed or taken (including destruction of nests/eggs) under the terms and conditions of some General Licences. A General Licence also permits sale of eggs for human consumption in Wales.

Gull, Herring	May be killed or taken (including destruction of nests/eggs) under the terms and conditions of some General Licences. A General Licence also permits sale of eggs for human consumption in Wales.
Gull, Yellow-legged	Protected at all times.
Gull, Little	Specially protected.
Gull, Mediterranean	Specially protected.
Harrier (all species)	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Hawfinch	Protected at all times.
Heron, Grey	Protected at all times.
Heron, Purple	Specially protected.
Hobby	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Hoopoe	Specially protected.
Jackdaw	May be killed or taken (including destruction of nests/eggs) under the terms and conditions of some General Licences. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with approved close-ring.
Jay	May be killed or taken (including destruction of nests/eggs) under the terms and conditions of some General Licences. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with approved close-ring.
Kestrel	Protected at all times. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Kingfisher	Specially protected.
Kite, Red	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Kittiwake	Protected at all times.
Knot	Protected at all times.
Lapwing	Protected at all times. May be killed or taken (including destruction of nests/eggs) under the terms and conditions of the air safety General Licences. Provision exists for licence to be issued to permit the taking of eggs before 15 April for food for human consumption.
Linnet	Protected at all times. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with approved close-ring.

Magpie	May be killed or taken under the terms and conditions of some General Licences. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with an approved close ring.
Mallard	Protected in close season. May be shot from 1 Sept–31 Jan (to 20 Feb in areas below high water mark). May be sold (dead) 1 Sept–28 Feb. General Licences permit authorised persons to take eggs for incubation before 31 March.
Martin (all species)	Protected at all times.
Merganser, Red-breasted	Protected at all times.
Merlin	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Moorhen	Protected in close season. May be shot from 1 Sept–31 Jan.
Nightingale	Protected at all times.
Nightjar	Protected at all times.
Nuthatch	Protected at all times.
Oriole, Golden	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Osprey	Specially protected. Nests protected all year round. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Ouzel, Ring	Protected at all times.
Owl, Barn	Specially protected. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with approved close-ring. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97. A General Licence permits the release of barn owls which have been taken in from the wild for treatment. This does not apply to barn owls bred in captivity.
Owl, Little	Protected at all times. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Owl, Long-eared	Protected at all times. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Owl, Short-eared	Protected at all times. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Owl, Snowy	Specially protected. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Owl, Tawny	Protected at all times. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.

Oystercatcher	Protected at all times. General Licence permits authorised persons to kill or take birds and destroy their nests and eggs at certain aerodromes in England.
Partridge (all species)	Covered by Game Acts which give protection in close season and allow shooting from 1 Sept–1 Feb.
Peregrine	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity. Subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Petrel, Leach's	Specially protected.
Petrel, Storm	Protected at all times.
Phalarope, Grey	Protected at all times.
Phalarope, Red-necked	Specially protected.
Pheasant	Covered by Game Acts which protect it in the close season and allow it to be shot from 1 Oct–1 Feb.
Pigeon, Feral	May be killed or taken (including destruction of nests/eggs) under the terms and conditions of some General Licences.
Pintail	Specially protected in close season. May be shot from 1 Sept–31 Jan (to 20 Feb in areas below high water mark). May be sold (dead) from 1 Sept–28 Feb. General Licence permits the sale of captive-bred birds and their eggs.
Pipit (all species)	Protected at all times.
Plover, Golden	Protected in close season. May be shot from 1 Sept–31 Jan. May be sold (dead) from 1 Sept–28 Feb.
Plover, Grey	Protected at all times.
Plover, Kentish	Specially protected.
Plover, Little ringed	Specially protected.
Plover, Ringed	Protected at all times.
Pochard	Protected in close season. May be shot from 1 Sept–31 Jan (to 20 Feb in areas below high water mark). May be sold (dead) from 1 Sept–28 Feb. General Licence permits sale of captive-bred birds and their eggs.
Ptarmigan	Covered by Game Acts which protect it at all times in England and Wales.
Puffin	Protected at all times.
Quail, Common	Specially protected.
Rail, Water	Protected at all times.
Raven	Protected at all times.
Razorbill	Protected at all times.
Redpoll, Lesser and Mealy	Protected at all times. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with approved close-ring.

Redshank	Protected at all times.
Redshank, Spotted	Protected at all times.
Redstart	Protected at all times.
Redstart, Black	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Redwing	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Robin	Protected at all times.
Rook	May be killed or taken (including destruction of nests/eggs) under the terms and conditions of some General Licences.
Rosefinch, Scarlet	Specially protected.
Ruff	Specially protected.
Sanderling	Protected at all times.
Sandpiper, Common and Curlew	Protected at all times.
Sandpiper, Purple, Green and Wood	Specially protected.
Scaup	Specially protected. General Licence permits sale of captive-bred birds and their eggs.
Scoter, Common and Velvet	Specially protected.
Serin	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Shag	Protected at all times.
Shearwater (all species)	Protected at all times.
Shelduck	Protected at all times. General Licence permits sale of captive-bred birds and their eggs.
Shorelark	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Shoveler	Protected in close season. May be shot from 1 Sept–31 Jan (to 20 Feb in areas below high water mark). May be sold (dead) from 1 Sept–28 Feb. General Licence permits sale of captive-bred birds and their eggs.
Shrike, Great grey	Protected at all times.
Shrike, Red-backed	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Siskin	Protected at all times. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with approved close-ring.
Skua (all species)	Protected at all times.
Skylark	Protected at all times.

Smew	Protected at all times. General Licence permits sale of captive-bred birds and their eggs.
Snipe, Common	Protected in close season. May be shot from 12 Aug–31 Jan; may be sold (dead) from 1 Sept–28 Feb.
Snipe, Jack	Protected at all times.
Sparrow, House	May be killed or taken (including destruction of nests/eggs) under terms and conditions of some General Licences in Wales.
Sparrow, Tree	Protected at all times.
Sparrowhawk	Protected at all times; subject to commercial use controls under COTES 97.
Spoonbill	Specially protected.
Starling	May be killed or taken (including destruction of nests/eggs) under the terms and conditions of some General Licences in Wales. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with approved close-ring.
Stilt, Black-winged	Specially protected.
Stint, Little	Protected at all times.
Stint, Temminck's	Specially protected.
Stonechat	Protected at all times.
Stone-curlew	Specially protected.
Swallow	Protected at all times.
Swan, Bewick's	Specially protected.
Swan, Mute	Protected at all times.
Swan, Whooper	Specially protected. General Licence permits sale of captive-bred birds and their eggs.
Swift	Protected at all times.
Teal	Protected in close season. May be shot from 1 Sept–31 Jan (to 20 Feb in areas below high water mark). May be sold (dead) from 1 Sept–28 Feb. General Licence permits sale of captive-bred birds and their eggs.
Tern, Black	Specially protected.
Tern, Little	Specially protected.
Tern, Roseate	Specially protected.
Tern, (all other species)	Protected at all times.
Thrush, Mistle	Protected at all times.
Thrush, Song	Protected at all times. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with approved close ring.
Tit, Bearded	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.

Tit, Crested	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Tit (all other species)	Protected at all times.
Treecreeper	Protected at all times.
Treecreeper, Short-toed	Specially protected.
Turnstone	Protected at all times.
Twite	Protected at all times. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with approved close-ring.
Wagtail (all species)	Protected at all times.
Warbler, Cetti's	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Warbler, Dartford	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Warbler, Marsh	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Warbler, Savi's	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Warbler (all other species)	Protected at all times.
Waxwing	Protected at all times.
Wheatear	Protected at all times.
Whimbrel	Specially protected.
Whinchat	Protected at all times.
Whitethroat (all species)	Protected at all times.
Wigeon	Protected in close season. May be shot from 1 Sept–31 Jan (to 20 Feb in areas below high water mark). May be sold (dead) from 1 Sept–28 Feb. General Licence permits sale of captive-bred birds and their eggs.
Woodcock	Protected in close season, may be shot from 1 Oct–31 Jan.
Woodlark	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Woodpecker (all species)	Protected at all times.
Woodpigeon	May be killed or taken (including destruction of nests/eggs) under the terms and conditions of some General Licences.
Wren	Protected at all times.
Wryneck	Specially protected. Must be ringed and registered if kept in captivity.
Yellowhammer	Protected at all times. May be competitively exhibited or sold if captive-bred and fitted with approved close-ring.

Licences

Licences to permit an otherwise illegal act may be granted by one of a number of authorities.

These may be granted to take, kill or disturb birds, for the following purposes:

- Scientific, research or educational (NE, CCW)
- Ringing, marking or photography of Schedule 1 species (NE, CCW)
- Conserving wild birds, re-populating an area with, or the reintroduction into an area of, wild birds, or conserving flora or fauna (NE or WAG)
- Protecting any collection of wild birds (NE or WAG)
- Falconry or aviculture (NE or WAG)
- Preserving public health or public or air safety (NE or WAG)
- Preventing serious damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing timber, fisheries or inland waters (NE or WAG)
- Taking a gull's egg for food (NE or WAG)

Licences may also be granted for: the sale of dead birds or their parts (NE or WAG); the public exhibition or competition of birds not listed on Schedule 3, Part I (NE or WAG); taxidermy (NE or WAG).

The appropriate authority shall not grant a licence for any of these purposes a) unless it is satisfied that there is no other satisfactory solution, and b) otherwise than on a selective basis and in respect of a small number of birds.

Licences may be specific or general; may be granted to persons of a class

or to a particular person; may be subject to compliance with any specified conditions; may be modified or revoked at any time and are valid for the period stated in the licence.

A licence which authorises any action in respect of wild birds must specify the species of wild birds in respect of which, the circumstances in which, and the conditions subject to which, the action may be taken; and must specify the methods, means or arrangements which are authorised or required for the taking of the action.

Guide to General Licences issued under the Act

Only brief details are given, the actual licences should be consulted for details of the precise terms and conditions, and notes on use. Copies of the licences can be obtained from the Government department responsible for their issue. Licences previously issued by Defra are currently available at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/vertebrates/gen-licence.htm> (see addresses page 38). Responsibility for issuing these licences has now passed to Natural England. To find out about licences issued by WAG, please contact the Nature Conservation and Biodiversity Branch on 01970 610216.

Licences which permit the killing of wild birds for the following reasons are issued by NE (England) and WAG (Wales):

Licences can only be relied on in circumstances where the authorised person is satisfied that appropriate

non-lethal methods of control such as scaring are either ineffective or impracticable.

- 1 Killing of birds to prevent serious damage or disease:** permits the killing or taking of certain birds, including the taking, damaging or destruction of their eggs and nests by an authorised person for the purpose of preventing the spread of disease and for preventing serious damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing timber, fisheries or inland waters. Precise details of control methods are outlined in the licence terms and conditions. This applies to the following species:

England

Canada goose
 Carrion crow
 Collared dove
 Great black-backed gull
 Lesser black-backed gull
 Herring gull
 Jackdaw
 Jay
 Magpie
 Feral pigeon
 Rook
 Woodpigeon

Wales

Carrion crow
 Collared dove
 Great black-backed gull
 Lesser black-backed gull
 Herring gull
 Jackdaw
 Jay
 Magpie
 Feral pigeon
 Rook
 House sparrow

Starling
 Woodpigeon

- 2 Killing of birds to preserve public health or safety:** permits the killing or taking of certain birds, including the taking, damaging or destruction of their nests or the taking or destruction of their eggs and nests by an authorised person for the purpose of preserving public health or public safety. This applies to the same species as noted in 1) above with the exception of jay (note difference in species for each licensing authority).
- 3 Killing of birds to preserve air safety:** permits the killing or taking of certain birds, including the taking, damaging or destruction of their nests or the taking or destruction of their eggs and nests by an authorised person for the purpose of preserving air safety. This applies to the following species:

England

On or in the vicinity of an aerodrome

Canada goose
 Carrion crow
 Great black-backed gull
 Lesser black-backed gull
 Herring gull
 Mallard
 Feral pigeon
 Rook
 Starling
 Woodpigeon

Within the perimeter of an aerodrome

Collared dove
 Black-headed gull
 Common gull
 Jackdaw

Lapwing

Magpie

Certain named aerodromes

Oystercatcher

Wales

Carrion crow

Collared dove

Great black-backed gull

Lesser black-backed gull

Herring gull

Black-headed gull

Common gull

Jackdaw

Jay

Magpie

Feral pigeon

Rook

House sparrow

Starling

Woodpigeon

Lapwing

- 4 **Conserving wild birds:** permits the killing of certain birds including the taking, damaging or destruction of their nests and eggs by an authorised person for the purpose of conserving wild birds. This applies to the following species:

Carrion crow

Great black-backed gull

Lesser black-backed gull

Herring gull

Jackdaw

Jay

Magpie

Feral pigeon

Rook

Information on using and keeping of live birds in cage traps: Under the above General Licences, cage traps may be used with a live decoy bird in order to entice other birds into the trap. The situation regarding the use

of these varies significantly between England and Wales.

England: Cage traps can be used by authorised persons in relation to General Licences 1 to 4 above. It permits the keeping or confining of a live carrion crow, magpie, rook, jackdaw or jay as a decoy bird (NB: jay excluded from air safety and public health/safety licence). The trap must be physically inspected at intervals of no more than 24 hours, except where this is not possible because of severe weather conditions, and any decoy bird must be provided with adequate food, water, shelter and a perch. Any non-target birds must be released immediately upon discovery. When a cage trap is not in use, it must be rendered incapable of catching or holding birds or other animals. Cage traps include the small portable Larsen cage trap.

Wales: Cage traps which meet the requirements of section 8(1) of the Act (which allow a bird to stretch its wings freely) can be used by an authorised person in relation to General Licences 1 to 4 above. The trap must be physically inspected at intervals of no more than 24 hours, except where this is not possible because of severe weather conditions. Any non-target birds must be released and when a cage trap is not in use, it must be rendered incapable of catching or holding birds. There are no welfare conditions for decoy birds in these cage traps. There is a separate licence relating to the use of Larsen cage traps which do not meet the

requirements of section 8(1) of the Act. This licence permits the keeping or confining of a live carrion crow, magpie, rook, jackdaw or jay as a decoy bird. The decoy bird must be provided with adequate food, water, shelter and a perch.

- 5 **Sale of gull's eggs, England: this licence has been revoked. Wales (WAG):** permits the sale and advertising for sale of eggs of great black-backed, lesser black-backed and herring gulls for human consumption providing eggs have been collected by an authorised person under the terms and conditions of the licence.
- 6 **Eggs in nest boxes, England (NE) and Wales (WAG):** permits the removal and destruction of eggs from nest boxes not in use by birds from 1 August to 31 January. Eggs removed may not be kept.
- 7 **Taking of mallard eggs, England (NE) and Wales (WAG):** permits the taking of mallard eggs for incubation before 31 March to assist in the successful rearing of birds that would otherwise have been unlikely to survive. Any bird hatched from an egg so taken must be released before 31 July in the same year; any unhatched eggs must be destroyed.
- 8 **Sale of captive-bred wild birds, England (NE) and Wales (WAG):** three licences permit the sale of most captive-bred wild birds other than birds on Part I Schedule 3 of the Act and certain species of wildfowl. Birds must be accompanied by documentary evidence of captive breeding and be fitted with a correct size close-ring. Species on Schedule 4 are also subject to registration controls. Species listed on Annex A of the European Regulations are also subject to controls under COTES (see page 32).
- 9 **Sale of wildfowl, England (NE) and Wales (WAG):** permits the sale of certain wildfowl (which regularly breed in captivity) or their eggs. Birds must have been bred in captivity from parents lawfully held and documentary evidence must accompany sale (see legal status checklist pages 17–26).
- 10 **Sale of dead birds and derivatives, England (NE) and Wales (WAG):** two licences permit the sale of most species of dead wild birds (unless for human consumption) providing that such birds were bred in captivity, or had not been illegally taken from the wild. These licences relate mainly to taxidermy. Each sale must be accompanied by documentary evidence that the bird was captive-bred or legally removed from the wild. The seller is obliged to keep certain records and submit a report of such sales by 31 December each year. Species listed on Annex A of the European Regulations are also subject to controls under COTES (see page 32).
- 11 **Exhibition of captive birds, England (NE) and Wales (WAG):** three licences exist. One permits the competitive exhibition of certain captive birds of species that have occurred as vagrants in Britain providing that they have been bred in captivity from parents lawfully

held in captivity. The other licences permit the competitive showing of other wild birds (not listed on Schedule 3 Part I) providing that they can be proven bred in captivity and are ringed with an individually numbered metal close-ring of the correct size.

12 Keeping disabled Schedule 4 birds

England (NE) and Wales (WAG): permits vets to keep Schedule 4 species which are receiving treatment for up to six weeks, without the need to register them.

13 Keeping disabled birds, England

(NE) and Wales (WAG): permits authorised persons (subject to certain conditions) and RSPCA Inspectors to keep disabled Schedule 4 species (see page 16) for the purposes of rehabilitation for up to 15 days without the need to register them.

14 Semi-automatic weapons, England:

this licence has been revoked and replaced with terms and conditions on specific licences. **Wales (WAG):** permits the use of semi-automatic weapons to kill certain species by an authorised person for the purpose of preserving public health, air safety or preventing serious damage to agriculture.

15 Artificial light and dazzling devices,

England: this licence has been revoked and replaced with terms and conditions on specific licences. **Wales (WAG):** permits the use of artificial light, sighting devices, mirrors, dazzling devices for the killing of feral pigeon, house sparrow and starling by an authorised person for the purpose

of preserving public health, air safety or preventing serious damage to agriculture.

16 Keeping captive-bred birds in show cages, England (NE) and Wales

(WAG): permits certain birds to be kept in small cages for training purposes. No bird shall be confined in such a cage for more than one hour in 24 hours and the minimum dimensions permissible are: 25.4 cm x 24.13 cm x 11.43 cm (height x breadth x depth).

17 Ruddy ducks, England (NE): permits

the killing or taking of ruddy ducks, including the taking, damaging or destruction of their nests or the taking or destruction of their eggs for the purpose of conserving flora and fauna. **Wales (WAG):** this licence does not exist.

Trade in Endangered Species

Worldwide trade in certain species of wild plants and animals is regulated by an international agreement called the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species 1973 (CITES). Over 160 countries including the UK are signatories to CITES. Trade is regulated by a system of permits and certificates that are issued when certain conditions are met. The implementation and enforcement of CITES in the UK is overseen by Defra and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), who are the Management Authority and Scientific Authority respectively.

Plants and animals subject to CITES controls are listed on two main Appendices:

Appendix I includes those species that are considered to be directly threatened with extinction by trade. Individual exemptions to allow trade in these specimens may be given in very limited circumstances, such as for scientific purposes or for legitimately captive-bred specimens. This Appendix includes, amongst others, species such as tiger, rhinos, pandas and certain parrots and some birds of prey.

Appendix II lists species that could become threatened with extinction if trade is not strictly controlled. Trade is only allowed in specimens that have been legally acquired. Many birds of prey are included on this Appendix.

CITES is implemented in the EU by the **Wildlife Trade Regulations** (principally Council Regulation (EC) 338/97) and enforced in the UK by the **Control of Trade in Endangered Species**

(Enforcement) Regulations 1997 (COTES).

The EU CITES Regulations
The EU Wildlife Trade Regulations introduced a number of stricter measures over the global CITES convention. Foremost among these was that specimens listed in Appendix I of CITES were placed into **Annex A** of the EU Regulations and a number of additional species of European concern were added. These included all native European birds of prey and owls. This means that within the EU, a kestrel is afforded the same level of protection in trade as an Appendix I specimen like a tiger or a panda.

The Regulations require people trading in such species to acquire an individual licence. These licences are referred to as 'Article 10 certificates'. The only circumstance under which the Article 10 requirement does not apply is if the specimens fall under a general sales exemption for the sale of worked items acquired before 1 June 1947 ('the fifty year rule'). Defra will only issue an Article 10 certificate for sale of an Annex A specimen providing certain conditions are met. For Annex A birds this would normally mean they have to be captive-bred and fitted with an appropriately sized, uniquely numbered leg ring.

Control of Trade in Endangered Species (Enforcement) Regulations 1997 (COTES)

In England and Wales, all Annex A birds are subject to stringent controls on sale and commercial display which

require an Article 10 certificate to be issued. Anyone wishing to sell, for example, a native European bird of prey or owl, or wanting to check on the legality of a particular sale, should consult Defra. These regulations make it an offence to purchase as well as to sell Annex A species. The controls apply to live and dead specimens including parts and derivatives. COTES

offences can carry sentences of up to five years imprisonment.

For information on the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations, an up-to-date list of protected species on the Annexes and information on whom to contact at Defra for information, see the following websites: www.eu-wildlifetrade.org, www.ukcites.gov.uk

Use of lead in gunshot

In England, restrictions on the use of lead gunshot are contained in the Environmental Protection (Restriction on Use of Lead Shot) (England) Regulations 1999 and in the 2002 amendments to those regulations (Statutory Instrument (SI) numbers 1999/2170 and 2002/2102). In Wales, the restrictions are contained in the Environmental Protection (Restriction on Use of Lead Shot) (Wales) Regulations 2002 (WSI number 2002/1730).

These regulations make it illegal to shoot certain species of waterfowl (coot, moorhen, all species of ducks, geese and swans) with lead gunshot. They also prohibit the use of lead shot below the high water mark and over certain wetland SSSIs identified for their (inter)national waterfowl importance – specific lists for both countries are available from the Office of Public Sector Information website www.opsi.gov.uk

Prohibition of shooting on Sundays

The following Orders made under the Protection of Birds Act remain in force under the Wildlife and Countryside Act. They prohibit the Sunday shooting of Schedule 2, Part I birds (quarry species) in the administrative counties of Anglesey, Brecknock, Caernarvon, Cardigan, Carmarthen, Cornwall, Denbigh, Devon, Glamorgan, Isle of Ely, Meirionnydd, Montgomery, Norfolk, Pembroke, Somerset, York North Riding, York West Riding and in the county boroughs of Doncaster, Great Yarmouth and Leeds. (1995, No 1286; 1956, No 1310; 1957, No 429; 1963, No 1700 respectively).

Table of Areas of Special Protection

The following areas are designated by Sanctuary Orders under the Protection of Birds Act. The extra protection afforded them remains in force under the Wildlife and Countryside Act where they are termed Areas of Special Protection.

Place	Protection given to all		Entry except by permit prohibited during period given	Order Number
	birds	eggs		
Abberton Reservoir, Essex	x	x	all times	1967 No 365
Berry Head and Berry Head (Southern Redoubt), Devon	x	x	15 Mar–31 Jan	1984 No 1471
Brean Down, Somerset	x	x		1968 No 562
Burry Estuary, West Glamorgan	x	x		1969 No 1795
Charlston's Pond, Billingham, Durham	x	x	part closed at all times	1968 No 564
Cleddau, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire	x	x		1970 No 72
Cley Marshes, Norfolk	x	x	all times	1966 No 536
Coquet Island, Northumberland	x	x	all times	1978 No 1074
Durleigh Reservoir, Somerset	x	x		1964 No 1989
Eastlington Lagoons, Humberside			1 Apr–31 Aug	1987 No 1163
Exe Estuary, Devon	x	x	all times	1951 No 901
Fairburn Ings and Newtown Ings, Fairburn, W and N Yorks	x	x(D)		1980 No 401
Farne Islands, Northumberland	x	x(D)	all times	1980 No 402
Foulney Island, Cumbria	x	x(D)	1 Apr–15 Aug	1980 No 1839
Gibraltar Point, Lincs	x	x(D)		1971 No 557
Havergate Island, Suffolk	x	x	all times	1961 No 1077
Hornsea Mere, Humberside	x	x		1980 No 403
Horsey Estate, Norfolk	x	x(D)	all times	1988 No 324
Humber Estuary, Yorks/Lincs	x		1 Sep–20 Feb	1955 No 1532 and 1963 No 1808
Poole Harbour, Dorset	x	x	parts at all times	1978 No 1259
Porth Reservoir, Cornwall	x	x		1964 No 1097
Southport, Lancs	x	x		1956 No 692
Tamar Lake, Devon/Cornwall	x	x		1960 No 2144
Trethais Island, Cornwall	x	x		1959 No 2009
Walmsley, Cornwall	x		all times	1961 No 865
Warren Shore, Needs Ore Point & Gull Island, Hampshire			all times (Gull Is) 1 Mar–31 Jul (Needs Ore Point and Warren Shore Is)	1984 No 578
Washington New Town, Tyne & Wear	x	x(D)		1980 No 404
Wheldrake Ings, North Yorks	x	x		1978 No 1259
Wicken Sedge Fen, Cambs	x	x		1957 No 1015
Wyne-Lune, Lancs	x	x		1963 No 2000

(D) denotes that it is an offence to disturb any bird while it is on or near a nest containing eggs or young.

Frequently asked questions about birds and the law

The following are some of the questions most frequently asked about bird protection. The answers are based on the provisions of Part I of the Act.

Q. My neighbour keeps a bird of prey. Do they need a licence?

A. No, but all British birds of prey (excluding buzzard, kestrel, sparrowhawk and owls) and some rare foreign species must be registered with Defra (see page 7). Any sale or commercial use of a European bird of prey would require an Article 10 Certificate issued by Defra.

Q. I have seen an advertisement offering barn owls for sale. Is this legal?

A. Yes, as long as they have been bred in captivity, are fitted with approved close-rings, and have an Article 10 Certificate issued by Defra.

Q. My local pet shop is selling bullfinches and goldfinches; surely they are protected?

A. Yes, they are fully protected but some British birds are bred in captivity by aviculturalists. Certain species may be sold if they have been captive-bred and are fitted with appropriate close-rings.

Q. I know a person who traps wild finches and keeps them in an aviary. Is this legal?

A. No. It is an offence to take British wild birds and to keep them.

Q. I have found an injured bird. Can I look after it?

A. Yes, but you must release it when it

has recovered unless it is included on Schedule 9 of the Act (see page 16). You should try to ensure the bird gets the appropriate treatment or pass it to a suitable individual or organisation to care for. In the case of Schedule 4 birds, only authorised persons can keep them for the purposes of rehabilitation without having to register them with Defra (see page 6).

Q. Is it against the law to collect wild birds' eggs?

A. Yes, except if you are an authorised person, such as a landowner, when you can take the eggs of a few named species under the terms of a General Licence (see pages 27–31). The maximum penalty for taking the egg of a wild bird is £5,000, or six months imprisonment, or both.

Q. Is it an offence to possess wild birds' eggs?

A. Yes, if they were taken illegally after 1954 in Great Britain or taken illegally in another EU Member State.

Q. I have a nest box in my garden and last year the birds deserted their eggs. Is it all right to clean the box out ready for next year?

A. Yes, but only between 1 August and 31 January. You are not allowed to keep the eggs.

Q. I have an old collection of birds' eggs. Can I sell it?

A. No. The sale or exchange of birds' eggs, irrespective of age, is illegal. If you do not want the collection, you could consider donating it to a museum.

Q. I have found a dead tawny owl on the road. Can I have it stuffed and keep it?

A. If the bird has died of natural causes you can pay a taxidermist to prepare and mount it for you to keep. The law requires you to explain your possession of a wild bird and it is worth keeping details of when and where the bird was found and its cause of death.

Q. I want to sell some stuffed birds, is this legal?

A. It is legal to sell dead wild birds under the terms of a General Licence (see page 30). The law requires certain records to be kept and the seller must supply documentary evidence that the bird had not been killed illegally or had been bred in captivity. The sale of European birds of prey, and certain other species, requires an Article 10 Certificate from Defra (see COTES page 32).

Q. Every year, a local farmer and his friends shoot the nesting crows on his land. Is this legal?

A. Yes, it probably is. Crows and several other species of birds are classed as pests and may be killed by authorised persons at any time of the year under the terms of a General Licence (see page 27).

Q. Each winter, the geese and ducks on a local lake are shot. Is this legal?

A. Possibly. Species of geese and ducks included on Schedule 2, Part I of the Act (see page 15) can be shot during the open season (1 Sep–31 Jan).

Q. I know someone who keeps some birds in very small cages. Surely this is cruel?

A. Possibly. The Act has regulations governing the size of cages. Normally, the RSPCA or the Police deal with offences of cruelty.

Q. Every year a neighbour knocks down house martin nests under his eaves while the birds are trying to build. Is this legal?

A. No. All wild birds' nests (with some limited exceptions) are fully protected and it is an offence to destroy them while in use or being built. In the case of house martins and swallows, a nest will remain in use throughout the summer until the birds leave on their autumn migration. Only after they have all left, sometime towards the end of October, can the nests be removed.

Q. I would like to take up photography. Is there anything I should know about photographing wild birds?

A. Yes, photography of wild birds in Britain is restricted by law if it would involve the disturbance of rare breeding birds (Schedule 1 – see page 14). If so, a licence is required from NE, or CCW. Further information on bird photography and the law can also be obtained from the RSPB.

Q. What can I do about youths with airguns shooting at birds in the local park?

A. They are committing a firearms offence by using an airgun in a public place. With the exception of 'problem' species, game birds and certain waterfowl (which may be killed or taken by authorised persons or during the open season) it is illegal to shoot at any bird.

Q. Every year our local council kills the pigeons in the town centre. Is this legal?

A. Yes, it probably is. Feral pigeons can be killed under the terms of General Licences issued to preserve public health (see page 28).

Q. If I want to report a wildlife offence to the Police, whom should I ask for?

A. Ask for the Wildlife Crime Officer (WCO). If they are not available, ask that the incident be brought to their attention.

Useful addresses

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)

Wildlife Licensing and Registration Section

Floor 1, Zone 17

Temple Quay House

2 The Square, Temple Quay

Bristol BS1 6EB

Tel: 0845 601 4523

(Licences for importing birds, also for registration matters.)

Defra

International Animal Health Division Service Delivery Unit

Ceres House

2 Searby Road

Lincoln LN2 4DT

Tel: 01522 563132

(Import licences in respect of health regulations.)

Wildlife Management and Licensing Service

Natural England

Government Buildings

Burghill Road

Westbury on Trym

Bristol BS10 6NJ

Tel: 0845 601 4523

(Licences in England for killing birds causing damage to crops, fisheries, or risks to public health or air safety.)

www.naturalengland.org.uk

Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) Department for Environment, Planning and Countryside

Cathays Park

Cardiff CF10 3NQ

Tel: 02920 825111

www.wales.gov.uk

(Licences in Wales for killing birds causing agricultural damage.)

Welsh Assembly Government Nature Conservation and Biodiversity Branch

Unit 9 Science Park

Cefn Llan

Aberystwyth SY23 3AH

Tel: 01970 610216

(For all other Welsh licensing information)

Natural England (NE)

Northminster House

Peterborough PE1 1UA

Tel: 0845 6003078

www.naturalengland.org.uk

(Licences for Schedule 1 bird nest examination and photography.)

Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)

Plas Penrhos

Fford Penrhos

Bangor

Gwynedd LL57 2LQ

Tel: 01248 385500

www.ccw.gov.uk

(Licences for Schedule 1 bird nest examination and photography.)

The Stationery Office

TSO

PO Box 29

Norwich NR3 1GN

Tel: 0870 6005522

Or try: www.opsi.gov.uk

(For copies of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (not updated), Lead Shot Regulations)

Environment and Heritage Service

Commonwealth House

35 Castle Street

Belfast

County Antrim BT1 1GU

Northern Ireland

Tel: (028) 9054 6533

www.ehsni.gov.uk

(For information on wildlife legislation in Northern Ireland.)

National Wildlife Crime Unit

North Berwick Police Office
50 High Street
North Berwick
East Lothian EH39 4HQ
<http://www.nwcu.police.uk>

In cases of suspected poisoning the following are contact addresses. Remember there is a freephone number: 0800 321600.

ENGLAND

Defra

Wildlife Incident Unit

Central Science Laboratory
Sand Hutton
York YO4 1LZ
Tel: 01904 462000

WALES

**Welsh Assembly Government (WAG)
Department for Environment, Planning
and Countryside**

Nature Conservation Branch

Crown Building
Cathays Park
Cardiff CF10 3NQ
Tel: 02920 825111

RSPB COUNTRY & REGIONAL OFFICES

UK Headquarters
The Lodge
Sandy
Bedfordshire SG19 2DL
Tel: 01767 680551

North Wales Office
Maes y Ffynnon
Penrhosgarnedd
Bangor
Gwynedd LL57 2DW
Tel: 01248 363800

South Wales Office
Sutherland House
Castlebridge
Cowbridge Road East
Cardiff CF11 9AB
Tel: 029 2035 3000

Midlands Regional Office
46 The Green
South Bar
Banbury
Oxfordshire OX16 9AB
Tel: 01295 253330

Eastern England Regional Office
Stalham House
65 Thorpe Road
Norwich
Norfolk NR1 1UD
Tel: 01603 661662

North England Regional Office
1 Sirius House
Amethyst Road
Newcastle Business Park
Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 7YL
Tel: 0191 233 4300

North West England Regional Office
Westleigh Mews
Wakefield Road
Denby Dale
Huddersfield
West Yorkshire HD8 8QD
Tel: 01484 861148

South East England Regional Office
Frederick House
42 Frederick Place
Brighton
East Sussex BN1 4EA
Tel: 01273 775333

South West England Regional Office
Keble House
Southernhay Gardens
Exeter
Devon EX1 1NT
Tel: 01392 432691

Northern Ireland Headquarters
Belvoir Park Forest
Belfast BT8 7QT
Tel: 028 9049 1547

Scotland Headquarters
Dunedin House
25 Ravelston Terrace
Edinburgh EH4 3TP
Tel: 0131 311 6500

East Scotland Regional Office
10 Albyn Terrace
Aberdeen AB10 1YP
Tel: 01224 624824

North Scotland Regional Office
Etive House
Beechwood Park
Inverness IV2 3BW
Tel: 01463 715000

South & West Scotland Regional Office
10 Park Quadrant
Glasgow G3 6BS
Tel: 0141 331 0993



PARTNERSHIP FOR ACTION AGAINST
wildlife crime

The Partnership for Action against Wildlife Crime (PAW)

The Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime (PAW) is a multi-agency body comprising representatives of all the organisations involved in wildlife law enforcement, including the Police, HM Revenue and Customs, representatives of Government Departments and NGOs such as the RSPB. It provides a strategic overview of enforcement activity; considers and develops responses to strategic problems; and looks at issues of strategic concern alongside the National Wildlife Crime Unit.

Its main objective is to support the networks of police Wildlife Crime Officers and HM Revenue and Customs Officers. Another objective is to draw attention to the growing problem of wildlife crime and to raise awareness

of the need for tough enforcement action. As a result, the scope of PAW's work includes awareness raising, publicity, training and education, as well as supporting investigations. For more information about PAW, see www.defra.gov.uk/paw

The National Wildlife Crime Unit (NWCU)

The NWCU was launched in October 2006. A multi-agency operation, the NWCU gathers, analyses and co-ordinates wildlife crime intelligence and supports enforcement activities of police and HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) officers in the UK, as well as liaising with enforcement agencies in other jurisdictions.

If you require assistance in interpretation of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 or with its enforcement, contact the RSPB's Investigations Section at our UK Headquarters.

For further information, or to report an offence, please visit our website at www.rspb.org.uk/birdlaw. You can also:

- Find out more about the work of the RSPB and other organisations to investigate crimes and bring offenders to justice.
- Learn about the offences committed and the implications of these crimes on wild bird populations.
- Download copies of this booklet and other publications produced by the RSPB's Investigations Section, including

Legal Eagle – the newsletter for police Wildlife Crime Officers, detailing prosecution news, police initiatives and changes in legislation

Birdcrime – an annual review summarising offences against wild bird legislation reported to the RSPB during the year.

Other leaflets on bird legislation available from the RSPB:

Wild Birds and the Law – Scotland

Information about Birds and the Law

Bird Photography and the Law

Birds and the Law: Some Questions Answered

Information about Birds and the Law – Northern Ireland

Code of Conduct for Birdwatchers

Investigations Section Fact File

A range of leaflets on individual bird species such as the barn owl and herring gull are also available.

For more information about
the RSPB, please contact:

The RSPB
UK Headquarters
The Lodge
Sandy
Bedfordshire SG19 2DL
Tel: 01767 680551

RSPB Cymru
Sutherland House,
Castlebridge
Cowbridge Road East
Cardiff CF11 9AB
Tel: 02920 353000

www.rspb.org.uk/birdlaw



The RSPB is the UK charity
working to secure a healthy
environment for birds and
wildlife, helping to create a
better world for us all.



We belong to BirdLife
International, the global
partnership of bird
conservation organisations.

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