

GOSHAWK *ACCIPTER GENTILIS* SPECIES ACTION PLAN

1. INTRODUCTION

The goshawk is not afforded priority status in the UKBAP, but it is a UK Species of Conservation Concern and is significant 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; Sch. 1, 4
Birds of Conservation Concern List ³⁰	-
Other Species Status	RDB Birds: RDB2



© CCBC 2002

2. CURRENT STATUS

2.1 UK and Wales

The goshawk is a large and very successful woodland dwelling bird of prey. It is fairly common, but secretive in woodlands with a preference for coniferous forests with many clearings. The extensive plantings of the Forestry Commission and private individuals have provided suitable habitat for the goshawk as the trees have matured. It was once Britain's most successful bird of prey, but it was one of the first birds of prey to be persecuted and along with destruction of its habitat was driven to the edge of extinction in 1883. By the early 1950s there were no certain breeding pairs in the country, but now the goshawk population has dramatically increased with human intervention. Approximately, 450 pairs are estimated to be breeding in the UK, with 200 – 250 pairs in Wales (UK Raptor Group). However, only 15% of the potential UK breeding range is currently occupied²⁶.

2.2 Caerphilly County Borough

In the past the goshawk has been recorded in forestry plantations in the county borough. However, it appears to be in decline and further survey work of possible sites is required.

2.3 Links with Habitats

- Woodlands (mainly coniferous) with many clearings
- ***Planted Coniferous Woodlands***

3. CURRENT FACTORS AFFECTING THE SPECIES

- The main threat in Wales is from forest operations. The Forestry Commission has produced guidelines for avoiding disturbance of nests, and the key to this is to know their locations. This becomes difficult if pairs are continually changing their nesting locations as a result of nest sites being felled during the non-breeding period.
- Localised persecution by gamekeepers is generally a problem in the autumn when the young birds are dispersing from the nesting woodlands and predation on pheasants is a problem in some areas. As they start to feed on domestic racing pigeons persecution may increase.

- Loss of habitat - each pair requires a large area of uninterrupted trees, especially conifer plantations, open country to hunt and large secluded tracts of woodland to breed.
- Nest destruction and egg theft are major factors in their decline. The nests of some birds of prey such as the goshawk and the peregrine are often destroyed, usually when they contain eggs or young chicks. The loss of just one or two clutches of eggs can have a considerable impact on some species' ability to recover.

4. CURRENT ACTION

- 4.1 Known nesting pairs are fully recorded, noting success and failure.
- 4.2 All pairs are protected by legislation (see section 1).
- 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 organisations. This involves educating farmers in the correct use of chemicals and investigating wildlife poisoning incidents (Poisons Hotline 0800 321 600)²⁹.

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 by 2004 and formulate a target for expansion (Target: 2005).
- 5.2.2 Maintain and increase 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 goshawks 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 woodlands, particularly coniferous, through appropriate management.	FC	CCBC Coed Cymru landowners	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Action	Key Partners		Year to be complete or in place by								
	Lead	Partners	2003	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
6.3 Species Management and Protection											
6.3.1 Ensure the protection of suitable nesting sites in the county borough by implementing wildlife legislation.	Gwent Police	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.3.2 Continue to ensure the protection of nest sites in forestry plantations, and work towards establishing permanent nesting retentions.	FC	-		✓							
6.4 Advisory											
6.4.1 Ensure the provision of advice to relevant organisations and landowners on the conservation of goshawks and sympathetic management of woodlands.	NAWAD	CCBC CCW RSPB FUW	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.5 Future Research and Monitoring											
6.5.1 Carry out a survey to determine the current status of the goshawk in Caerphilly county borough.	GBC GOS	BTO RSPB	✕								
6.5.2 Encourage recording of all known breeding sites and monitor regularly.	GBC GOS	BTO CCBC RSPB	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.6 Communications and publicity											
6.6.1 Encourage membership of local wildlife trusts/groups in Gwent, Glamorgan and areas of Caerphilly county borough.	GWT GLWT	CCBC WOWLS GOS GBC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.6.2 Provide schools, colleges and youth clubs with information in order to educate children, parents and teachers about the conservation of goshawks in the local area.	CCBC	Schools Youth Forum	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.6.3 Raise awareness of goshawks, and use them to promote the value of coniferous woodlands with the general public.	CCBC	FC RSPB	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.6.4 Aim to maximise public involvement in surveys where appropriate.	CBP	RSPB	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

✕ Survey year to be determined.