

2015 GRMG Peregrine Survey, Gloucestershire

As a group, the Gloucestershire Raptor Monitoring Group (GRMG) decided to continue the national 2014 Peregrine Survey led by the BTO in 2015 at a county level. A team of volunteers, largely those who contributed to the 2014 survey, as well as key group members agreed to take part again to once again monitor the key sites surveyed in 2014. A summary of these findings is given in this report and all sites have been kept confidential due to the risk of persecution that exists for many raptor species.

Coverage

In total, 25 sites were surveyed during the 2015 season and were categorised into the following types of site; natural cliff, quarry (used or disused), pylon or building. It is important to note that no new nest sites were found during this study and the 25 study sites were taken from the results of the 2014 national survey.

Only two of the 25 sites failed to be checked this year after being surveyed previously and this was due to locational factors. One, for example, is a large quarry with difficult access and a limited view once inside.

Nest outcomes

Fourteen of the 23 sites were found to have active nests. A summary of the outcomes at those nests can be seen in the table below.

Type of site	Number of nests (incubated)	Number of successful nests (fledged young)	Number of fledged young (minimum)
Quarry	6	5	11
Building	3	3	9
Pylon	2	1	2
Natural cliff	3	2	4
<i>Totals</i>	14	11	26
Change from 2014	-3	-4	-12

Unsuccessful sites

There are a variety of reasons for unsuccessful nests this year. As previously mentioned, one quarry in particular is a difficult site to monitor and therefore yielded no actual results; however birds were seen entering from a distance which could lead us to assume a nest was successful here. This is often the case for Peregrine sites, they are often out of view and difficult to monitor, which was the case for two sites this year. We are also aware of two sites which were successful in terms of incubating, however surveyors could not see well enough into nest sites to give certain numbers, or even be sure that birds had hatched.

In terms of failing nests, one was sited at a quarry and the other on a pylon. In the case of the quarry the young fell out of the scrape before fledging and in the case of the pylon which failed the young here were unfortunately blown out in a strong gale.

Comparison to 2014

If we compare these results to those of 2014, numbers are slightly down for Peregrines in the county with fewer young fledged this year. Two sites this year failed after incubation due to natural causes and two sites were not as extensively monitored so numbers fledged there are uncertain.

Moving forward

The GRMG will repeat this survey again in 2016 and potentially yearly, for at least five years. Through word of mouth and our submissions from supporters we will continue to add to the list of peregrine breeding sites (both potential and confirmed) to include in the survey.

Each year we will encourage others to take part with us to allow greater coverage of sites to give an even more reliable set of survey results. Do let us know if you monitor any sites so that we can include the data in our reports and remember to monitor within the law as to not cause a disturbance to the birds.