



giving
nature
a home

Name: Buzzard



History

Buzzard numbers in the UK have varied. During the 19th century many were killed until they were only found in the west of England, Wales and Scotland. Fewer were killed during the two World Wars and killing them was banned in 1954.

However, just as buzzard numbers were beginning to recover, most of their food disappeared in the 1950s when the myxomatosis disease killed many of the UK's rabbits.

More recently, buzzards are faring much better. Between 1970 and 2015, buzzard numbers increased by 465%.

What is special about this bird?

Buzzards are sometimes called "telegraph pole eagles" because of their large size and habit of hunting from perches. Individual buzzards can vary a lot in colour, from very pale to dark brown, making them tricky to identify.

General info

Scientific name: *Buteo buteo*

Size: An average of 54cm long with a wingspan of 120cm (the average armspan of a 9-year-old child is 1.3m).

Weight: Up to 1.2kg – females weigh more than males.

Where they live: Since 2000, they have nested in every UK county, on farmland, hills and moorland.

How long they live: Buzzards usually live about 12 years. The oldest recorded wild bird lived for 30 years, five months and 21 days.

What they eat: Mainly small mammals, but also birds, reptiles, amphibians, larger insects and even earthworms! In winter they will eat carrion (dead creatures).

Conservation status: The buzzard is the UK's most common bird of prey. It is on our Green List, which means that we have no concerns about it.

Fascinating fact

A buzzard's call sounds like a mewling cat. Starlings and jays often impersonate it.