

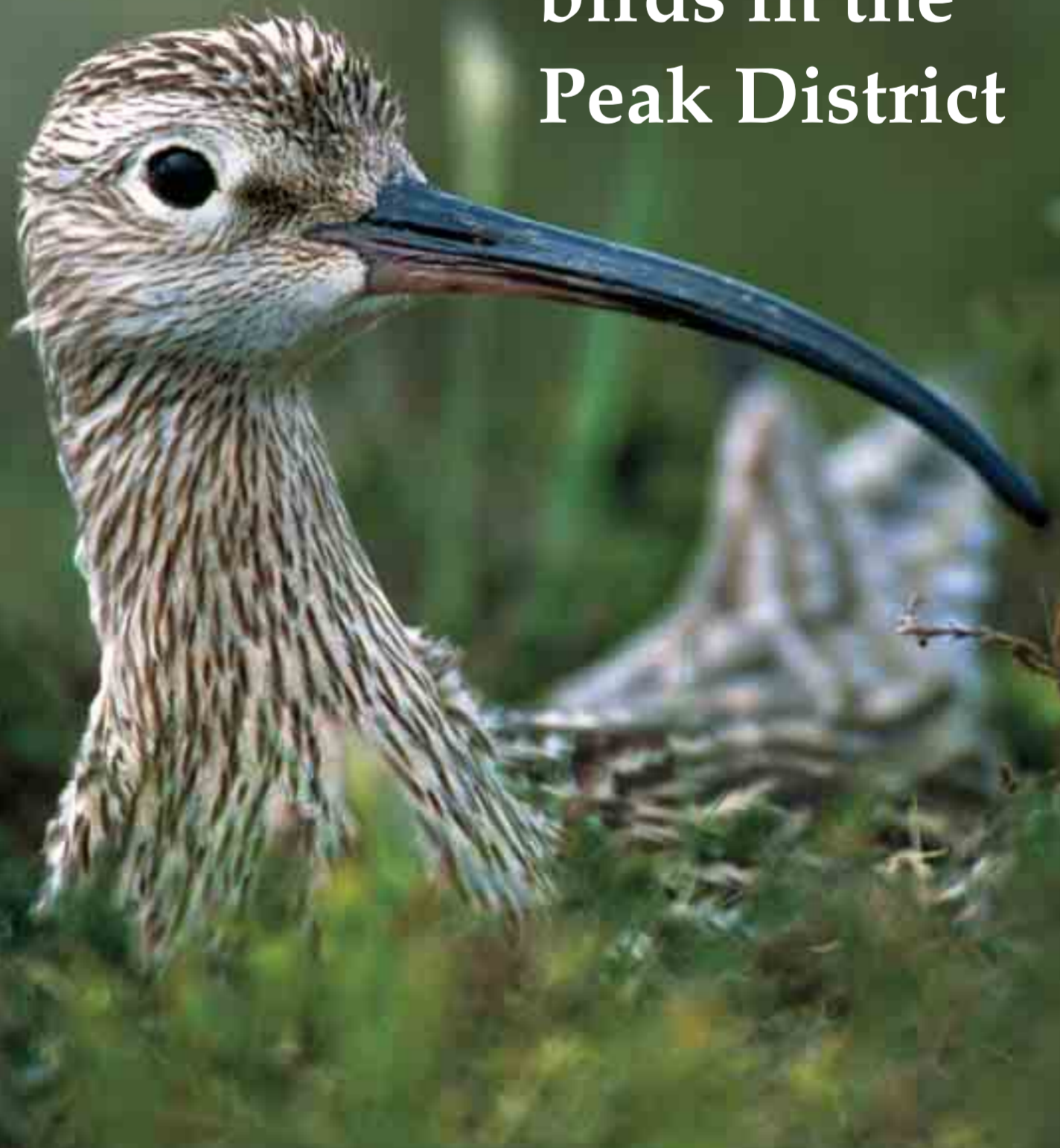
The ups and downs of Peak District birds

The fortunes of the Peak District's bird populations have changed in recent years, with many farmland species in decline. The Peak Birds Project is working with farmers to help stop the decline of bird species such as lapwings, curlews, snipe, twite and red buntings. Much of this conservation work will benefit other species, such as skylarks and golden plovers.

Warmer winters have helped small birds such as long-tailed tits and wrens. Stonechats have also benefited and can be seen all year round in the Peak District. Legal protection has helped raven, which can now be found all over the Peak District. The RSPB is concerned at what is happening to our woodland birds and research is underway to find the cause.

Where to find birds in the Peak District

Working together for the benefit of farmers and birds in the Peak District



Farming and wildlife in harmony

What is the Peak Birds Project?

The Peak Birds Project was launched in 2001, as a joint venture between the Peak District National Park Authority and the RSPB. Working with farmers, landowners and other partner organizations, the project aims to secure a brighter future for the Peak District's wildlife. Curlews, lapwings and twite are three species requiring help, in order to ensure their numbers stabilize and then increase over the next ten years.

What does the Peak Birds Project do?

FARMLAND BIRD ADVISORY SERVICE TO FARMERS

By employing a project officer, the Peak Birds Project works in harmony with farmers and landowners, offering conservation advice and securing agri-environment scheme funding.

RUSH CUTTING

Farmers are encouraged to cut areas of dense rush annually to provide ideal breeding habitat for the Peak District's lapwings, curlews and snipe.

HAY MEADOWS

Flower-rich hay meadows provide nesting cover for skylarks, curlews and lapwings and food for a range of farmland birds including twite. The project officer helps landowners apply for grants to maintain this traditional management system.

SAFEGUARDING WADER NESTING AND FEEDING SITES

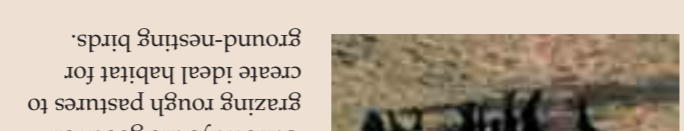
The project officer helps farmers apply for grants to farm in an environmentally sensitive way. create ideal habitat for ground-nesting birds.

TRADITIONAL BREEDS

Traditional breeds of cattle such as these Belted Galloways are good for grazing rough pastures to create ideal habitat for ground-nesting birds.

GRAZING BY

Upland arable crops sown in spring provide important areas for lapwings and other farmland birds. The project officer helps landowners apply for funding to do this work.



CHRIS TOMSON

UPLAND ARABLE

NEST PROTECTION

Where cattle are liable to tread on nests, guards are put up to protect the eggs. Lapwings happily accept these guards and continue to incubate their eggs when the guards are in place.

WEED WIPING

Weed wiping is used to control rushes on some sites. Herbicide is wiped onto the rushes, avoiding damage to other plants in the field.

WILD BIRD COVER CROPS

A wild bird cover crop is a mixture of seed-bearing plants such as quinoa, cereals and kale sown in small plots to feed seed-eating farmland birds throughout the year.

SCAPE AND POND CREATION

Scrapes are shallow pools excavated on farmland around which lapwings, curlews and snipe can feed. Vegetation close by provides protection for their chicks.

WHEATEAR

WHINCHAT

WOOD WARBLER

SKYLARK

RED GROUSE

RAVEN

GOLDEN PLOVER

LAPWING

MERLIN

CURLEW

DUNLIN

STONECHAT

TWITE

WHEATEAR

WHINCHAT

WOOD WARBLER

SKYLARK

RED GROUSE

RAVEN

GOLDEN PLOVER

LAPWING



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.

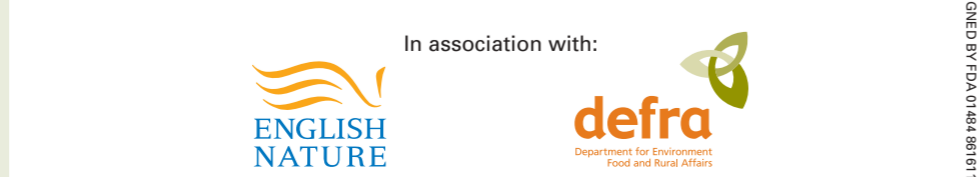
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Where to watch these birds in the Peak District

CURLEW – Marsden area, Meltham area, North Staffordshire Moors, Eastern Moors, Goyt Valley, Carsington Water

DUNLIN – Bleaklow, Saddleworth Moor, Derwentdale

GOLDEN PLOVER – Axe Edge, Kinder Scout, Wessenden, Flouch, Stockport area

LAPWING – Flouch, Stockport area, Eastern Moors, North Staffordshire Moors, Bakewell area, Carsington Water

MERLIN – areas of heather moorland in the Dark Peak

RAVEN – Dovestones, The Roaches, Derwentdale, Goyt Valley, Longdendale

RED GROUSE – Strines and Langsett Moors, Axe Edge, Eastern Moors, Snake Summit

REDSTART – Monsal and Manifold Valleys, Padley Gorge, Goyt Valley, Chatsworth Estate, Langsett area, Derwentdale, Macclesfield Forest

REED BUNTING – Goyt Valley, Eastern Moors, North Staffordshire Moors, Redmires, Langsett

RING OUZEL – Stanage Edge, Wessenden Valley, Little Don Valley, Goyt Valley, Marsden area

SKYLARK – widespread across the area, but especially around Hathersage, North Staffordshire Moors, Eastern Moors

SNIPE – Flouch area, Upper Midhope, North Staffordshire Moors, Redmires Reservoir, Carsington Water

STONECHAT – Marsden area, Eastern Moors, Stocksbridge/Penistone area

TWITE – Marsden area, Wessenden Valley, Meltham area, Buxton area

WHEATEAR – Marsden area, North Staffordshire Moors, Buxton area, Langsett, White Peak

WHINCHAT – Langsett Moors, Wessenden Valley, North Staffordshire Moors, Longdendale

WOOD WARBLER – Padley Gorge, Ewdon Valley, Monsal and Manifold Valleys, Gradbach

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PETER GUY

CURLEW

- 1,000 pairs breed in the Peak District
- Spring and summer visitor to the Peak District from the coast
- Nests on the moorland edge, feeds in fields and meadows
- Has a long, curved beak for probing the ground for earthworms and leatherjackets
- Length: 48–57 cm



ANDY HAY rspb-images.com

TWITE

- Known as the Pennine finch. Similar to the linnet
- Nests on moorland, breeds in hay meadows
- Declining in the Peak District
- Feeds entirely on seeds, usually dandelion and sorrel
- Length: 12.5–14 cm



STEVE KNELL rspb-images.com

MERLIN

- Scarce, small falcon
- Breeds on heather moorland
- Feeds on small birds
- Length: 26–33 cm, wing-span: 55–69 cm



MARK HAMBLEN rspb-images.com

GOLDEN PLOVER

- Spring and summer visitor from the coast
- Nests on high moorland, feeds on pastures
- Feeds on insects
- Related to the lapwing
- Length: 25–28 cm



ROGER WILL MSHURST rspb-images.com

RING OUZEL

- Known as the 'mountain blackbird'
- Summer visitor from North Africa
- Nests in moorland cloughs
- Feeds on worms and insects on sheep pastures in summer and berries in autumn
- Declining in the Peak District
- Length: 24–27 cm



MARK HAMBLEN rspb-images.com

REDSTART

- Colourful spring and summer visitor from West Africa
- Nests in holes in trees or old buildings
- Feeds largely on caterpillars
- 'Flicking' red tail
- Length: 13–14.5 cm



ANDY HAY rspb-images.com

LAPWING

- 1,200 pairs breed in the Peak District
- Ground-nesting wader
- Prefers wet farmland fields or ploughed land to nest and find food
- Feeds on earthworms, leatherjackets and insects
- Length: 28–31 cm



BARRY HUGHES rspb-images.com

PIED FLYCATCHER

- Spring and summer visitor from West Africa
- Woodland bird
- Nests in holes in trees but readily takes to nestboxes
- Feeds on caterpillars and insects
- Length: 12–13.5 cm



ALL LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS TOMSON