



Press Release - 30th October 2019
-Marsden, Yorkshire

Survey shows that moorland bird species on Peak District moors have increased

A survey of breeding birds on moors in the Peak District National Park has shown an increase in the breeding wader populations in contrast with national declines, as well as in ravens and raptors.

The 2018 Moorland Breeding Bird Survey – which was carried out during the breeding season, between April and June and coordinated by the Moors for the Future Partnership – announced its findings this evening. The results showed that:

- A greater number of species increased than declined
- Increase in breeding wader populations, in contrast with national declines
- Increases in ravens and raptors reflect national recovery
- Mixed songbird trends
- Moorland trends independently validated by BBS
- The Peak District supports >1% of UK population of red grouse, golden plover, curlew and ring ouzel

This was the first time in 14 years that the moor's breeding bird population had been measured, and the Peak District Moorland Group worked together with Natural England and affiliated organisations of Moors for the Future to discover how moorland birds are faring on the moors of the Peak District.

Specialist surveyors covered 500 square kilometres of moorland, visiting each area twice, to record the presence and behaviour of birds. The data was then surveyed by the British Trust for Ornithology and compared to previous surveys, which took place in 1990 and most recently in 2004.

The Peak District is a unique environment, home to a number of bird species which are classed as “priority” when it comes to conservation. The Peak District Moors Special Protection Area is a designated protection site for the short-eared owl, merlin, and golden plover, and both waders, such as the curlew, lapwing and snipe, and birds of prey benefit from the habitat management of the moorland shooting estates.

The Peak District Moorland Group work to promote the positive contribution that moorland management brings to the unique habitat of the Peak District moors, and the diverse wildlife that it is home to.

“Gamekeepers and Moorland Managers welcome the results from the 2018 Breeding Bird Survey, which clearly shows that the assemblages of birds on Moorland that are managed for sustainable grouse production, with best practice principles, show a marked increase compared to those areas that do not have the same level of intervention”, said Richard Bailey, coordinator of the Peak District Moorland Group.

“The Peak District is a unique National Park, with 13 million visitors per year. These Managed Moorland areas and the communities that live and work on them do a fantastic job of keeping disturbance to a minimum in the spring nesting time, exercising legal predator control, incorporating ‘fit for purpose’ fire mitigation into habitat management work and successfully producing breeding numbers of red and amber listed birds which are increasing compared to a downward trend in many other areas”.

The survey was supported by funding from Natural England, the Moorland Association, National Trust, RSPB, Severn Trent, United Utilities and Yorkshire Water.

For further information, please contact info@peakdistrictmoorlandgroup.co.uk