



Shropshire Ornithological Society

# Save our Curlews

## Campaign & Appeal



*The Birds of Shropshire* estimated that the Curlew population declined by 77% between 1990 and 2010, down to around only 160 pairs, and had disappeared from 62% of the area they occupied in 1990. They have continued to decline since, down to below 120 pairs. At the current rate of loss, the population will halve in 12 years, and virtually disappear within 25. There is a real danger that Curlew will become extinct in the County, unless urgent and effective action is taken to save them.

Shropshire Ornithological Society 2005 (SOS 2005)\* has committed to support a long-term County-wide *Save our Curlews* Campaign, by providing funding for three years, promoting an Appeal to SOS and Community Wildlife Group (CWG) members, and the general public, hosting banking facilities, and supporting grant applications and other funding requests. The Campaign will continue to undertake nest finding, protecting nests with electric fencing, and radio-tagging and tracking chicks to find out how they use the landscape, and what happens to them. Understanding the reasons for low levels of chick survival is part of the key to an effective conservation plan.

Campaign work also involves ten independent CWGs from across the County, over 300 people who are monitoring about three-quarters of the County Curlew population.

In 2022, project work was carried out in the Upper Clun, Clee Hill and Strettons CWG areas. Nine nests were found. Four were predated, but 18 chicks hatched from the other five, and all were tagged. All except three were predated. The exceptions apparently died of natural causes, surrounded by thick impenetrable silage. This result is even worse than last years, when all except one of 21 tagged chicks were predated. Average survival was less than seven days, a small fraction of the 35 days each chick needs to fledge. We obtained similar results in 2018 and 2019.

**More funds are needed for this ground-breaking work. In 2023, it is intended to continue in the Strettons area, and spread this vital conservation work to CWG areas around Oswestry.**

The results are sent to the South of England Curlew Forum, the UK and Ireland Curlew Action Group and the Curlew Recovery Partnership for England, so the work is an integral part of the case to Government for effective Curlew conservation measures.

You can read more detail about campaign and project results since 2018, and future plans, on the SOS website [www.shropshirebirds.com/save-our-curlews/](http://www.shropshirebirds.com/save-our-curlews/). It also describes the overwhelming evidence that predation by foxes and other predators is the main cause of Curlew's continuing decline. It is clear that the annual release of millions of pheasants for shooting, only a third of which are actually shot, results in an over-abundant food supply which maintains the numbers of all the Curlew's main predators at well above naturally sustainable levels. We must continue to produce the evidence and call for immediate action to reduce the release of gamebirds.

Donations to the Appeal are vital, both to help pay for the work, and because they demonstrate to potential funders the commitment of local people to saving Shropshire's Curlews. You can donate by sending a cheque, a bank standing order, an internet banking or a bank transfer payment (see details overleaf). Please note that it is essential that whilst donations should be made out to Shropshire Ornithological Society (SOS) they should be clearly marked "Curlew Appeal." If you are a UK taxpayer, you can increase the value of your donation by 25% if you sign and send in the Gift Aid certificate (also overleaf), so please do so.

\* SOS 2005 is the not-for-profit limited company created to handle SOS's financial and property affairs.

## Shropshire will be a much poorer place without Curlews. Please support the Appeal

For further information, please contact Leo Smith  
SOS Curlew Campaign Co-ordinator, email [leo@leosmith.org.uk](mailto:leo@leosmith.org.uk), or ring 01694 720296.

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# Donations

**Please note that it essential that all donations can be identified as being for the “Curlew Appeal”**

Cheques should be made payable to SOS, endorsed on the reverse “**Curlew Appeal**” and posted to Brian Andrews, SOS, 6 Sytche Close, Much Wenlock TF13 6JJ, together with the signed Gift Aid Certificate below.

Donations by internet banking, bank transfer or bank standing order should be paid in to the **Shropshire Ornithological Society Account at CAF Bank:**

**Sort Code: 40 52 40**  
**A/c No.: 00011946**

Please ensure that your payment carries a Reference which will identify you and the fund to which it is to be paid e.g.: Ref: Smith, L.N. Curlew Appeal  
N.B. If you make a donation by internet banking, bank transfer or standing order, please sign and post the Gift Aid Certificate as well.

**Donation amount** .....

Name: .....

Address: .....

## Gift Aid Declaration

Tax rules allow us to claim 25p for every £ you donate to the Curlew Appeal from HMRC. If you are a UK taxpayer, please sign the appropriate section below.

### UK Taxpayers - make your gift worth more for wildlife...at no extra cost to you

I would like to Gift Aid all subscriptions and donations I make today and any I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to Shropshire Ornithological Society. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that I if pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signature .....

Date .....

**Register me for Gift Aid with Shropshire Ornithological Society (please sign)**

I am NOT a UK tax payer (do not need to sign)

I do not wish to Gift Aid my donations (do not need to sign)

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax refund due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid Donations on your Self-Assessment Tax Return or ask HM Revenue & Customs to adjust your tax code. Please notify Shropshire Ornithological Society if you want to cancel this declaration, change your name or home address or no longer pay sufficient tax equal to all of your Gift Aid donations on your income or capital gains.