



Nesting Birds Guidance

It is against the law to damage or destroy a nest that is in use or being built. This applies to all wild birds. Bird breeding season is usually considered to be March to August inclusive, but on occasion birds may nest outside of this season.

Any activities likely to disturb nesting birds should be undertaken outside of the bird breeding season wherever possible, e.g. tree or shrub removal. Where this is not possible, an ecologist should check vegetation for signs of breeding bird activity before clearance.

In the case of building refurbishment, maintenance or demolition, exclusion measures such as netting should be installed prior to breeding season commencing.

While most birds usually nest in trees, shrubs or buildings, they can occasionally nest in unexpected locations:



Wagtail nest in roller engine compartment



Pigeon nest made from cable ties



Blackbird nest in a cabin

Bird deterrents

Although it is illegal to disturb existing nests, it may be possible to prevent birds from nesting in the first place by using deterrents. There is a variety of deterrents available, including: decoy birds of prey, bird deterrent tape, sonic (audible) and ultrasonic (silent to humans) devices, netting etc. Many of these are available online.



Sonic deterrent



Bird of prey kite



Reflective deterrent tape

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Discovery of nesting birds

If nesting birds are found that could be disturbed by our activities, the area should be cordoned off and advice sought from the relevant Group Health, Safety & Environment Advisor.

It may be that the nest needs to be protected until the eggs have hatched and chicks have left the nest. In this instance fencing and signage may be required, dependant on the location.

In some limited circumstances where there is a need to preserve public health or public safety (for example where a building is in the process of being demolished and would be unsafe to the public if left partially demolished **or** where feral pigeon faeces could come into contact with the public or workers), certain bird species can be removed by licensed persons such as pest control companies.

Refer to EMS standard - Ecology and Biodiversity

Refer to EMS TBT - Birds

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