

The 2015 breeding season was the sixteenth since the reintroduction of Red Kites to Yorkshire began in 1999. Several pairs were located at new locations, though we were unable to undertake a full survey of all known nesting sites. The table below includes estimated figures for the locations which it was not possible to check. The overall figures are very encouraging and, allowing for other pairs which have undoubtedly gone undetected, it is highly likely that we now have more than 100 successful breeding pairs in the county.



Red Kite

photo: Stephen Lilley

Two occupied nests are known to have been destroyed in storms, resulting in the death of the young. Two other nests failed, likely causes being disturbance caused by woodland management activity close to the nest and inquisitive trespassers, respectively. On a lighter note the Kite's habit of collecting soft toys to decorate their nests was witnessed at one North Yorkshire nest, below which a toy rabbit and cat were found.

Area	Territorial pairs	pairs bred	pairs successful	young
West Yorkshire	65 (63)	61 (61)	54 (53)	102 (93)
North Yorkshire	44 (40)	40 (37)	36 (31)	68 (63)
East Yorkshire	14 (9)	11 (8)	9 (7)	16 (15)
Totals	123 (112)	112 (106)	99 (91)	186 (171)

Average young raised per successful pair = 1.88 (1.86)



photo: Brian Vickers

The illegal use of poisoned baits in the open countryside continues. The deaths of a Red Kite and a Common Buzzard caused by carbofuran in different areas of North Yorkshire in 2015 suggest that this banned insecticide is still being widely abused. Appendix 2 of the RSPB's report Bird Crime 2014 (see website) shows that the number (36) of reported incidents involving birds of prey in North Yorkshire far exceeded that in any other area. Details of recommended action if a wildlife offence is suspected can be found on the Yorkshire Red Kite website. Suspected poisoning incidents involving wildlife are investigated by the Wildlife Investigation Scheme (WIIS).

Sightings of Red Kites, frequenting new areas are particularly welcome. This helps to confirm new breeding pairs and monitor progress. The local contact is Doug Simpson doug@milvus.me.uk
website: www.yorkshireredkites.net