



Save our Curlews Appeal



www.shropshirebirds.com
SOS Church
Stretton Branch



We have been monitoring local Curlews since 2017, and found 9 - 10 pairs, similar to previous years. However, we think that at least two pairs have disappeared since we started, only five years ago.

There is a real danger that we will lose these iconic birds for ever, unless we can find out why they are disappearing, and take action to halt and reverse the decline. Remind yourself of what we might lose, by listening to the Curlew's evocative and mournful song on www.british-birdsongs.uk/curlew/?type1585

In 2021, the Shropshire Ornithological Society (SOS) worked with the Strettons area Community Wildlife Group to find nests, put an electric fence around them to protect the eggs from predators, and then fix radio-tags to the chicks and track them to see how they use the landscape, and what happens to them. Not enough young birds fledge to replace the older birds dying off. We need to know why.

Five nests were found and fenced, with landowners help. Eleven chicks were radio-tagged and tracked, but all 11 were predated within a few days of hatching.

Circumstances change each year, so we need to do the research for three successive years to draw reliable conclusions. It is expensive, but we have another grant towards the cost from the National Trust's Stepping Stones Project, via a Green Recovery Heritage Lottery grant, but we need to raise much more to carry it out.

Please use the form overleaf for your donation.

If you pay income tax, please complete the Gift Aid certificate too. This increases the value of your donation by 25%, because SOS can claim the Gift Aid from HMRC.

If the appeal raises more than we need to complete the planned work in 2022, the money will be carried forward to 2023.

Curlew Facts and Figures

Curlew is the "most pressing bird conservation priority in the UK", because we have an estimated 28% of the European, and 19-27% of the world, population. It is on the national *Red List of Birds of Conservation Concern* 4, because of a decline of 62% in the UK between 1969 and 2014.

In Shropshire, it declined from about 700 breeding pairs in 1990 to 160 in 2010 (a loss of 77%), and it disappeared from 62% of the Atlas survey squares (tetrads) between 1985-90 and 2008-13. The decline has continued, but the County holds almost 30% of the total in southern England. At the current rate of decline, the County population will half in about 13 years, and become virtually extinct in 25. Curlew is on the *Red List of Breeding Birds of Conservation Concern in Shropshire*, published by SOS in 2020.

You can find more information about local Curlews, including details of how to make donations and where to send them, on our website www.shropscwgs.org.uk/strettons-area-wildlife-group/ or contact Leo Smith (01694 720296, leo@leosmith.org.uk)

The Appeal is
supported by

