

Raptor Persecution UK

Peregrine found shot on RSPB nature reserve in Peak District National Park

RaptorPersecutionUK

May 2, 2024

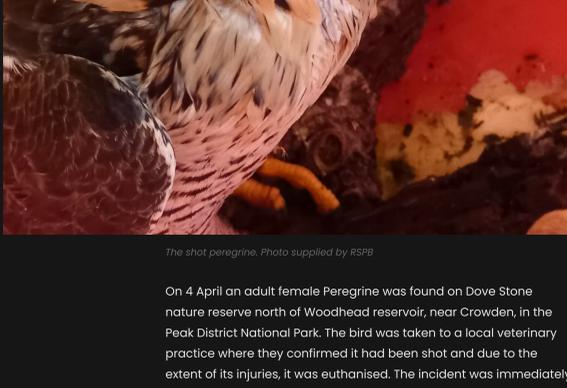
2024 persecution incidents, News, Persecution Incidents in England

peregrine, shooting

Press release from the RSPB (2nd May 2024):

SHOT PEREGRINE FOUND ON DOVE STONE NATURE RESERVE IN PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK

- A shot Peregrine was found in early April on Dove Stone nature reserve, land owned by United Utilities and managed in partnership with the RSPB
- Due to the severity of its injuries the Peregrine was euthanised
- This is the latest incident in catalogue of raptor persecution incidents in the Peak District
- The RSPB is appealing to the public for information relating to this incident
- The RSPB has offered a £5,000 reward for information which leads to a successful conviction for this wildlife crime. This amount has been matched by the Peak District National Park Authority, taking the reward to £10,000.



The shot peregrine. Photo supplied by RSPB

On 4 April an adult female Peregrine was found on Dove Stone nature reserve north of Woodhead reservoir, near Crowden, in the Peak District National Park. The bird was taken to a local veterinary practice where they confirmed it had been shot and due to the extent of its injuries, it was euthanised. The incident was immediately reported to Derbyshire Police.



The grounded peregrine. Photo supplied by RSPB

X-rays showed shotgun pellets lodged in the elbow and shoulder of the bird's left wing. An expert post-mortem also revealed a puncture wound in the bird's chest caused by shotgun pellets and concluded that the bird was shot at or near the location it was, as the injuries it sustained would have prevented it from flying.



X-ray showing shot gun pellets lodged in the peregrine's body. Image supplied by RSPB

Although Peregrine populations are recovering in many lowland areas across the UK, breeding Peregrines are missing from some upland areas in England due to illegal persecution. The RSPB has recorded 182 confirmed incidents of Peregrine persecution across the UK from 2003 to 2022. Between 2018 and 2022 alone, 30 Peregrines were killed or injured in England, including 19 which were shot. Data shows that nationally a significant proportion of raptor persecution incidents are linked to land managed for gamebird shooting. In 2022 at least 64% of confirmed incidents of raptor persecution in the UK were associated with land managed for gamebird shooting.

Mark Thomas, RSPB Head of Investigations UK: *"To think that this stunning bird was found shot at Dove Stone – a place which we help manage for the benefit and safety of species such as the Peregrine – is shocking.*

"This is just the latest incident of raptor persecution in the Dark Peak, a notorious blackspot for birds of prey, where these species should naturally be thriving. If anyone has any information about this crime, please contact us or the police."

Chief Executive of the Peak District National Park Authority, Phil Mulligan added: *"It's deeply concerning to see a species as iconic as the Peregrine shot within our National Park, and so much more distressing during the crucial breeding season for many of our birds of prey. This is therefore not just the loss of a single bird of prey, but impacting on a potential further generation when every one of these charismatic raptors counts.*

"Our birds of prey of all shapes and sizes have a right to call the Peak District home without fear of falling victim to acts of wildlife crime. That's why we have committed to supporting the reward for information in this case, and I would urge anyone to contact the police regarding this or other potential incidents that may be putting wildlife at risk."

Chris Wilkinson, Derbyshire Police Rural Crime Team: *"It is a sad fact that bird of prey crime is still prevalent in Derbyshire and particularly concerning is that this incident appears to have occurred on an RSPB reserve. We are keen to speak with anyone who may have information about this crime"*.

If you have any information, please call Derbyshire Police on 101 and quote crime reference number: 24000198336. Alternatively, you can call the RSPB anonymously on their dedicated Raptor Crime Hotline on 0300 999 0101.

ENDS

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8 thoughts on "Peregrine found shot on RSPB nature reserve in Peak District National Park"

dblenki

May 2, 2024 at 3:36 pm

just shows how these killers are absolute morrobs & don't care for wildlife

Reply

oj55

May 2, 2024 at 4:29 pm

Is it not possible, in some way, to set up some covert cameras around this notorious area to catch those who are intent on murdering our raptor population?

I have no real idea if this is at all possible, not being local to the area nor knowing the terrain in the Peak District National Park where these murders happen. So my apologies if this is a stupid suggestion

Reply

spaghnum morose

May 2, 2024 at 11:16 pm

I've always thought the same – that the prospect of remote recording device on a powerful telescope (hidden in vegetation) that could monitor a whole hillside from say a mile away would really take the fun out of it for keepers and inhibit their dirty deeds. I would say it is very possible given the technology we see today in similar open (usually battlefield) landscapes. It would be very useful I reckon and could be one element of a go-to range of monitoring tactics that could easily and cost-effectively be done in that area and others. Terrain & practicalities could all be overcome and worked with, the knowledge of local raptor monitors, investigators and volunteers, etc could all be harnessed. But while landowners like United Utilities might allow it I suppose (I honestly don't know), the Owners & Agents of most grouse moors would raise absolute hell in the corridors of power and prevent any potentially fruitful schemes from getting authorised. For that reason I think it's never been properly explored and unless there's some sensible changes made to the law, it never will be. I think the nearest there is to it is the raptor monitors and birdwatcher-moorland monitor / volunteer types doing it in person, taking turns to sit out for hours in all weathers and I think they are hated by estates as much as RSPB Investigations team are!

Reply

Keith Dancy

May 2, 2024 at 4:38 pm

Tangential observation: BBC2 will be repeating QI on Friday 3rd May at 22.00, where grouse shooting, national parks, moorland... and the fate of peregrines (among others) will be (fairly briefly) mentioned.

"Chris Packham and anti-grouse shooting activists" (IIRC) come to mind. I wasn't impressed.

(Beware: It is the *shortened* version of the original QI XL... so maybe iPlayer?)

Reply

Amanda P

May 2, 2024 at 8:32 pm

This is so terribly sad

Reply

alsere32

May 3, 2024 at 8:55 am

Perhaps 1 or 2 of these specific Grouse moors would benefit from a mass trespass once the breeding seasons over to scatter grouse and spoil their fun.

Reply

John L

May 3, 2024 at 6:09 pm

This is much more than just a wildlife crime. From reading the report it would appear that whoever committed this crime was trespassing with a firearm on a nature reserve and land owned by United Utilities. It is a criminal offence under the Firearms Act to trespass on land with a firearm. It is also a criminal offence to possess a loaded firearm in a public place (the gun must have been loaded if the peregrine was shot). If the public have access to the nature reserve, which I assume they will do then by definition the nature reserve is a public place. So it would appear Derbyshire police have some very serious and worrying firearms offences to investigate. So I hope the scope of their investigation meets the seriousness of what has taken place, and it isn't dismissed as just another wildlife incident.

Reply

Karen disillusioned

May 3, 2024 at 9:15 pm

Such a tragic affair and in a place of supposed safety to such a beautiful bird just hope karma strikes the bastards's.

Reply

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