

Red Kite in Shropshire 2021 & 2022

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Introduction

The Welsh Kite Trust and the Shropshire Raptor Study Group again tried to find the nests of all breeding pairs of Red Kite in 2021 and 2022. Efforts were again hampered by the coronavirus lockdown restrictions in 2021, although less so than in 2020. The situation returned to normal in 2022.

No report was prepared for 2021, so this report covers two years, 2021 and 2022.

Reports were received from landowners revisited in 2021 of five nests at sites that were not visited in 2020, and were therefore not included in the 2020 Report (three successful, one with well-grown young heard in the nest, and one failed). These five nests have been added to the published results. Including them, and the results of monitoring in 2021 and 2022, the significant results since the first nests were found in 2005, and the first successful breeding in 2006, include the following:-

1. 406 nests, of which at least 291 were successful, found and monitored
2. At least 502 young fledged from these nests
3. 207 fledged young tagged in the nest
4. Over 30 tags read on individual nesting adults, some seen over several years.
5. Oldest known tagged Shropshire Kite found in 2022, aged 13 years.
6. In 2021, 44 nests were found in 2021, and confirmed breeding evidence was found for a further six, the first time 50 or more breeding pairs have been located. 49 young are known to have fledged, one more than 2020, when a much lower number of nests were found.
7. In 2022, 59 nests were found, and confirmed breeding evidence was found for a further two, the first time 50 or more nests have been found. At least 67 young are known to have fledged. 50 or more young have fledged in each of the three years 2020-22, all of which were considerably higher than the previous highest (36 in 2011).

Monitoring 2021

Thirty-two nests were found and monitored by members of the Group, and another 12 were reported by local residents, making 44 found nests in all. Confirmed breeding evidence was seen or reported for another six, but the nests of none of these were found. This total of 50 compares with 37 nests found or reported in 2019, which was 12 more than in 2018 and nine more than the previous highest total (28 in 2017). We had high hopes of finding 50 in 2020, before our ambition was thwarted by the covid-19 restrictions.

In addition, there was Probable breeding evidence at nine more sites.

Of the 44 nests, 17 were at new sites, 14 were in the same nest as last year, five were at the same site, but had moved up to 200m. Two reoccupied sites last used several years ago, and the information was not reported for six sites.

The nests found were concentrated in the south-west hills (37 out of 44 were in SO27, 28, 37, 38, 39, 47, 48 and 49), but fieldwork by the Raptor Group was concentrated in these areas. More reports of Kites in the north of the County, and the south-east, would be gratefully received.

Some of these nests are very close together, and several pairs have neighbours within three kilometres.

Eleven (25%) of the 44 nests failed, probably due to the cold northerly winds that persisted through April and May. The outcome of three nests is not known.

Assuming that all chicks large enough to tag survived, at least 49 young fledged from them, one more than in 2020 (from 34 nests), and considerably higher than the previous highest, 2011, when 36 fledged from 20 nests.

Two young Kites were wing-tagged in one nest, but the wing-tagging is largely finished, now the number of nests is too large to visit a worthwhile sample.

About 150 different sites have been used since 2005. As well as the 50 sites occupied in 2021, and the nine probable breeding sites, another 62 sites used in previous years were checked, but no Kites were found there. Thirty-six other sites, with no nest for some years, were not revisited.

Monitoring 2022

Fifty-three nests were found and monitored by members of the Group, and another 6 were reported by local residents, making 59 found nests in all. Confirmed breeding evidence was seen or reported for another two, but the nests of neither of them was found. This total of 61 pairs confirmed breeding compares with 50 in 2021, 37 nests found or reported in 2019, which was 12 more than in 2018 and nine more than the previous highest total (28 in 2017). The total for 2020 is not included, as it is not comparable because of limited fieldwork due to the covid-19 restrictions.

In addition, there was Probable breeding evidence at seven more sites.

Of the 59 nests, 18 were at new sites, 21 were in the same nest as last year, 10 were at the same site, but had moved up to 200m. Two reoccupied sites last used several years ago, and the information was not reported for eight sites.

The nests found were concentrated in the south-west hills (45 out of 59 were in 10km squares SO27, 28, 37, 38, 39, 47, 48 and 49), but fieldwork by the Raptor Group was concentrated in these areas. More reports of Kites in the north of the County, and the east and south-east, would be gratefully received.

Some of these nests are very close together, and several pairs have neighbours within three kilometres.

Fifteen (25%) of the 59 nests failed, probably due to the cold strong northerly winds and dry weather that persisted through April and May. The outcome of two nests is not known. The failure rate in 2021 was the same. In 2020, only four (13%) of 29 nests failed, in a dry warm spring, a considerable improvement on the 36% failure rate in 2019, when there was continuous rain for several days in June.

Forty-two nests were successful. Assuming that all chicks large enough to tag survived, at least 69 young fledged from them, 9 more than last year (from 34 nests), compared with 52 in 2020 (from 28 nests), and considerably higher than the previous highest, 2011, when 36 fledged from 28 nests.

No young Kites were wing-tagged. The wing-tagging is finished, now the number of nests is too large to visit a worthwhile sample.

About 185 different sites have been used since 2005. As well as the 59 sites occupied in 2022, and the seven probable breeding sites, another 74 sites used in previous years were checked, but no Kites were found there. Thirty-four other sites, with no nest for some years, were not revisited.

Two unsuccessful nests were found in 2005, and between then and 2014, 59% of the total nest sites used in that 10-year period were used for one year only. Thirteen sites used between 2015 and 2017 were also used for one year only.

Figures for 2017-22 include a nest literally on the County border, near Bromfield. The border is a stream, and the wood and tree trunk was on the Herefordshire side, but the nest over-hanged the Shropshire side of the stream.

Expansion of Range

The first nest site found north of Shrewsbury (SJ41T), in 2017, has not been reoccupied since, but the other 2017 nest site in the northern half of the County (the SJ ordnance survey grid squares), 10km south-west of Shrewsbury, has been occupied each year since, successfully in 2017-20, but not in 2021 or 2022. In 2021, another pair nested only 600m distant, and raised another two young, but only one pair was present in 2022..

Another site north of Shrewsbury, in SJ41Z near Bomere Heath, was reported in 2019; the nest was found, and one young fledged. This site was apparently occupied in 2017, unknown to the Raptor Group, and three young fledged, but the pair there in 2018 apparently failed and left early. This site was occupied again in 2020, and three young fledged, in 2021 when one young fledged and in 2022 when three young fledged, all from the same tree.

The pair reported as nesting near Llanyblodwel (SJ22G) in 2018 was reported again in 2019, and Kites were seen at that location again in 2020 and 2021, but permission to access the wood was not obtainable. Nesting was eventually confirmed in 2022, but the nest failed. This site is not included in the confirmed breeding totals for previous years. The landowners reported that Kites had been present in the wood for 2-3 years prior to 2018.

In addition to this nest, the number of Kites in the north-west has increased considerably in recent years. The Tanat to Perry Community Wildlife Group surveys 43 tetrads south and south-west of Oswestry. In 2022, at least nine Kites were seen in eight tetrads, slightly fewer than 12 in seven tetrads in 2021, and in 2020. In 2019, nine were seen in eight tetrads, and in 2018 11 were seen in 10 tetrads. Prior to 2018, Kites were much more scarce, and several members who saw Kites in 2018 said it was the first time they have seen them in the area, so these numbers reflect the spread of this species. In addition to the pair nesting in SJ22G, referred to above, a second nest was found in the south of the area (in SJ32K) in 2021 and 2022. The number of casual records has also increased considerably, and two of the nine sites with probable breeding in 2021, referred to above, were in this area, near Morda and near Oswestry Old Racecourse.

Red Kite is also a target species for bird surveys carried out by other Community Wildlife Groups, covering the Severn –Vyrnwy Confluence, the Three Parishes (Weston Rhyn, St. Martin's and Gobowen - Oswestry north) and (Titterstone) Clee Hill. The number of Kites seen, and the number of tetrads where Kites were recorded, has increased steadily, and, for example, Kites were seen in more tetrads outside the main range by members of these groups in 2019 than in the whole of the six years of Atlas fieldwork 2008-13, also confirming the continuing expansion of range.

Many reports were received of individual birds in the north, including several in the vicinity of Shrewsbury and Telford, so breeding is expected there in the near future, if it hasn't occurred already. A nest was found near Buildwas, in the Severn Valley, between these two major towns, in 2022.

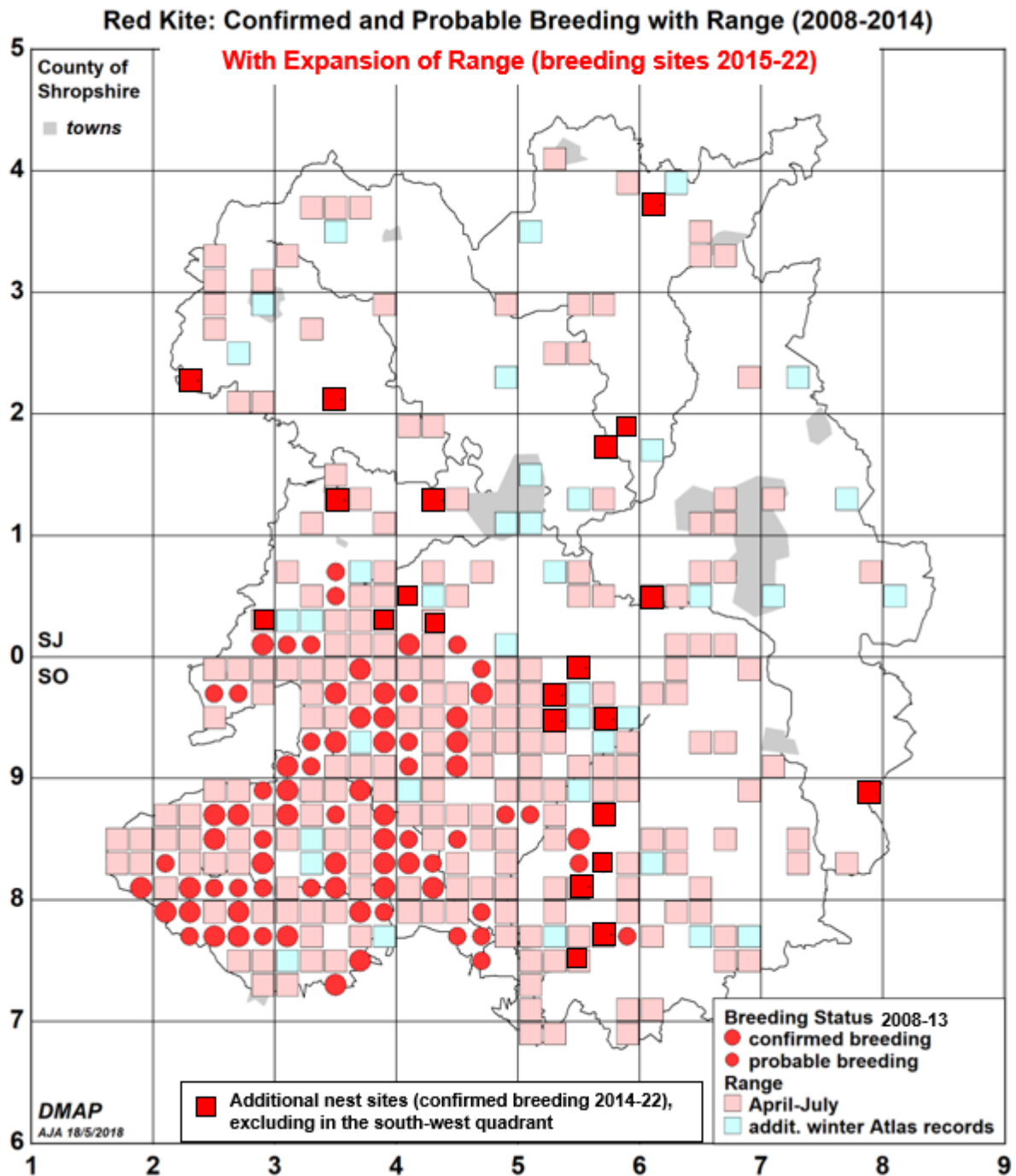
The expansion eastwards has continued as well, with a nest reported in 2019 from near Bridgnorth in SO78Z. A pair was reported at a different site near Bridgnorth in 2020, 2021 and 2022: no nest was found, but this is a probable breeding site. A nest was found on the lower western slopes of Brown Clee in 2020, and two young fledged, but the site was not occupied in 2021 or 2022, although there was probably a nest nearby. Nests were found at three other sites in the south-east, all to the west of Brown Clee, in 2022.

The successful nest found in 2019 east of Church Stretton, near Longville (SO59I), successfully fledged two young in 2020, one in 2021 and at least two in 2022. Two other nests were found in adjacent tetrads in 2021, but neither was occupied in 2022.

As the population increases and spreads, nests become harder to find, so the breeding population is now undoubtedly well over the 68 breeding pairs located in 2022

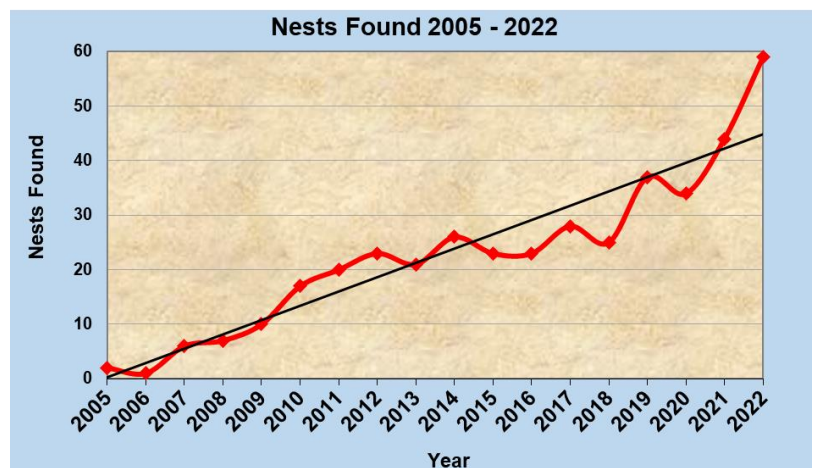
The Birds of Shropshire, published by Liverpool University Press in December 2019, included a Red Kite distribution map based on fieldwork carried out between 2008 and 2013. Each symbol represents one of the 870 tetrads (2x2 kilometre squares on the Ordnance Survey national grid) in the County. Tetrads with Confirmed and Probable breeding are represented by round red dots (larger size = confirmed breeding), pink squares are tetrads where kite was seen in the breeding season, and pale blue squares are where it was seen in winter but not the breeding season.

The tetrads containing the nests found since 2013 listed above (which excludes additional nests found in the main range, the south-west quadrant) have been added to the map, marked with red squares.

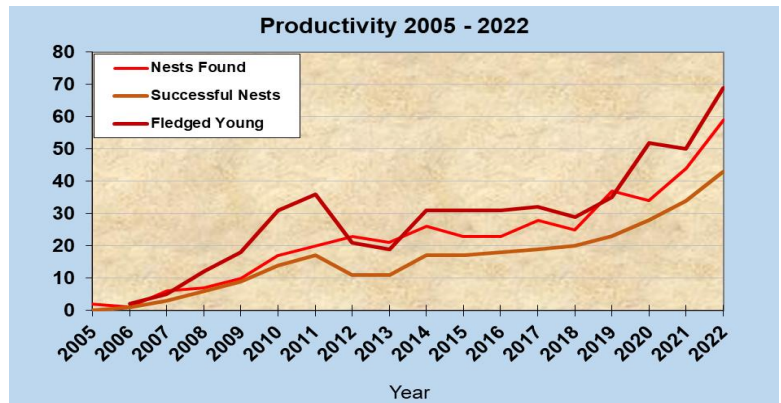


Comparison with Previous Years

Kites returned to breed here in 2005, after an absence of 130 years, and the first known successful breeding occurred the following year. The number of nests found has grown rapidly, as shown in the chart, and 44 were found in 2021. More than 50 were found for the first time in 2022. The lower number in 2020 reflects the reduction in fieldwork effort, due to coronavirus restrictions. In total, 406 nests have been found, and 291 (72.9%) have been successful.



Up until 2019, the most productive year was 2011, when 36 young fledged from only 20 nests. That total was probably exceeded in 2019, when at least 35 fledged. It was certainly exceeded in the three years since, with 52 from 28 nests in 2020, 50 from 44 nests in 2021, and 67 from 43 nests in 2022, the highest yet, albeit from a rapidly increasing number of nests.



Nests and Outcome	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Nests Found	2	1	6	7	10	17	20	23	21	26	23	23	28	25	37	34	44	59	406
Successful Nests	0	1	3	6	9	14	17	11	11	17	17	18	19	20	23	28	34	43	291
% Successful Nests	0	100	50.0	85.7	90.0	82.4	85.0	47.8	52.4	65.4	73.9	78.3	67.9	80.0	62.2	82.4	77.3	72.9	71.7
Fledged Young		2	5	12	18	31	36	21	19	31	31	31	32	29	35	52	50	67	502
Productivity / Nest		2.00	0.83	1.71	1.80	1.82	1.80	0.91	0.90	1.19	1.35	1.35	1.14	1.16	0.95	1.53	1.14	1.14	1.24
Productivity / Successful Nest		2.00	1.67	2.00	2.00	2.21	2.12	1.91	1.73	1.82	1.82	1.72	1.68	1.45	1.52	1.86	1.47	1.56	1.73

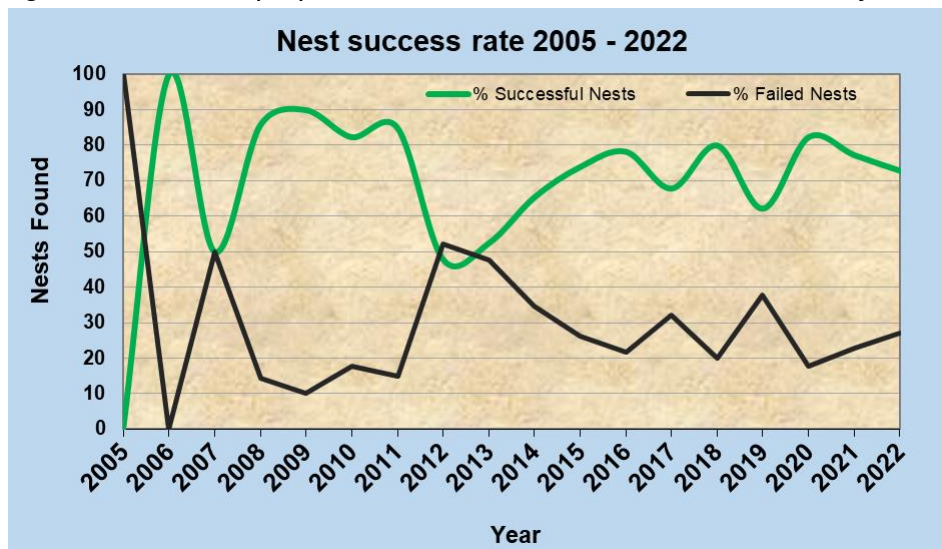
Since the first successful breeding in 2006, over 500 young are known to have flown from Shropshire nests, and 207 have been tagged. The number of nests found, successful nests and fledged young in each year is shown in the chart, and summarised in the table.

Productivity

Since the first successful nest, average productivity has been 1.24 fledged young per nest found and 1.73 per successful nest. Productivity varies from year to year, affected mainly by weather conditions. In 2020, the proportion of successful nests (82.4%), and the productivity per nest (1.53) and per successful nest (1.86), were all substantially higher than 2019, which was badly affected by severe weather, including one of the wettest June's on record. April and May 2020 were largely sunny and dry, and all three indicators of productivity were the highest since 2011, and considerably better than the annual average figure since 2006. Figures for 2021 and 2022 were closer to the average for the whole period. The annual figures are shown in the table above.

As usual, productivity in Shropshire nests was considerably higher than in the adjacent monitoring area in East Powys, where the comparable figures were an average of 0.88 fledged young per nest found and 1.31 per successful nest since 2003, and 0.9 and 1.31 respectively in 2022. Better productivity in Shropshire is attributed to better weather (generally warmer and drier), and better food supply, particularly the massive amount of Pheasant carrion available year-round from the three-quarters of a million released in the County each year for shooting.

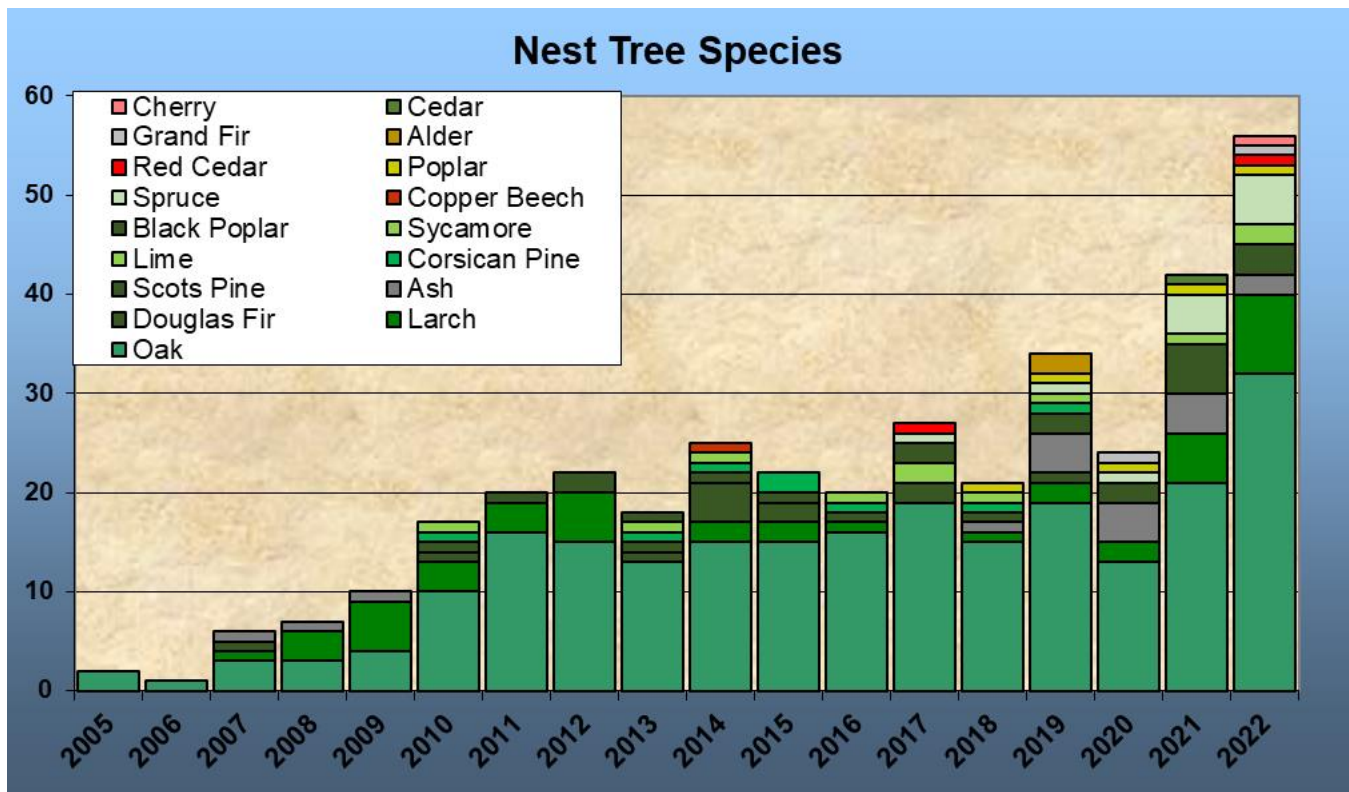
Figure 4 shows the proportion of successful and failed nests each year.



Nest Tree Species

The species of tree holding the nest has been recorded for 375 of the 406 nests found. Almost two-thirds (62%) have been in oak trees, and 11% in larches. Fifteen other species have been used, but only four species have reached double figures: Ash (18 – 5%), Scots Pine (19 – 5%), Douglas Fir (14 – 4%), and Spruce (12 – 3%) and none have exceeded 5% of the nests found. Six species have only been used once or twice. The increase in species used has reflected the growing kite population, but in 2022, of the 56 nests where the tree species was recorded, 32 (58%) were in Oaks, 8 (13%) were in Larches, 5 (9%) were in Spruces, and no other species exceeded 5.

The annual totals are shown in Figure 5.



White Kite

The white Kite seen several times near Bridges, during 2017 and in the early spring in 2018, has not been seen subsequently. No other white Kites have been reported since then either.

White Kites are leucistic, lacking the brown pigment in the feathers. They are not true albinos, as they do have pigment in the cere and legs (yellow as normal), and in the iris in the eye.

This is believed to be a result of the genetic bottleneck in the Welsh population, when there were only two breeding females in the 1930s, and in 2010 it affected about 1 in 150 Kites. Few have attempted to breed, but all those known have been males, so they may all be males. None are known to have bred successfully.

As the population has grown the genetic diversity has increased, and white Kites have become even more rare.

Poisoning

In 2014, an adult was found dead on the ground directly under one nest. There were no visible signs of injury or persecution, but the landowner had used rat poison in a nearby barn. Two well grown chicks were later found dead in the nest, presumably from the same cause. Rat poison is a common cause of death, and it is found in potentially lethal amounts in most dead Kites sent for post-mortem. The corpse of this adult was sent for post-mortem analysis immediately after it was found, but preliminary results were not received until 24 January 2017. Extensive haemorrhaging was found, similar to that “found in

birds in which high levels of anticoagulant rodenticides have been detected”, and samples were sent to the Predatory Birds Monitoring Scheme for further analysis. No further results have been received.

Another dead Kite, found at a nest site near Hopesay, was sent to the Predatory Bird Monitoring Scheme for a post-mortem in June 2021. It was a young bird, not one of the adults, and apparently died of starvation, but it was too decomposed to draw firm conclusions. No poisoning was detected.

Wing Tags

A total of 207 chicks have been wing-tagged in 126 different nests since 2006, all except 11 in 2017 or earlier, by Tony Cross of the mid-Wales Ringing Group. This involved carrying climbing equipment to the nest site, often up steep slopes, and climbing the nest tree, often twice if the young birds were brought down to the ground for ringing and measuring. Nests were, on average, about 14 metres (45 feet) high. All these chicks were reared in the wild. None were captive-reared and released. Released. BTO rings were also fitted, and the chicks were weighed and the length of the fifth primary feather was measured, which often enabled the sex of the nestling to be determined.

There were 9 tagged birds at Shropshire nest sites in 2014, but the number has declined since, with 8 in 2015, and 5 in 2016 and 2017. In 2018, there were six, including four of those present in 2017, and there were five in 2019, including three with tags read in 2018. In 2020 there were six, of which three were at the same site in 2019, two were seen for the first time in many years, and one was found for the first time since it left the nest. There were six again in 2021 (five of them seen in 2020 and in previous years, and one re-found), and there were eight in 2022, including the same six found in 2021, plus two new ones.



Pride of place goes to Cerise (Pink) 30, photographed by Simon Marlow near Clunbury in 2020. This male Kite fledged from a nest near Craven Arms in 2009, nested as a one-year-old (the only example of such precociousness in Shropshire) in 2010, but moved to a different site near Purslow in 2011, the last time he was seen

until 2020. The first photo revealed the area to be searched for the nest, and the second was taken from near the nest site, only a few metres from the 2010 site, in 2021. He was found at the same site in 2022. At 13 years old, he is the oldest known Shropshire Kite (the national longevity record is more than 26).



The next oldest known before 2022 was an 11-year-old, female black L1, found nesting near Bridges in 2019, 2.0km from her natal site. The largest of a brood of three tagged in July 2008, she was found at a nest site in 2010 and 2011 (also 2km from her natal site), then at a second nest site in 2013, 2015 and 2019, but not in the years in between. The distance between her two known nest sites is only 0.8km. She was not found in 2020 or subsequently, although both previous nest sites were checked each year.

A nine-year-old was provisionally identified as a male, Cerise 46, near Mainstone in 2018, one of a brood of two raised near Bridges, 13km distant, in 2009. The male at the same site in 2019 was also tagged, but it couldn't be read. It may well have been the same bird. The site was unoccupied in 2020, and subsequently.

Three white-tagged birds from 2011 nests have been present at breeding sites for some years. and were present in 2021 and 2022. They were 12 years old in 2022.

- White / black A, a female fledged on the western slopes of the Long Mynd, was present at her nest site near Bishop's Castle for the eighth consecutive year.



- White / black O fledged from the same nest as Cerise 30 two years later, and was found at a nest near Edgton in 2013 and 2014, but was not seen again until 2020, on the other side of Edgton. Kites had then been present at this site for the three years that the current owners have lived there (Janet Cobb, *pers.comm*), so it is likely that this tagged kite had then been at this site for several years. It was present again in 2021 and 2022.

- White / black Q, which fledged near Purslow, was first seen at a nest near Bucknell in 2016. He was not seen in 2020, but was probably overlooked in that year.

There were also two Yellow / black tagged Kites from 2013 nests

- Yellow/black 01, an eight-year-old female, fledged from a nest near Knighton, and nested just west of Clun for the sixth year running; she had nested at a different site nearby in 2016.
- Yellow / black 07 nested near Lydham in 2017. It was found at a winter roost site near Norbury in the winter of 2017-18. A tagged bird was at a nest near the roost site in 2018, but the tag could not be read. However, this female has been at the same nest, which was her natal site, each year since 2019.



Another bird tagged in 2015, at the same site on the western slopes of the Long Mynd as White / black A (Green / black 29), probably a female, was found at a nest in 2020, 5.5km north of its natal site. It has not been seen since, and was not at this site in 2021 or 2022.

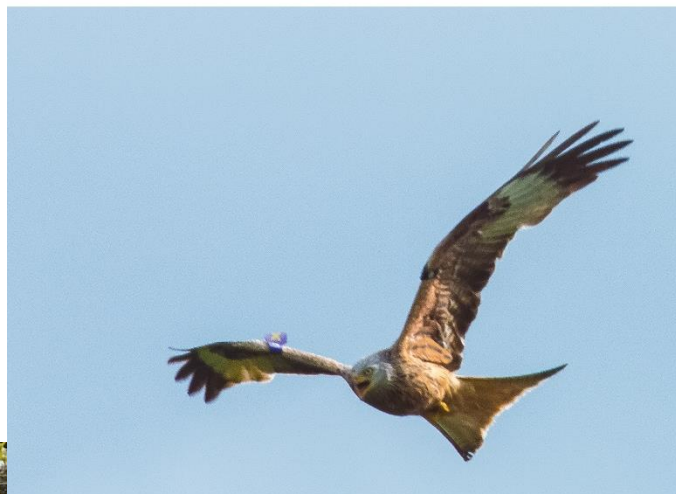
Green/black 46, a female from a nest near Knighton in 2015, was photographed near Kempton in February 2021, but it has not been found at a nest site.

Black / yellow E5, tagged at the same nest on the western slopes of the Long Mynd as White / black A in 2017, has been seen regularly at a farmyard near Marton each year since 2019, but her nest site remains undiscovered.



Two tagged birds were recorded for the first time in 2022

- Purple / black X, a female, was found at a nest near Chapel Lawn, only 1.6km from the nest where she fledged in 2016.
- Yellow X3, also a female, was found at a nest near Church Stretton. This tag is not one from the Mid-Wales and Shropshire tagging scheme, and is probably the first known example of a Kite from one of the reintroduction programmes nesting here. She was two years old, and had been caught and tagged in north Dorset in November 2020, 186km to the south, 4-5 months after fledging. It is likely that she was caught near her natal site, though some recently fledged young move a long way, and there is often an influx of Kites into south-west England in late autumn, so its origins are not known for certain. The local 2022 nest was unsuccessful.



A total of 32 different tags have been read at nest sites, 13 males, 13 females and four sex unknown. Excluding the bird from

north Dorset, males have moved an average of 17 km from their natal site, and females 17km. However, three of these (two males and a female) were long-distance colonisers from Wales in 2007 and 2008. If these three are excluded, the averages are 8km for males and 10km for females. If subsequent colonisers from Wales and a female that returned to Wales are also excluded (i.e. only birds that moved within Shropshire are included) the averages are 7km for males but still 10km for females. These figures illustrate again how sedentary Kites are, but there is a tendency for females to move further.

The average age of first breeding is 2.7 years (excluding those that were first found at 5 years or older, which had probably been overlooked, or at different nest sites, previously), and average age of last observed breeding is over 5 years (including 7 still alive). One has reached 13, four have reached 11, two have reached 9, two have reached 8 and one has reached 5 years old. In addition, Blue E5 was 10 years old when last seen in 2020, and Green 46 was 6 years old when seen.

The other notable recovery was killed by a car, early in 2015, 8 years 7months 7days after ringing. She was one of the early colonisers, but had lost both wing tags before her death.

Photographers who take digital pictures of Kites are requested to blow them up and check for wing-tags. If the photo is sharp, the tag can often be read, as in the cases above, and such photos provide very useful information.

No tags were read at winter roost sites (see below).

Reporting Tagged Kites

Reports of tagged Kites should be sent to Leo Smith (contact details below), or reported online to the Welsh Kite Trust website, www.welshkitetrust.wales

Winter Roost Sites

Kites often form roosts in the mid-winter months. The first roost was found near Kempton early in 2009, with up to 14 kites present, but only one tagged individual was seen at the roost on all six visits. Assuming that the turnover of tagged and untagged kites was the same, around 20 different individuals used the roost. A larger roost was found at the same site in 2010, and the tagged birds indicated that the majority were one-year-olds from Wales. The furthest travelled came over 100km, and four more came more than 50km. The roost was visited 43 times, no individual was present for as many as half the occasions, and seven out of 17 tagged individuals were only seen once. A second roost, near Wentnor, was also found in 2010. Tags suggested that most there were one-year-olds from Shropshire nests. Again, knowing that individuals did not join the roost every night, and assuming that the turnover of tagged kites was the same as untagged kites, around 60 different individuals were present at the two roosts in 2010. Only three were seen at both roosts.

Subsequent attempts have been made to find winter roosts. One of up to 32 individuals was found in 2012, but the birds disappeared quickly into the wood, and no tags could be read. No regular roost site was found in the following three years, but three winter roosts were found and monitored in 2016 (near Aston-on-Clun, maximum of 39 on 22 January; near Norbury, maximum 17 Kites on 23 January; and near Wentnor, maximum seven on 27 January).

In 2017-18, four roosts were found, near Onibury (max. 6 on 19 January), near Lydham (max. 29 on 27 December 2017), near Kempton (max 9 on 13 February 2018) and near Aston-on-Clun (29 on 2 and 29 January).

In the winter of 2018-19, five roosts were found, near Plowden, Clungunford, Norbury, Aston-on-Clun and Lydbury North. A monthly visit was made to each roost, a total of 29 visits altogether. The maximum count at each site was 29 on 20 January, 6 on 4 February, 7 on 17 January, 19 on 28 February and 9 on 26 January, respectively. No tagged Kites were seen, but the roosts were usually at the top of a hill, and the light was often poor, so it was often impossible to reach a position to look for tags.

In 2019-20, five roosts were found, near Aston-on-Clun, Corvedale, Norbury, Onibury, and Plowden, three of which are similar locations to last year. Visits were made monthly, and the maximum count at each site was 10 on 9 December, 8 on three separate dates, 24 on 21 December, 17 on 7 February and 9 on two separate dates, respectively. No tagged Kites were seen.

In 2020-21, four roosts were found, near Aston-on-Clun, Norbury, Plowden and, three of which are similar locations to last year. Visits were made monthly, and the maximum count at each site was 12 on three separate dates, 8 on three separate dates, 24 on 21 December, 17 on 7 February and 9 on two separate dates, respectively. In 2021-22, roosts were seen at the same four locations, with maximum counts of 29, 7, 9 and 19. No tagged Kites were seen.

The total of these maximum counts is 64 in 2021-22 and 66 in 2020-21, similar to the total of 70 in 2017-18 and 2018-19. As there has been little evidence in the past of tagged Kites visiting more than one roost, and the maximum count has been about half the total number visiting each roost, it is likely that the total number of Kites involved was well over 100 in each winter. As it appears that breeding pairs roost close to their nest sites, and monitoring of

tagged birds at the early roosts referred to above found that a high proportion of them were in their first year, these are all likely to be Kites in their first or second year.

All these roosts were in the south-west, but, given the expansion of range of the breeding population, it is likely that there are roosts now in other parts of the County too.

The monitoring of winter roost sites confirms that the County population remains healthy, but the population in the south west may have stabilised.

The future of Kite Tagging

It has become impossible to tag a high proportion of the population, and the number found at breeding sites has been declining steadily since 2010. It was decided to continue tagging chicks in the nest in 2017, in the hope of reaching 200 tagged young from Shropshire nests. This target was just missed, so a further seven were tagged in 2018. Two more in 2019, and another two in 2021, brought the total to 207. None were tagged in 2022.

To ensure that as much as possible is learnt from the tagging, finding nest sites in the hope of locating tagged adults will continue. All the surviving tagged Kites should have joined the breeding population by 2023 or 2024, but some may nest at unknown locations. .

If anyone knows the location of a previous Kite nest, or finds one in 2024 or subsequently, please don't assume we know about it. Photos of tagged kites that we have received show that there are many that we are not aware of. Please tell Leo Smith 01694 720296, leo@leosmith.org.uk

Further Information

A similar monitoring report for the adjacent area of East Powys (Radnorshire), and other information, can be found on the Welsh Kite Trust's website www.welshkitetrust.wales

Leo Smith
August 2023

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