

What is PAW NI?

The Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime NI (PAW NI) brings together statutory agencies, non-statutory agencies and interested parties with the common goal of combating wildlife crime through publicity, education and campaigning. PAW NI partners include key government Departments, the Police Service and other enforcement agencies, environmental organisations, animal welfare groups and country sports associations.

You can contact the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) if you have any concerns about bird related public health & safety ☎ 028 9056 9551



Reporting a wildlife crime

Any information about wildlife crime should be passed immediately to the Police Service by phoning ☎ 101

- Describe your call as a Wildlife Crime report
- Give details of the (potential) crime
- Ask for an incident reference number
- Retain incident number and date

* Information can also be given anonymously via Crimestoppers

Northern Ireland

CrimeStoppers.

0800 555 111

100% anonymous. Always.

Criminal activity can be intentional, reckless or opportunistic. Reporting suspicious activities may not immediately lead to an arrest, but can help build a picture that later leads to successful enforcement action.

Reporting even the smallest pieces of information can be useful in protecting NI's wildlife.

Further information is available in the NIEA's booklet "Wildlife Law and You" (2016)

www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/wildlife-law-and-you

www.wildlifecrimeni.org



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NESTING BIRDS



This project has been kindly supported by the DoJ's Assets Recovery Community Scheme (ARCS) Fund



Nesting sites

Birds build their nests in a variety of places; our gardens, parks, hedgerows, woodlands, along river banks, and beaches, on or within houses and outbuildings. Remember they don't just nest in trees - nests can turn up anywhere!



Everyone can play a part to help breeding birds by taking simple steps to ensure nest sites aren't disturbed or destroyed. It is a sensitive time for birds as they can be easily disturbed and are at risk of predation. The adults, nests, eggs and chicks are all legally protected to help ensure that chicks fledge successfully.



What can I do to help?

PAW advises people avoid cutting or clearing hedges, trees or dense vegetation during the spring - summer months, and keep dogs on leads, to reduce the risk of disturbing nest sites. Pruning is best done in late winter after flowering and fruiting has taken place. This does not just leave nest sites undisturbed but also maintains food availability during the winter the birds need it most. If you discover birds nesting, simply leave them alone, they will only be there temporarily.

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In the garden

Birds will nest in hedges and trees or outbuildings around our homes. E.g. Robins breed from March to the end of July. They often nest close to the ground in vegetation, stone walls, outhouses and even in plant pots! Robins can raise up to three broods of chicks.



On the house or office

Birds will nest on, in or around buildings. House martins migrate from Africa to breed here. Using mud to build nests, typically under the eaves of buildings Re-using old sites or build new nests, raising up to three broods of chicks from late April to October.



On the farm

Birds will use trees, hedges, buildings and walls, as well as nesting on the ground. Yellowhammers nest near the ground in hedges, amongst scrub and in ditches around rich arable farmland. They are one of our most threatened farmland birds, with a core population in County Down. They can have up to three broods from April to the end of September.



On the river

Birds will use trees and bankside vegetation as well as manmade structures. Kingfishers use muddy banks of the river to dig nesting holes. Keeping river banks natural helps provide nesting habitat.



Nesting Birds and the Law

The Wildlife (NI) Order 1985 (as amended) protects all wild birds from unlawful killing or injury. Making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

- ◇ kill, injure or take any wild bird
- ◇ take, damage, destroy or disturb a nest whilst it is being built or is in use
- ◇ at any other time take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird on Schedule A1*
- ◇ obstruct or prevent any wild bird from using its nest
- ◇ take or destroy the egg of any wild bird
- ◇ disturb any wild bird whilst it is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young
- ◇ disturb dependent young.

*Schedule A1

provides year round nest site protection for some birds of prey including barn owl, red kite and peregrine falcon — which means their nests must not be disturbed at any time.

If convicted of an offence fines of up to £5000 and or 6 month imprisonment per offence can be applied.

