

# 2016 Data summary

In 2016, the RSPB Investigations team recorded:

## Raptor Persecution (see also Appendix III, Appendix IV)

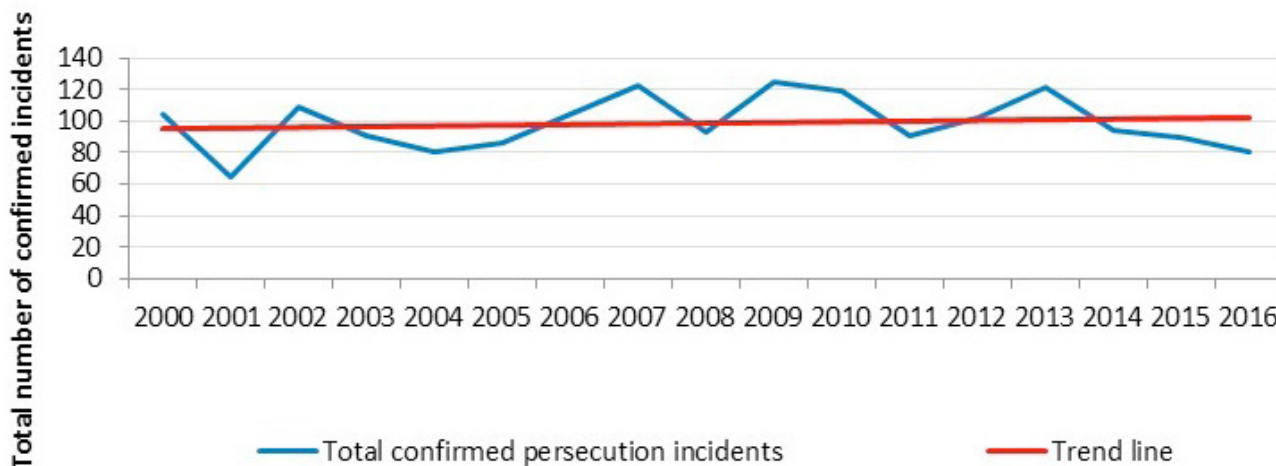
A total of 81 confirmed raptor persecution incidents. These can be broken down further into the following incident types:

- 40 confirmed shooting/attempted shooting. Victims included two hen harriers, seven peregrine falcons, 14 buzzards and 11 red kites.
- 22 confirmed poison (pesticide) abuse incidents. Victims included 13 buzzards, four red kites and two peregrine falcons.
- 15 confirmed trapping incidents. Victims included two buzzards, two kestrels and one peregrine falcon.
- One confirmed nest destruction incident involving a buzzard nest.
- Three confirmed “other” persecution incidents.

## UK breakdown of 2016 confirmed bird of prey persecution incidents:

- 53 (65%) of bird of prey persecution incidents occurred in England (in line with the five year average of 54).
- 13 (16%) occurred in Wales (higher than the five year average of eight).
- 9 (11%) occurred in Scotland (lower than the five year average of 27).
- 6 (7%) occurred in Northern Ireland (slightly lower than the five year average of eight).

**Raptor persecution clearly continues to be an ongoing issue showing no real improvement since 2000.**



We are able to map 80 of the 81 confirmed raptor persecution incidents to an Ordnance Survey 10km grid reference (see Appendix VII).

### Wild bird poisoning (see also Appendix IV)

53 reports of wild bird poisoning and related offences. There were 34 confirmed incidents, 22 of which involved raptors.

#### Other offences:

##### Trade in wild birds and taxidermy.

- 36 reports of illegal taking, possession or sale of wild birds other than birds of prey (predominantly finches).
- Four incidents of illegal taxidermy.
- 24 incidents involving illegal taking, possession or sale of birds of prey.

##### Egg collecting and nest robberies.

- Five confirmed (and 11 probable) egg or chick robberies from Schedule 1 species, including goshawk, peregrine falcon, Mediterranean gull, merlin, hobby and little tern. (See Appendix V).
- 22 reported incidents of egg collecting and egg thefts.
- Seven reports of eggs being illegally sold.

Note that figures featured in this report were accurate at time of extraction but are constantly being updated and may be subject to change.

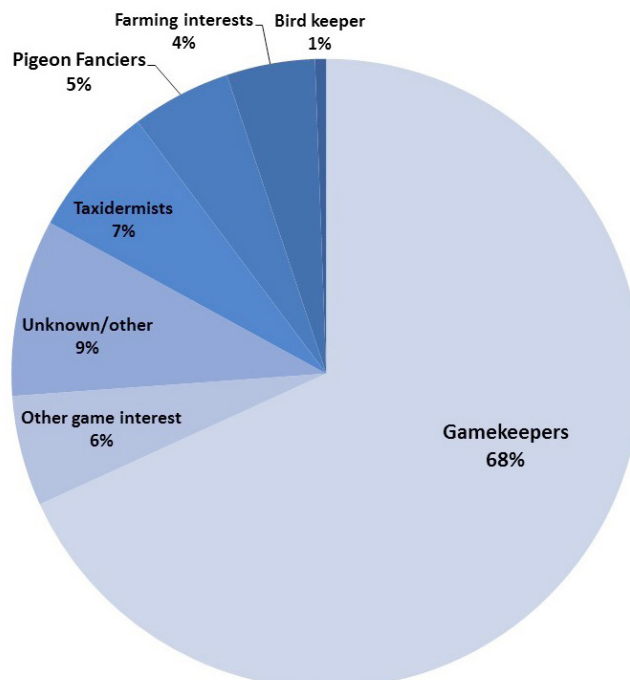
## Prosecutions

12 reports of bird crime prosecutions (see also Appendix VI). These involved a total of 32 charges; 28 (88%) of these resulted in a guilty outcome.

Fines for the year amounted to £17,070 and one person was given a prison sentence for their crimes (this was a suspended sentence).

For the first time in over three decades there were no raptor persecution-related prosecutions in 2016.

### The occupations/interests of the 176 individuals convicted of bird of prey persecution-related offences 1990-2015



# Appendix I

## Incidents reported to the RSPB 2011-2016

The table shows the number of incidents reported to the RSPB each year, for the categories specified.

Note that the 2016 figures do not include the full annual data set usually included from RSPCA (data from 2013 onwards has been delayed but may be included retrospectively). As a result, the figures for 2016 will be lower, in particular for categories involving taking, sale and possession of non bird of prey species.

Report type	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Shooting and destruction of birds of prey	213	210	177	189	196	160
Taking, sale and possession of birds of prey	36	26	30	16	28	24
Poisoning and use of poisoned baits	102	79	79	73	50	53
Import and export of live or dead birds	0	3	1	1	2	1
Taking, sale and possession of non-bird of prey species	84	65	36	44	28	36
Taxidermy and possession of dead wild birds	13	6	8	5	3	4
Egg collecting and egg thefts	33	27	17	28	21	22
Sale of eggs	5	7	3	11	12	7
Photography and disturbance	18	26	14	17	17	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>324</b>

UK Breakdown for above incident types in 2016	Count
England	241
Scotland	49
Wales	24
Northern Ireland	9
United Kingdom (Country unspecified)	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>

The data above were extracted on 6 September 2017 and were accurate at the time of extraction. However, the data are constantly being updated, so reported incident totals for previous years may have changed due to a number of belated reports or additional information received after the publishing date for *Birdcrime* of that year.

# Appendix II

## Regional breakdown of incidents reported in 2016

RSPB Region	County	Total
<b>Eastern England</b>	Bedfordshire	2
	Cambridgeshire	3
	Essex	6
	Hertfordshire	8
	Lincolnshire	7
	Norfolk	9
	Suffolk	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Central England</b>	Buckinghamshire	1
	Herefordshire	5
	Leicestershire	2
	Northamptonshire	1
	Nottinghamshire	2
	Oxfordshire	2
	Rutland	1
	Shropshire	6
	Staffordshire	3
	Telford and Wrekin	1
	Warwickshire	1
	West Midlands	4
	Worcestershire	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	
<b>Northern England</b>	Cheshire	6
	County Durham	21
	Cumbria	2
	Derbyshire	21
	East Riding of Yorkshire	4
	Greater Manchester	5
	Halton	1
	Lancashire	11
	Middlesbrough	2
	North Yorkshire	46
	Northumberland	16
	Redcar and Cleveland	1
	South Yorkshire	10
	Tyne and Wear	2
	West Yorkshire	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>153</b>	
<b>South East England</b>	Bracknell Forest	1
	East Sussex	2
	Greater London – Bexley	1
	Greater London – Greenwich	1
	Greater London – Hackney	1
	Greater London – Redbridge	1
	Greater London – Richmond upon Thames	2
	Greater London – Southwark	1
	Greater London – Sutton	1
	Hampshire	7
	Isle of Wight	1
	Kent	7
	Reading	1
	Surrey	2
	West Berkshire	5
West Sussex	5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	

RSPB Region	County	Total
<b>South West England</b>	Cornwall	3
	Devon	10
	Dorset	4
	Gloucestershire	13
	Plymouth City	2
	Somerset	3
	Wiltshire	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	Antrim	7
	Armagh	2
	Down	6
	Londonderry	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	
<b>East Scotland</b>	Aberdeenshire	11
	Angus	1
	Fife	8
	Perth and Kinross	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	
<b>North Scotland</b>	Highland	24
	Orkney	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>South and West Scotland</b>	Argyll and Bute	1
	Clackmannanshire	2
	Dumfries and Galloway	9
	East Ayrshire	1
	Renfrewshire	1
	Scottish Borders	14
	South Ayrshire	2
	South Lanarkshire	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	
<b>Wales</b>	Blaenau Gwent	1
	Cardiff	2
	Ceredigion	4
	Denbighshire	2
	Gwynedd	1
	Isle of Anglesey	4
	Merthyr Tydfil	2
	Monmouthshire	1
	Neath Port Talbot	2
	Pembrokeshire	2
	Powys	12
	Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	1
	Vale of Glamorgan	1
	Wrexham	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	
<b>UK</b>	<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>459</b>

Incidents where the location was not specified to County level (eg "England" or "UK") are not included. The regional breakdown in Appendix II includes all incidents reported to the RSPB. Figures of reported incidents in Appendix I are for the specified categories only. Therefore Appendix I and II figures will not correlate.

The data above were extracted on 6 September 2017 and were accurate at time of extraction.

# Appendix III

Confirmed and probable bird of prey and owl persecution during 2016

Persecution type	Month	Species	Confirmed	Probable	County	
SHOOTING	March	Sparrowhawk	0	1	County Durham	
		Red kite	1	0	North Yorkshire	
		Red kite	1	0	Oxfordshire	
		Red kite	1	0	County Durham	
	April	Buzzard	1	0	East Riding of Yorkshire	
		Peregrine falcon	1	0	Lancashire	
		Goshawk	1	0	Gloucestershire	
		Red kite	1	0	Oxfordshire	
		Red kite	1	0	North Yorkshire	
		Red kite	1	0	West Yorkshire	
		Buzzard	0	?	Londonderry	
		Sparrowhawk	1	0	Down	
		Sparrowhawk	1	0	West Yorkshire	
		May	Buzzard	0	1	Buckinghamshire
	Red kite		1	0	North Yorkshire	
	Red kite		1	0	West Yorkshire	
	Buzzard		0	1	Essex	
	Buzzard		1	0	Perth and Kinross	
	June	Red kite	1	0	North Yorkshire	
		Red kite	1	0	South Yorkshire	
	July	Buzzard (#1)	1	0	North Yorkshire	
		Buzzard	1	0	Herefordshire	
	Aug	Buzzard	1	0	North Yorkshire	
		Peregrine falcon	1	0	Powys	
		Peregrine falcon	1	0	Powys	
		Sparrowhawk	1	0	Pembrokeshire	
		Kestrel	0	1	Kent	
	Sept	Marsh harrier	1	0	East Riding of Yorkshire	
		Buzzard	1	0	Suffolk	
		Kestrel	1	0	Lancashire	
		Peregrine falcon	1	0	Derbyshire	
		Peregrine falcon	1	0	Devon	
		Buzzard	1	0	Unspecified (Scotland)	
		Peregrine falcon	1	0	Antrim	
	Oct	Peregrine falcon	1	0	North Yorkshire	
		Hen harrier	1	0	Cumbria	
		Buzzard	1	0	North Yorkshire	
		Red kite	1	0	Shropshire	
	Nov	Buzzard	1	0	North Yorkshire	
		Buzzard	1	0	Herefordshire	
		Buzzard	1	0	Herefordshire	
	Dec	Buzzard	1	0	Powys	
		Buzzard	1	0	Vale of Glamorgan	
		Buzzard	1	0	Somerset	
		Hen harrier	1	0	Northumberland	
			Number of birds	40	4	

Persecution type	Month	Species	Confirmed	Probable	County
NEST DESTRUCTION	May	Red kite	0	?	Perth and Kinross
		Red kite	0	?	Perth and Kinross
	June	Buzzard	?	0	North Yorkshire
		Number of birds	?	?	
ILLEGAL POLE/ SPRING TRAPPING	Feb	Buzzard	1	0	North Yorkshire
	April	Peregrine falcon	1	0	Lancashire
	May	Birds of prey and owls	?	0	North Yorkshire
		Birds of prey and owls	?	0	North Yorkshire
		Birds of prey and owls	?	0	North Yorkshire
		Buzzard	1	0	Perth and Kinross
	July	Buzzard (#1)	0	1	North Yorkshire
		Birds of prey (except owls)	?	0	Aberdeenshire
	Aug	Birds of prey (except owls)	0	?	North Yorkshire
		Kestrel	1	0	North Yorkshire
		Birds of prey (except owls)	?	0	Devon
	Unspecified	Kestrel	1	0	North Yorkshire
		Falcons	1	0	North Yorkshire
		Number of birds	6	1	
ILLEGAL TRAPPING (OTHER)	Feb	Birds of prey (except owls)	?	0	Scottish Borders
	March	Sparrowhawk	0	?	Perth and Kinross
	May	Birds of prey (except owls)	?	0	Scottish Borders
		Birds of prey (except owls)	?	0	Scottish Borders
	June	Birds of prey (except owls)	0	?	Northumberland
	Aug	Birds of prey (except owls)	?	0	Kent
	Number of birds	?	?		
OTHER	Feb	Birds of prey (except owls)	?	0	Staffordshire
		Golden eagle	0	1	Highland
		Hen harrier	?	0	Derbyshire
	March	White-tailed eagle	0	1	Perth and Kinross
	April	Peregrine falcon	?	0	Northumberland
		Peregrine falcon	0	?	Armagh
	May	Goshawk	0	?	Dumfries and Galloway
		Buzzard	0	?	Perth and Kinross
		Buzzard	0	?	Perth and Kinross
		Golden eagle	0	1	Highland
		Golden eagle	0	1	Highland
	June	Birds of prey (except owls)	0	?	North Yorkshire
		Hen harrier	0	1	South Lanarkshire
	July	Golden eagle	0	1	Highland
	Aug	Goshawk	0	1	Norfolk
		Hen harrier	0	1	Highland
		Hen harrier	0	1	Highland
	Dec	Birds of prey (except owls)	0	?	South Yorkshire
		Number of birds	0	9	

The data above were extracted on 6 September 2017 and were accurate at time of extraction.

? Indicates no bird found but the most likely/known target is listed

Items grouped by shading are to show one incident involving more than one species or offence type/category - rows connected by the same numbered bracket (x) relate to one incident. Eg (#1) shows a confirmed shot buzzard which also had injuries consistent with probable spring trapping. Note that the interactive map and the map displayed in Appendix VII only show confirmed incidents, with one offence type per incident, to avoid incident duplication.

For definitions of "confirmed" and "probable" please see Explanatory Notes.

# Appendix IV

## Confirmed poison abuse incidents during 2016

Month	Victim	Number	Poison	County	Bait
Jan	Cat*	1	Withheld	Scottish Borders	-
	Cat*	1	Alphachloralose	Fife	-
	Bird	B	Bromadiolone	Isle of Anglesey	Grain
Feb	Buzzard	1	Alphachloralose	Derbyshire	Pheasant bait x 1
	Buzzard	1	Aldicarb	Derbyshire	-
	Red kite	1	Fenthion	Ceredigion	-
	Cat*	5	Withheld	Scottish Borders	-
	Fox	1	Metaldehyde	Isle of Anglesey	Pheasant bait x 1
March	Buzzard	1	Carbofuran	Antrim	-
	Buzzard	1	Alphachloralose	Antrim	-
	Raven	1	Aldicarb, bendiocarb	Powys	Pheasant bait x 1
	Red kite	1	Alphachloralose, aldicarb	North Yorkshire	-
	Buzzard	3	Alphachloralose, metaldehyde	Derbyshire	Pheasant bait x 1
	Cat*	1	Withheld	Scottish Borders	-
	Cat*	1	Metaldehyde	Undefined (Scotland)	-
April	Peregrine falcon	1	Aldicarb	Antrim	-
	Peregrine falcon	1	Diazinon/dimpylate	Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	-
	Buzzard	1	Phorate	Lincolnshire	-
	Blackbird*	1	Bendiocarb	Aberdeenshire	-
	Jackdaw*	4	Bendiocarb	Aberdeenshire	-
	Siskin*	1	Bendiocarb	Aberdeenshire	-
	Raven	1	Aldicarb, bendiocarb	Powys	-
	Buzzard	1	Strychnine	South Ayrshire	-
May	Red kite	1	Alphachloralose, aldicarb, bendiocarb, carbofuran, isofenphos	North Yorkshire	-
	Buzzard	1	Alphachloralose	Antrim	-
	Cat*	1	Withheld	Scottish Borders	-
	Mallard	1	Metaldehyde	South Yorkshire	-
June	Cat*	2	Carbofuran	Fife	-
	Peregrine falcon	B	Alphachloralose, bendiocarb	Blaenau Gwent	Pigeon bait x 1
	Cat*	1	Withheld	Scottish Borders	-
	Cat*	1	Metaldehyde	Fife	Sausages x 1
Aug	Carrion crow	1	Carbofuran	Hertfordshire	Grey squirrel bait x 1
	Red kite	1	Carbofuran	Hertfordshire	
	Raven	3	Diazinon/dimpylate	Neath Port Talbot	Lamb bait x 1
Sept	Buzzard	1	Withheld	Dumfries and Galloway	Pheasant bait x 1
	Buzzard	1	Aldicarb	Denbighshire	-
	Buzzard	1	Bendiocarb, Metaldehyde	Staffordshire	-
	Number of victims	47			

B indicates that a bait was found, but there was no victim (or there was no toxicological confirmation that possible victims had actually been poisoned).

Items grouped by grey shading are to show one incident involving multiple species, nests, etc. Incidents in the table above include cases where birds were poisoned or vulnerable to poison baits being laid in the open, even if the victim was a wild animal or domestic pet.

The data above were extracted on 6 September 2017 and were accurate at time of extraction.

\* Indicates that further information is pending from Police Scotland

Some details cannot be shown, as requested by Police Scotland.



# Appendix V

## Schedule 1 nest robberies during 2016

### Confirmed

Species	Number of nests	Nest contents	County
Goshawk	1	Chicks	Devon
Peregrine falcon	2	Eggs	Cheshire
Peregrine falcon	1	Chicks	County Durham
Mediterranean gull	1 ≤ 100	Eggs	Dorset
<b>Total</b>	<b>5 ≤ 100</b>		

### Probable

Species	Number of nests	Nest contents	County
Merlin	1	Chicks	Derbyshire
Hobby	1	Eggs	West Midlands
Peregrine falcon	1	Eggs	Derbyshire
Peregrine falcon	1	Chicks	Lancashire
Peregrine falcon	1	Chicks	Greater Manchester
Peregrine falcon	1	Chicks	Northumberland
Peregrine falcon	1	Chicks	Scottish Borders
Peregrine falcon	1	Chicks	Derbyshire
Mediterranean gull	1	Eggs	Hampshire
Little tern	1	Eggs	East Riding of Yorkshire
Little tern	3	Eggs	Hampshire
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>		

The data above were extracted on 15 August 2017 and were accurate at time of extraction.

# Appendix VI

## Bird crime prosecutions in 2016

Date	Act	Section/Reg	Charges	Prosecutor	Court	Surname	Plea	Outcome	Penalty Type	Penalty	Penalty Type 2	Penalty 2	Details
28/01/2016	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	1(1)(A)	1	RSPCA	Barrow In Furness Magistrates	Nikitinas	G	G	Jail	12 weeks suspended for 12 months	CO	160 hours	Defendant pleaded guilty to kicking a juvenile lesser black-backed gull to death. Sentenced to 12 weeks in prison suspended for 12 months, and 160 hours unpaid community work. Ordered to pay £300 court costs and £60 victim surcharge.
29/03/2016	Animal Welfare Act 2006	4(1) & 32(1)	1	RSPCA	Bexley Magistrates	Oloyede	NG	G	CO	160 hours total			Defendant was found guilty of two charges contrary to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981: possessing 12 wild birds including eight goldfinch, two linnet, a greenfinch and a common redpoll at his home; and possessing two dead goldfinches. He was also found guilty of causing unnecessary suffering to the birds by confining them in captivity contrary to the Animal Welfare Act 2006. Sentenced to complete 160 hours of unpaid work and ordered to pay £2,560 costs. Banned from keeping all birds for five years.
	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	1(2)(A)	2	RSPCA	Bexley Magistrates	Oloyede	NG	G	CO	160 hours total			
29/04/2016	Plant Protection Products (Sustainable Use) Regulations 2012	17(6)	1	CPS	Workington Magistrates	Mingins	G	G	Fine	£300			Defendant (pigeon fancier) pleaded guilty to the illegal storage of the banned pesticide carbofuran. Fined £300 and ordered to pay £85 costs.
06/04/2016	Control of Trade in Endangered Species (Enforcement) Reg. 1997	8(1)	8	CPS	North Tyneside Magistrates	Fraser	G	G	Fine				Defendant pleaded guilty to fraud by misrepresentation re sale of replica eggs of fake provenance, and eight COTES charges relating to prohibited offering for sale of birds' eggs (Annex A) including Tibetan snowcock, Hawaiian nene goose, Cabot's tragopan and Himalayan monal. Fined a total of £660, ordered to pay £85 costs and a £66 victim surcharge.
	Fraud Act 2006	1	1	CPS	North Tyneside Magistrates	Fraser	G	G	Fine				
	Control of Trade in Endangered Species (Enforcement) Reg. 1997	8(1)	2	CPS	North Tyneside Magistrates	Fraser	U	D					
07/04/2016	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	1(1)(A)	1	CPS	Liverpool Magistrates	Durkan	G	G	CO	Curfew			Defendant pleaded guilty to intentionally killing a wild bird (herring gull) by shooting it with an air rifle. Sentenced to a 10 week (tagged) curfew (8pm to 6am). Ordered to pay £350 costs and a £60 victim surcharge. Air rifle was confiscated.
14/06/2016	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	1(1)(C)	2	FISCAL	Kirkwall Sheriff	Beaton	G	G	Fine	£4,200 total			Defendant (retired solicitor) pleaded guilty to two charges relating to the taking of 11 eggs of wild birds, (Arctic tern, great skua, rock dove, great black-backed gull, herring or lesser black-backed gull, black-headed gull, greylag goose and blackbird), and a third charge of possessing an article capable of being used to take or destroy wild birds eggs (an egg scoop), all contrary to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Fined £4,200. The eggs and egg scoop were forfeited by the Court. (This case preceded a second prosecution for the same defendant - see below).
	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	18(2)	1	FISCAL	Kirkwall Sheriff	Beaton	G	G	Fine	£4,200 total			
12/07/2016	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	1(1)(A)	1	CPS	Sunderland Magistrates	Thompson	G	G	CO	12 Months Total			Defendant pleaded guilty to killing a wild bird (one feral pigeon), possession of a loaded air weapon in a public place, and failing to surrender to court bail. Sentenced to a 12-month community order, with 30 days' rehabilitation activity requirement. Fined £100, and ordered to pay £60 costs and £60 surcharge.
	Firearms Act 1968	19	1	CPS	Sunderland Magistrates	Thompson	G	G	CO	12 Months Total			

# Appendix VI (continued)

## Wild bird related prosecutions in 2016

Date	Act	Section/Reg	Charges	Prosecutor	Court	Surname	Plea	Outcome	Penalty Type	Penalty	Penalty Type 2	Penalty 2	Details
29/09/2016	Protection of Livestock Act 1953	U	1	CPS	Thames Magistrates	Goodman	G	G	Fine	£120			Defendant pleaded guilty to being in charge of a dog that worried livestock (mute swan) contrary to the Protection of Livestock Act (1953). The swan died. Fined £120.
09/11/2016	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	18(2)	1	CPS	Plymouth Magistrates	Beaton	G	G	Fine	£250			Defendant (retired solicitor) pleaded guilty to five charges relating to the possession of 12 eggs of Schedule 1 species; 435 other eggs; the intentional taking of barn owl and red-throated diver eggs from Norfolk and Orkney; and the possession of articles capable of being used to commit offences. Fined £4,750 and ordered to pay £85 costs. The eggs were forfeited and passed to the Natural History Museum. (This case followed the defendant being caught taking eggs in Scotland in June 2016, for which he was also prosecuted in Scotland - see above).
	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	1(1)(C)	2	CPS	Plymouth Magistrates	Beaton	G	G	Fine	£2,000			
	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	1(2)(B)	2	CPS	Plymouth Magistrates	Beaton	G	G	Fine	£2,500			
10/11/2016	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	1(5)(A)	2	CPS	York Magistrates	Lawton	NG	D					Defendant pleaded not guilty to two charges of disturbing a Schedule 1 breeding bird (peregrine falcon). The charges were discontinued.
29/11/2016	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	1(1)(A)	1	RSPCA	Canterbury Crown	Thompson	G	G	Fine	£7,500 total			Defendant pleaded guilty to killing two swans and injuring another. Fined £7,500 in total and ordered to pay £470 costs.
16/12/2016	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	1(1)(A)	1	RSPCA	Scarborough Magistrates	Rose	G	G	Fine	£200			Defendant was witnessed kicking a fledgling starling and pleaded guilty to intentionally killing a wild bird. Fined £200 and ordered to pay £300 costs.

### Key to Appendix VI

CD	Conditional discharge	NG	Not guilty
CBO	Criminal Behaviour Order	NP	Not proven
CO	Community Order	NSP	No separate penalty
CU	Curfew order	U	Unknown
D	Discontinued		
G	Guilty		
NCA	No case to answer		

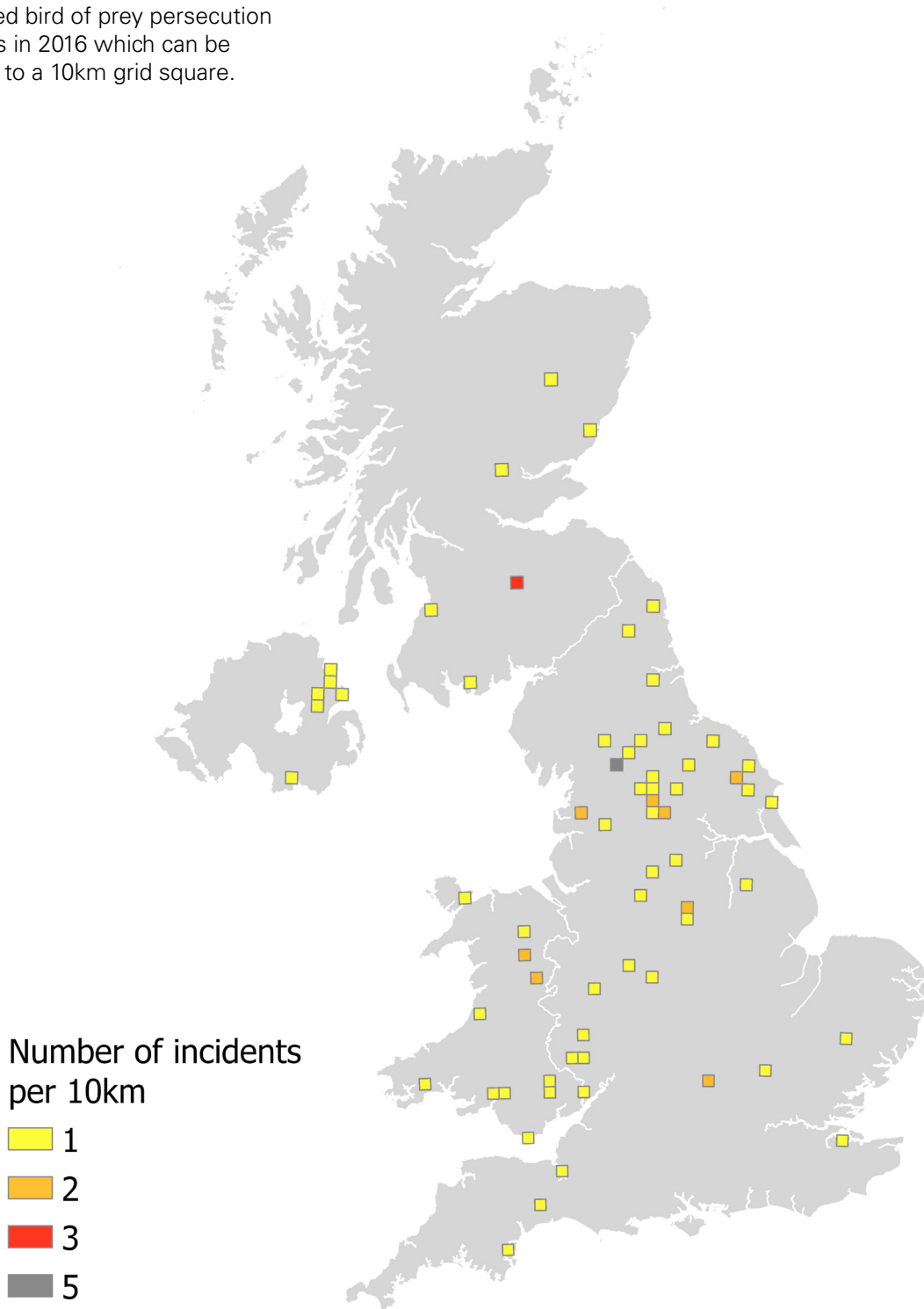
Note that the 2016 prosecution figures will be lower than the true figure, in particular for categories involving the taking, sale and possession of non bird of prey species. This is due to the delay in obtaining a full list of RSPCA wild bird related prosecutions.

The data above were extracted on 9 August 2017 and were accurate at time of extraction.

# Appendix VII

## Confirmed bird of prey persecution incidents in 2016 – UK map

This map shows 80 of the 81 confirmed bird of prey persecution incidents in 2016 which can be mapped to a 10km grid square.

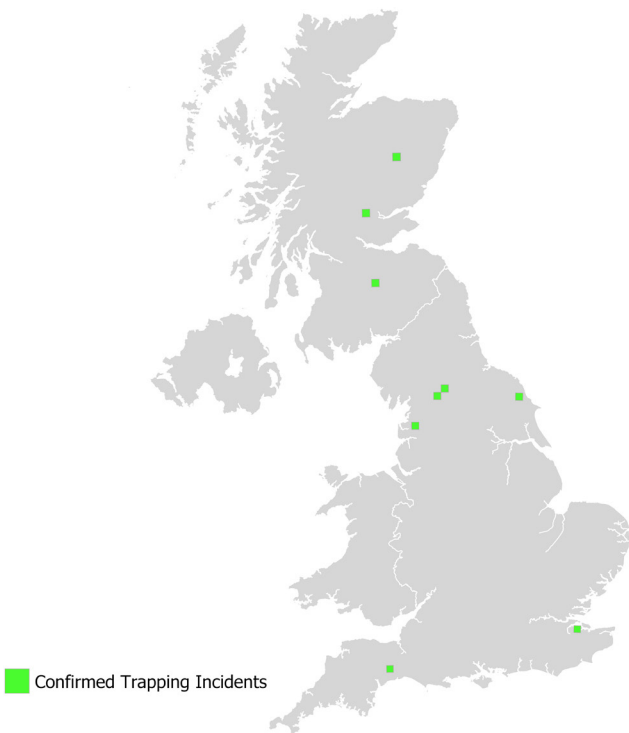
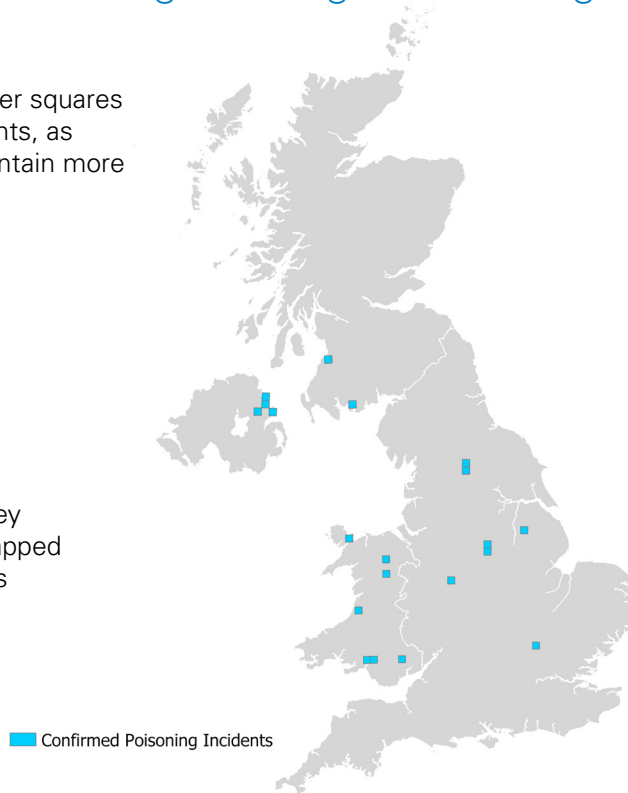


# Appendix VII (continued)

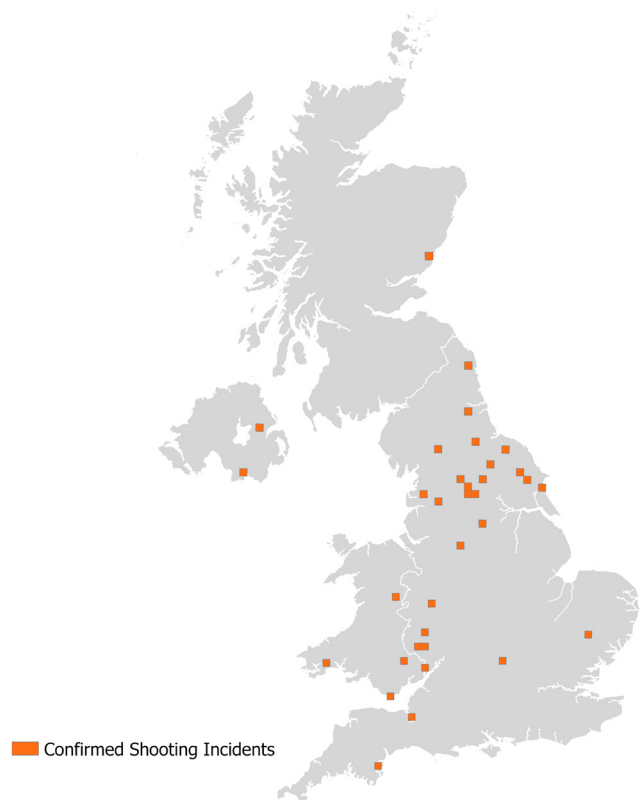
Confirmed bird of prey persecution incidents in 2016 – split into main incident types (poisoning, shooting and trapping)

**Note** there may be fewer squares than numbers of incidents, as some 10km squares contain more than one incident

22 confirmed bird of prey poisoning incidents, mapped to 20 10km grid squares



15 confirmed bird of prey trapping incidents, mapped to 9 10km grid squares



39 confirmed bird of prey shooting incidents, mapped to 34 10km grid squares

# Explanatory notes

The RSPB's *Birdcrime* report summarises offences against wild bird legislation that are reported to the RSPB each year. We have published the report annually since 1990: it is the only centralised source of incident data for UK wild bird crime.

The report focuses on crimes of higher conservation concern, such as bird of prey persecution and threats to rare breeding birds. The data is gathered by the RSPB Investigations Team, a specialist unit set up to assist the statutory agencies with the investigation and prosecution of crimes against wild birds. The team also undertake their own investigations regarding offences against wild birds of conservation concern.

Incidents of bird crime are recorded in three categories:

**Confirmed: Where circumstances indicate that an illegal act has taken place.** These incidents are typically substantiated by evidence such as post-mortem or toxicological analysis, or reliable eyewitness evidence.

**Probable: The circumstances indicate that by far the most likely explanation is that an illegal act has taken place.**

**Unconfirmed: The circumstances indicate that an illegal act has possibly taken place.**

Sadly, we believe that the figures in our report represent only a fraction of the number of wild bird crime incidents that take place. Many remain undetected and unreported, particularly those that occur in remote and private areas.

The RSPB has been recording wildlife crime consistently for several decades. The figures in annual *Birdcrime* reports may vary from other published reports, because data sets compiled for different purposes, using very different methods, are unlikely to be directly comparable.

Toxicology results from the government's Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme (WIIS) form the primary source of wildlife poisoning data included in *Birdcrime* reports. In isolated cases toxicology results may be obtained by other routes. The RSPB is the only organisation to present pesticide analysis data in a standardised format to reflect actual wildlife crime incidents.

Conclusions that can be drawn from annual crime figures alone are limited. A more complete picture of the severe effect that illegal killing is having on national populations of wild birds can be gauged through long-term, systematic study of bird populations themselves, such as the rigorous *Conservation Framework* reports by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) on golden eagles ([snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned\\_reports/193.pdf](http://snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned_reports/193.pdf)) and hen harriers ([jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/jncc441.pdf](http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/jncc441.pdf)). There are also a range of peer-reviewed scientific publications that demonstrate the impacts of persecution on golden eagles, hen harriers, red kites ([snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned\\_reports/904.pdf](http://snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned_reports/904.pdf)) and peregrine falcons ([sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0006320711003831](http://sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0006320711003831)).

For the SNH review published May 2017 which showed that almost a third of golden eagles fitted with satellite tags disappeared in suspicious circumstances, see [snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned\\_reports/982.pdf](http://snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/commissioned_reports/982.pdf).

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- The Zoological Society of London (ZSL)
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- Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspection Directorate (SGRPID)
- Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)
- UK veterinary practices
- The Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI NI)
- Ryedale Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre