



If you see evidence of breeding

Red Kites

We would like to know, please.

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Red Kites almost became extinct in Wales in the 1930s, but the population slowly increased, reaching 100 pairs in 1993. They have spread since then, and two pairs nested unsuccessfully in Shropshire in 2005. One pair fledged two young here in 2006, the first successful breeding in Shropshire for 130 years. Six nests were found in 2007, and, by 2010, the population had reached 20 breeding pairs. Numbers have continued to increase.

*In 2018, 25 nests were found, and 5 additional pairs.
18 were successful, producing 25 fledged young.*

*Since the first successful breeding in 2006, around 300
young are known to have flown from Shropshire nests.
203 of these young have been tagged.*

A full report will be posted on the SOS website www.shropshirebirds.com

Almost all found nests have been in the AONB in the south-west Shropshire hills, but the range is spreading, and there have been nests further east and north in the last five years. The first nest north of Shrewsbury was found in 2017. As the range increases, they are harder for us to find, so reports from the rest of the county are particularly important, please.

Kites usually don't breed until they are two or three years old. Young birds wander widely, so many sightings will be of immature birds. However, there should be even more nests to find this year, including some in north and east Shropshire. Most nests are started in late March, but first-time breeders may not lay until late April or early May. Nests are usually built in large trees, on steep hillsides. Young fly in late June or early July. Nest sites are kept confidential.

We are still trying to find all nests, so reports are wanted, please, of a pair together in spring, or displaying, or one seen several times in the same place, or one going into a wood, any time between March and June. Reports of wing-tagged birds are wanted too, please. All reports will be treated in absolute confidence. Kites are very shy, and they are legally protected. It is an offence to disturb them, but this monitoring is carried out under licence.

The tagging is largely finished, but we need to visit as many nests as possible until 2020 to look for the tags, to get maximum benefit from our efforts.

The Welsh Kite Trust promotes conservation, organises nest protection, and monitors the increasing population and range. You can support this work, and receive on-line newsletters, by donating to the Trust. See www.welshkitetrust.wales