

## What to do:

 **Do not put yourself at risk.** Take careful note of exactly what is happening and report it to police as soon as possible.

 **Do report all suspected wildlife crimes;** even if you are not sure - report it. The evidence of wildlife crime is not always obvious and any information may be valuable to an investigation.

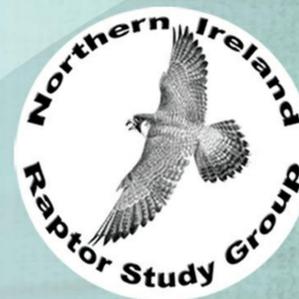
 **Call the PSNI on 101** and tell them you would like to report a wildlife crime. To make a report anonymously call Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**.

 **Do take careful note of exact locations of anything that might be useful evidence and note the grid reference of the incident if possible**

 **Do write down vehicle registration numbers believed to be involved in the possible incident, don't trust memory alone.**

 **Don't touch dead birds or animals and/or possible bait that you have found, especially if you suspect they may contain poison.** Many of these substances are extremely dangerous and you may put yourself at risk.

 **Don't trespass on private land or interfere with traps or snares, etc.** These may be for legitimate use. If in doubt call the NIEA wildlife team for information on 02890 569551 and to report a crime call the PSNI on **101**.



## Crimes Against Birds of Prey

Working in partnership to reduce wildlife crime by raising awareness and promoting effective enforcement

The Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime (PAW) is a body comprising representatives of government agencies and non-government organisations involved in wildlife crime and enforcement in the UK. It provides opportunities for people with a range of skills and experience to work together to combat and reduce wildlife crime by raising awareness and promoting effective enforcement.

Birds of prey ('raptors') are predators at the top of the food chain and are an important component of our ecosystem. They are also important indicators of the general state of our biodiversity and health of our environment. Birds of prey are extremely sensitive to many environmental changes in our ecosystem and can indicate when something is wrong with our environment and when we need to take action.



Wildlife crime against birds of prey remains a significant threat to the conservation of a number of species in the UK and Ireland. Populations of birds of prey are particularly vulnerable to wildlife crime due largely to their slow reproductive rates; that is when birds are killed they are only slowly replaced in the overall population. Persistent killing of birds of prey can therefore result in local population extinctions, and if carried out more widely, in regional and national extinctions.

## The Law and Crimes Against Birds of Prey

The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) are responsible for investigating a possible breach of the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 and the Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 legislation.

It is against the law to intentionally or recklessly:

- Kill, injure or take any wild bird
- Take or destroy wild bird eggs
- Take, damage or destroy a nest of a wild bird whilst it is in use or being built
- Disturb a wild bird when it is building a nest or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young or disturb dependent young.
- Obstruct or prevent any wild bird from using its nest or roost site
- Take, damage or destroy a nest of a Golden Eagle, White-tailed Eagle, Osprey, Barn Owl, Peregrine or Red Kite at any time of the year.

These acts of persecution may be subject to custodial sentences or fines (up to £5,000 per offence) if carried out against any bird of prey in Northern Ireland.

It is likely that the victims of wildlife crime that are found each year are only a very small proportion of the actual deaths and these crimes may be under-reported. That is why we need the public to remain vigilant and to report any suspected wildlife crimes.

The most common crimes committed against raptors are poisoning, trapping and shooting. The setting of poison baits in the open is illegal because it is indiscriminate and has the potential to kill many birds of prey as well as other wildlife, pets and livestock and/or people.

## What Can You Do? **Report It!**

In Northern Ireland if you suspect a wildlife crime has taken place contact PSNI on **101** with the following details if possible:

- That you suspect a wildlife crime
- Suspected activity, location, date and time
- Description of the person(s) involved
- Vehicle registration number, colour, model
- Whether there has been a use of firearms

Always ask for and retain a '*Police Command and Control (C&C) Reference Number*' and record the date on which you have made the report.

Alternatively if you suspect a wildlife crime and wish to provide information anonymously contact the Crimestoppers charity on **0800 555 111**.

