

BUZZARD BUTEO BUTEO SPECIES ACTION PLAN**1. INTRODUCTION**

The buzzard does not have priority status in the UKBAP, but it is a UK species of conservation concern and is an easily recognised and distinctive species throughout the country. The buzzard is considered to be highly important for the promotion of biodiversity in locally.

Relevant Legislation/Species Status	
priority species (P) or species of conservation concern (S)	S
EC Birds Directive 1979	-
Berne Convention 1982	-
Bonn Convention 1979	App. II
CITES 1975	Annex A
WCA 1981	Part I Section 1
Birds of Conservation Concern List ³⁰	-
Other Species Status	RDB Birds: candidate



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2. CURRENT STATUS**2.1 UK and Wales**

Buzzards bred almost throughout the whole of the UK in 1800, but by 1875 they were eliminated from all but parts of western Britain.

It recovered through the early 1900s, but in 1955 populations collapsed as a result of the devastation of rabbit populations by myxomatosis. Recovery since the 1960s has been slow, and in some areas the rate of expansion has been affected by illegal persecution. By 1983 there were at least 12,000 pairs of buzzards. In the last decade the rate of spread seems to have increased with buzzards re-colonising eastern and southern Britain²⁹. In Wales it is estimated that there are between 3500 to 4500 pairs²⁹. It currently occupies around 70% of the potential breeding range in the UK²⁶.

2.2 Caerphilly County Borough

The buzzard is of local significance. It is the most widespread large bird of prey in south Wales and is commonly seen circling on broad wings across the whole of the area. It nests in tall, mature trees and hunts for food over open woodland, and other open areas, eating rabbits, birds and many types of carrion¹². It is also often seen hopping along the ground, eating worms. In Caerphilly county borough it will nest in almost any suitable mature tree in open areas, and is fairly widespread throughout, often hunting and scavenging over hillsides and along roadside verges. **Map 2.2** shows the distribution of known and possible breeding areas across the county borough. The following SINC sites have records of buzzards⁸: 45 **Cwm Afon Railway Line** and 55 **Nelson Bog** (SSSI).

2.3 Links with Habitats

- **Deciduous Woodlands** (woodland clearings, adjacent to open fields)
- **Wildlife Corridors** (mature trees, hedgerow trees and roadside verges)

- **Species-rich Grasslands**
- *Common Land*
- *Heathland*
- *Post-Industrial Land* (refuse tips)

3. CURRENT FACTORS AFFECTING THE SPECIES

- Localised persecution may occur in some areas, especially game conservation areas where gamekeepers have been known to trap and shoot buzzards. Buzzards are the most frequent victims in the UK as a whole, accounting for 40% of all incidents between 1990 and 1998²⁹.
- Myxomatosis and other diseases, associated with prey species, have a serious effect on buzzard populations. The abundance of the various prey species is a significant factor, which can also be affected by pollution, pesticides and rodenticides, affecting the bird of prey at the end of the food chain.
- Availability of places to roost, nest and forage ultimately determines the buzzard population size. Urbanisation will continue to intrude into open countryside and may reduce the number of nesting trees and hunting habitats.

4. CURRENT ACTION

- 4.1 Many woodland sites suitable for breeding buzzards are designated as SINC⁸.
- 4.2 The RSPB are campaigning to change policies that encourage habitat degradation through agricultural practices.
- 4.3 The RSPB Investigations Unit supports investigation of crimes such as killings, by providing specialist advice and training to the police²⁹.
- 4.4 The RSPB also maintains a database of crimes against birds.
- 4.5 The UK Government Campaign Against the Illegal Poisoning of Wildlife is supported by the RSPB and other conservation and countryside organisations, they are also involved in educating farmers about the need to use chemicals properly and investigating wildlife poisoning incidents (Poisons Hotline = 0800 321 600 if you find a dead bird or other animal in suspicious circumstances)²⁹.
- 4.6 The Gwent Ornithological Society and Glamorgan Bird Club bird reports^{17, 18, 19}, and the BTO Breeding Bird Survey⁶ all contribute to the annual monitoring and recording of buzzard populations.

5. OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

5.1 UK Objectives and Targets

Not applicable to this species.

5.2 Caerphilly Objectives and Targets

5.2.1 Determine the current status and distribution in Caerphilly county borough (Target: 2004).

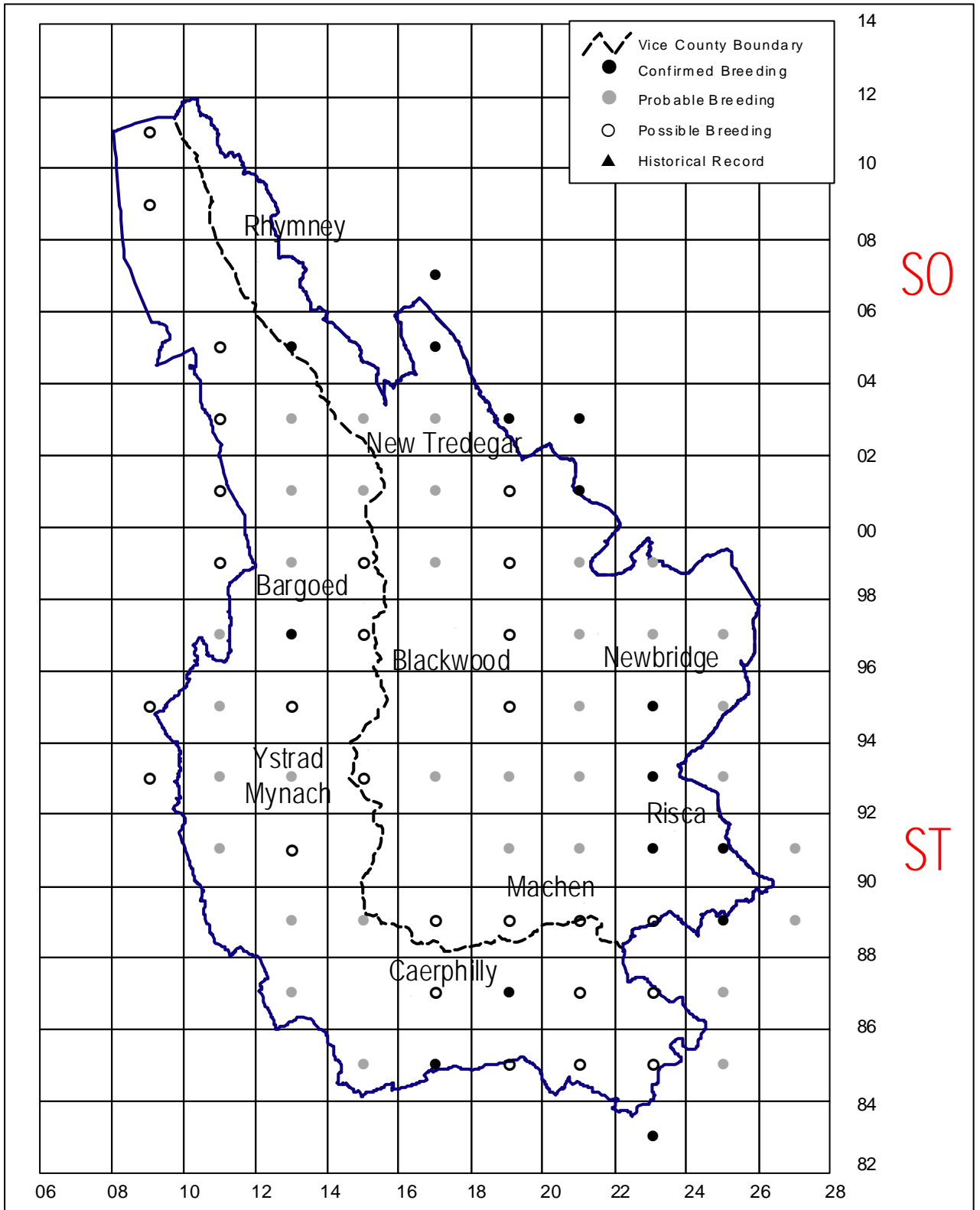
5.2.2 Maintain existing breeding pairs throughout the county borough (Target: ongoing).

6. ACTION AND KEY PARTNERS

Action	Key Partners		Year to be complete or in place by								
	Lead	Partners	2003	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
6.1 Policy and Legislation											
6.1.1 Promote the protection given to buzzards among landowners/managers, contractors and planning officers.	CCBC	RSPB GWT GLWT FUW	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.2 Site Safeguard and Management											
6.2.1 Maintain the current extent and quality of mature trees, hedgerows and open grasslands through appropriate management.	CCBC	GWT, GLWT landowners	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.3 Species Management and Protection											
6.3.1 Identify the number of nest sites within protected sites, such as SINCs, SSSIs.	CCBC	GOS GBC Coed Cymru FC landowners	✓								✓
6.3.2 Continue to implement wildlife legislation.	Gwent Police	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.4 Advisory											
6.4.1 Ensure the provision of advice to relevant organisations and land managers on the conservation of buzzards and sympathetic management of trees and open habitats.	NAWAD	CCBC ADAS RSPB FUW	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.5 Future Research and Monitoring											
6.5.1 Encourage recording of all known breeding sites, and monitor regularly.	GBC GOS	BTO RSPB CCBC	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓
6.5.2 Carry out a survey to determine the current status of the buzzard in Caerphilly county borough.	GBC GOS	RSPB	✕								
6.6 Communications and Publicity											
6.6.1 Encourage membership of wildlife trusts and local ornithological societies.	CBP	GWT GLWT GBC GOS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.6.2 Provide schools, colleges and youth clubs with information in order to educate children, parents and teachers about the conservation status of buzzards in their local area.	CBP	Youth forum Schools	✓			✓					✓
6.6.3 Raise awareness of buzzards, and use them to promote the value of trees and other habitats to the general public.	CBP	RSPB	✓			✓					✓
6.6.4 Aim to maximise public involvement in surveys whenever appropriate.	CBP	GBC GOS		✓				✓			

✕ Survey year to be determined.

MAP 2.2 – BUZZARD



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Atgynhychwyd o fapiad yr Arolwg Ordnans gyda chaniatad rheolwr Llyfifa ei Mawhydi hawffraint y Goron. Mae atgynhychu heb awdurdod yn torri hawffraint y Goron. Gall hyn arwain at erlyniad neu achos sifil. Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Caerffili, LA09004L, 2001.