

What to do if you find a rare bird

RSPB: -

If you discover a rare bird, please bear the following in mind:

- Consider the potential impact of spreading the news and make an effort to inform the landowner (or, on a nature reserve, the warden) first. Think about whether the site can cope with a large number of visitors and whether sensitive species might be at risk, such as breeding terns, flocks of wading birds or rare plants. The County Bird Recorder or another experienced birdwatcher can often give good advice
- On private land, always talk to the landowner first. With a little planning, access can often be arranged
- 'Twitches' can raise money for a local reserve, other wildlife project or charity. Consider organising a voluntary collection at access points to the site
- Rare breeding birds are at risk from egg-collectors and some birds of prey from persecution. If you discover a rare breeding species that you think is vulnerable, contact the RSPB, which has considerable experience in protecting rare breeding birds, and report it to the County Bird Recorder or the Rare Breeding Birds Panel. Also, consider telling the landowner – in most cases, this will ensure that the nest is not disturbed accidentally

Some useful guidelines

- If you have the opportunity to see a rare bird, enjoy it, but don't let your enthusiasm override common sense.
- In addition to the guidelines above:
 - If you go to see a rare bird, park sensibly, follow instructions and consider making a donation if requested
 - Don't get too close for a photograph – you'll earn the wrath of everyone else if you flush the bird out of sight
 - Be patient if the viewing is limited, talk quietly and give others a chance to see the bird too
 - Do not enter private areas without permission
 - Birds should never be flushed in important wildlife habitats or where there are other nesting or roosting birds nearby. Birds should not be flushed more frequently than every two hours nor within two hours of sunrise or sunset, so the bird has chance to feed and rest

Natural England: -

in the case where people are using callers on a SSSI: -

1. The owners/managers of the land are carrying out the activities without Natural England's Consent. This activity would come under '27 Recreational or other activities likely to damage features of interest' of the Operations Requiring Natural England's Consent (ORNECs)
2. A third party is carrying out the activity and it is damaging to the special features that the SSSI is Notified for. Disturbance to the bird features could be classed as damaging