

The Yorkshire Dales provides a home for a range of special birds that nest on the ground. These birds lay their eggs and raise their chicks in open grasslands, meadows and moorlands, which makes them more vulnerable to disturbance than those that nest in bushes or trees.

The uplands of the Dales contain important populations of six wading birds: golden plover, lapwing, dunlin, redshank, curlew and snipe. Their populations have declined across the UK, especially in the lowlands due to the loss of nesting habitat. This decline is made worse by the impact of predation and disturbance. In the uplands the birds are faring better, but they need your support to continue to thrive.

Curlews have declined so drastically that they have been placed on the Red List – a list of species of uppermost conservation concern.



CURLEW BY JON HAWKINS SURREY HILLS PHOTOGRAPHY

Remember the Five 'A's

The breeding bird season is generally taken as being from **1st March – 31st July**, though this may be longer in some years due to weather conditions.

Alert

Be alert for signs of ground-nesting birds, such as distressed or disturbed parent birds

Avoid

Actively avoid areas where ground-nesting birds are present during the breeding season

Always

Always keep your dog on a short lead during the breeding season and when livestock are present

Away

If you enter an area where ground-nesting birds are present, move away as quickly as possible

Awareness

Raise awareness of ground-nesting birds among other visitors to the Dales

This leaflet was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund as part of the Upper Nidderdale Landscape Partnership, hosted by the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

 Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

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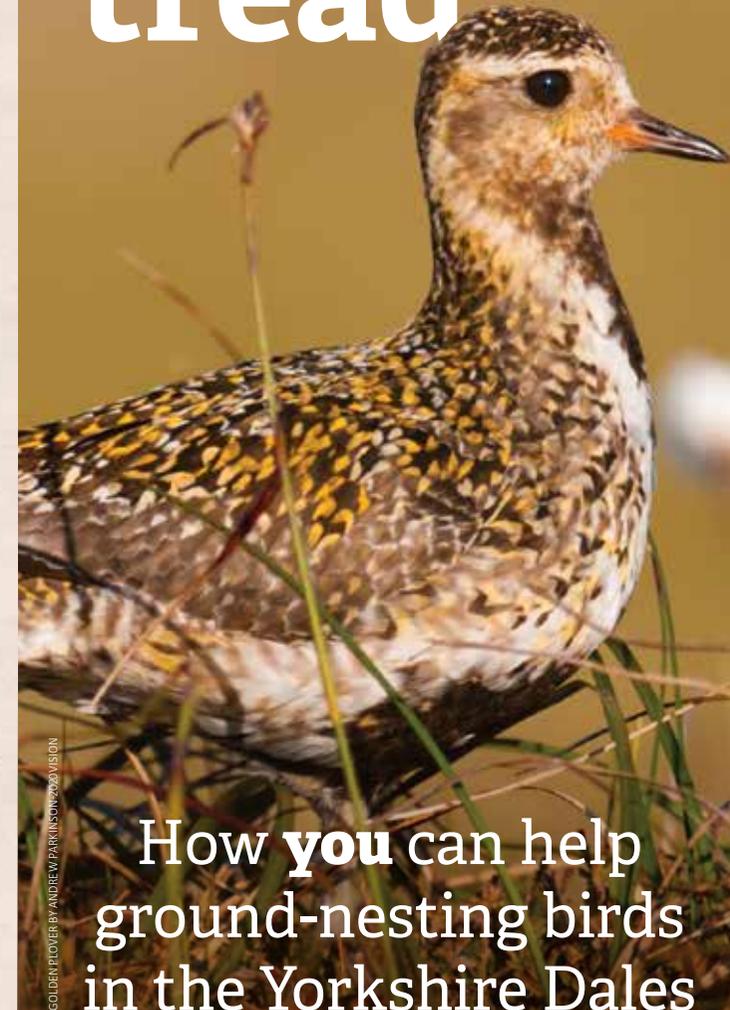
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Watch where you tread



GOLDEN PLOVER BY ANDREW PARKINSON/SONOVISION

How you can help ground-nesting birds in the Yorkshire Dales

Lapwing

Commonly known as a 'peewit' after their distinctive call that is made repeatedly as they fly at and around predators in defence of their nest.



Curlew

This is a large brown wader with a characteristic long down-curved beak and loud, evocative call. Populations have declined drastically across Britain due to a loss of nesting habitat.



Golden plover

This beautiful bird nests on high moorland and is very wary on the breeding grounds. They typically run along the ground before pivoting to pick up an insect or grub with their short beak.



Dunlin

Tiny dunlins, sporting black belly patches nest in boggy areas. They lose the black patch in winter when they move to the coast.



Redshank

This red-legged wader has a strident call and relentlessly mobs any would-be predator. They nest in damp grasslands making a small tent out of grass stems.



Snipe

This little, long-beaked wader performs an incredible aerobic display, called drumming, holding its tail feathers out at right angles catching the air and creating a vibrating hum.



Waders in decline

Yorkshire's waders have declined across Britain:

↓ **Lapwing**
down 80%

↓ **Redshank**
down 29%

↓ **Curlew**
down 46%

↓ **Snipe**
down 62%

Why are ground-nesting birds vulnerable?

Breeding attempts by ground-nesting birds fail for a variety of reasons, including:

-  **Direct trampling of eggs and chicks**
-  **Predation of eggs and chicks by natural predators such as crows, or by dogs**
-  **Chilling of eggs and chicks that have been deserted by parents in response to threat**

The presence of people near a nest site will cause a response from the parents that may include flying around calling repeatedly or even strange behaviour, known as a distraction display, aimed at luring a potential predator away from their nest. Predators such as crows have learnt that this behaviour can signal the presence of eggs and chicks and will often investigate to see if they can find a source of food. Therefore, if you cause this behaviour, you may be putting the survival of the eggs or chicks at risk.

Remember the 5 'As'

