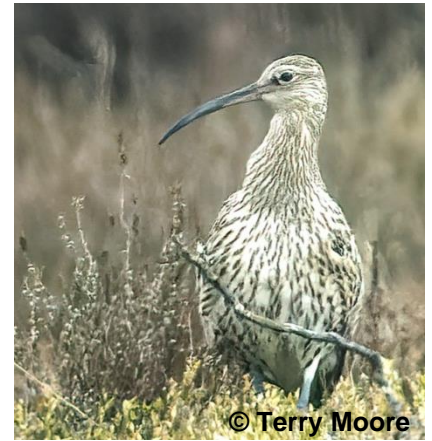




Shropshire Ornithological Society

Save our Curlews

Campaign & Appeal 2025



The Birds of Shropshire estimated that the Curlew population declined by 77% between 1990 and 2010, down to around only 160 breeding pairs, and had disappeared from 62% of the area they occupied in 1990. The decline has continued since, now down to 100–110 pairs. At the current rate of loss, the population will halve in 12 years, and virtually disappear within 24, by the year 2048. Curlew will become extinct in the County, unless urgent and effective action is taken to save them. Following a recent Curlew Action webinar on the results of the 2024 breeding season across England, when the SOS results were presented, Mary Colwell, a tireless campaigner for Curlews and chair of *Curlew Action*, said it is “important we all know the reality” and our results are “a real wake-up call for so many”.

Shropshire Ornithological Society 2005 (SOS 2005)* has recently extended its commitment to support a long-term County-wide *Save our Curlews* Campaign, by providing part-funding for 2025, promoting an Appeal to SOS and Community Wildlife Group (CWG) members, and the general public, to cover part of the remainder, hosting banking facilities, and supporting grant applications and other funding requests. The Campaign will continue to undertake nest finding, protecting nests with electric fencing, and radio-tagging and tracking chicks to find out how they use the landscape, and what happens to them. Understanding the reasons for low levels of chick survival is part of the key to an effective conservation plan.

Campaign work also involves ten independent CWGs from across the County, over 250 people who are monitoring almost all of the County Curlew population. 88-98 pairs were located in 2023. Results for 2024 have not yet been analysed, but it appears that the decline has continued.

In 2025, project work will continue around Oswestry, in the Three Parishes and Tanat to Perry CWG areas, and in the Strettons CWG area.

More funds are needed to continue with this ground-breaking work

The results are sent to the South of England Curlew Forum, the UK and Ireland Curlew Action Group, and the Curlew Recovery Partnership for England, so the work is an integral part of the case to Government for effective Curlew conservation measures.

You can read more detail about campaign and project results since 2018, and future plans, on the SOS website www.shropshirebirds.com/save-our-curlews/. It also describes the overwhelming evidence that predation by foxes and other predators is the main cause of Curlew's continuing decline here. It is clear that the annual release of millions of pheasants for shooting, only a third of which are actually shot, results in an over-abundant food supply which maintains the numbers of all the Curlew's main predators at well above naturally sustainable levels. We must continue to produce the evidence and call for immediate action to reduce the release of gamebirds.

The Appeal is vital, both to help pay for the work, and because donations demonstrate to potential funders the commitment of local people to saving our Curlews. You can donate by sending a cheque, a bank standing order, an internet banking or a bank transfer payment (see details overleaf). Whilst donations should be made out to Shropshire Ornithological Society (SOS) they should be clearly marked “Curlew Appeal.” If you are a UK taxpayer, you can increase the value of your donation by 25% if you sign and send in the Gift Aid certificate (also overleaf), so please do so.

* SOS 2005 is the not-for-profit limited company created to handle SOS's financial and property affairs.

Shropshire will be a much poorer place without Curlews. Please support the Appeal

For further information, please contact Leo Smith
SOS Curlew Campaign Co-ordinator, email leo@leosmith.org.uk, or ring 01694 720296.

Shropshire Ornithological Society - Registered Charity No. 514487
Shropshire Ornithological Society 2005 - Company Limited by Guarantee Reg. No. 5322294
Reg. Charity No. 1108166
Registered Office 1 Bank Drive, Dorrington, Shrewsbury SY5 7JH