



BIRDS

There are more than 400 bird species regularly found in the UK. Some are resident breeding species, others are migrants. Birds occur in both rural and urban areas, with many species adapted to living in bridges, buildings, houses and gardens. Used and unused nests made of twigs, grass and moss, droppings and food pellets or food remains may also be found.

Most birds nest in scrub or hedgerows as well as trees, but some build nests in or on buildings, ledges, cliffs and on the ground.

Birds in the UK typically build their nests and lay their eggs between March and August. The peak months for breeding are May and June. Exceptions include the barn owl, which may breed for a longer period, and the collared dove and wood pigeon, which nest all year round. However, birds may be found breeding on a construction site at unexpected times of the year.

All wild birds are protected by law throughout the UK and in particular when they are nesting. It is illegal to kill, injure or take any wild bird, or damage or destroy the nest while that nest is in use or being built, or eggs of breeding birds. This includes commonly seen species, such as blackbirds and robins.

Certain birds receive additional protection whereby it is illegal to disturb them when they are nesting (e.g. barn owl, peregrine falcon, kingfisher, black redstart etc).

If nesting birds are found on site, all works in that area will have to stop until the birds have completed breeding. Nesting sites should be inspected only by experienced ecologists. Works must not damage the nests of breeding birds or be conducted near the nests of those species receiving additional protection. Birds may nest on machinery or scaffolding and other temporary site structures. If this happens the equipment cannot be used until the birds have finished nesting, and areas may need to be sealed off



to prevent disturbance. Where possible avoid clearance works during the nesting season.

Breaking the law can lead to fines of up to £5000 per offence and, potentially, prison sentences of up to six months. Any vehicle used to commit the offence may be forfeited.

Both the company and/or individuals can be held liable.