

British Birds of Prey #10 COMMON BUZZARD

The common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*) is the most populous and widespread bird of prey in the UK, and Europe as a whole. Some sources estimate up to 80,000 breeding pairs across the British Isles.

They have large, broad wings, which are locked out in thermals (upward currents of warm air) to spiral upwards. Buzzards are easily identified by this 'soaring', and it is not uncommon to see them either alone or in groups on warm days. Their call sounds quite similar to the mewling of a cat!



▲ Shannon, Huxley's common buzzard. You can meet her during our British Bird of Prey displays.

British Population



Between 60,000 to 80,000 breeding pairs estimated

Numbers are increasing

■ Found here

Size & Weight



Head to tail - 50 to 60 cm

Wingspan - 110 to 140 cm

Weight -
1.0 to 1.3 kg

Lifespan



8 years
Wild average



25 years
In captivity

Main Diet



Small mammals



Small birds

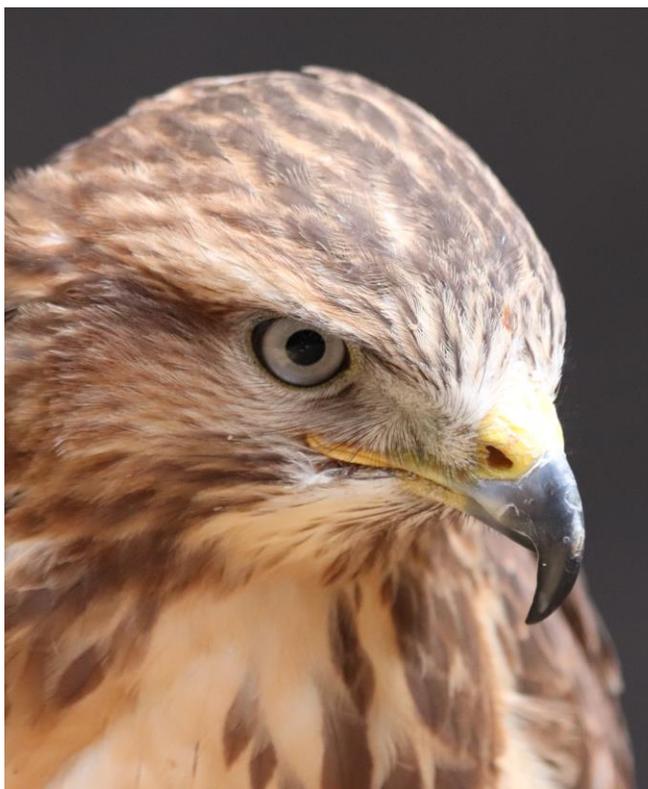


Reptiles



Insects

Huxley's Birds of Prey Centre, Horsham



The UK buzzard population was much smaller in the recent past. Improved protection laws and pesticide reduction has led to an incredible population growth of over 465% since the 1970s.

Elsewhere, they are found across Europe and into western Asia, with their global population estimated to be well into the millions. Those living in colder, more northerly areas will migrate, some to as far as southern Africa!

A	A	O	U	T	C	E	M	F	R	T	H	L	P	H
T	S	S	M	W	O	D	R	I	O	S	G	A	F	D
A	D	H	R	N	M	T	B	W	A	N	O	N	O	C
Q	L	S	A	D	M	G	Z	Z	I	U	F	S	E	F
S	V	N	U	N	O	A	E	R	O	R	G	H	T	O
F	B	O	L	P	N	P	A	B	M	A	W	S	U	R
O	H	K	Z	I	L	O	R	I	C	R	T	B	B	L
R	N	A	Z	B	S	R	N	O	T	N	H	T	M	T
S	P	I	M	C	O	S	L	P	G	E	E	J	A	G
R	X	M	S	G	N	I	W	D	A	O	R	B	O	I
M	A	B	H	B	A	H	O	U	F	I	M	T	N	E
I	O	P	Z	G	T	S	B	U	Z	Z	A	R	D	Y
L	W	Z	T	D	N	A	T	N	O	A	L	S	I	L
D	D	K	O	O	M	I	B	E	I	H	A	P	R	T
B	S	H	C	M	R	P	R	S	Z	T	U	E	O	O

Word Search

BUZZARD

COMMON

BUTEO

SHANNON

RAPTOR

SOARING

THERMAL

BROAD WINGS

Fill in the Blanks

Use the words on the right
to complete the facts!
Each word is used only once.

TERRITORY	ROLLER COASTER
HUNTING	BREEDING
SOARING	TECHNIQUES
BIRD OF PREY	PERCHED
WORMS	SLOW
DEFENDED	RABBITS

Buzzards are a comparatively _____ and sluggish _____, and it is not unusual for one to spend more than half the day inactively _____.

They have a variety of _____ . They commonly hunt by _____ in the air, searching for prey with their incredible eyesight, and are able to catch fowl or _____ up to twice their weight.

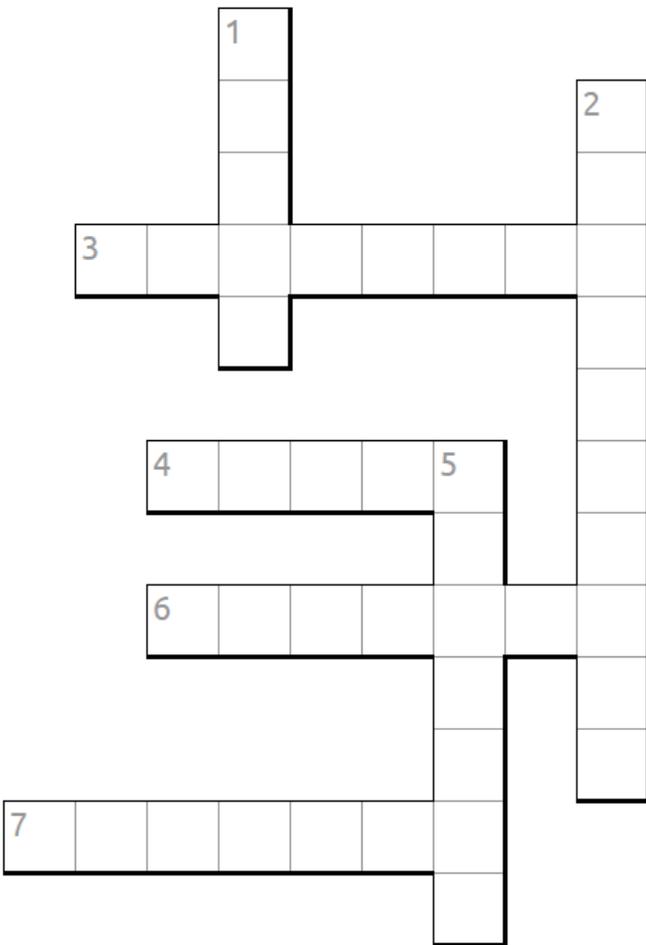
They will also stomp on the ground to draw _____ to the surface.

_____ begins when the buzzard reaches three years old, when the male will perform an aerial display known as the ' _____ ' in front of its potential mate.

A different nesting site is used each year, having up to three different sites within their strongly _____ .

Crossword

Solve the clues to complete the crossword about common buzzards. All the answers can be found somewhere in this activity pack!



ACROSS

- 3 – Warm air currents buzzards use to gain height
- 4 – A buzzard pair may have up to 3 of these in their territory
- 6 – The most common bird of prey in the UK
- 7 – The name of Huxley's buzzard

DOWN

- 1 – The age common buzzards might start to breed
- 2 – The reduced use of these has greatly helped the buzzard population
- 5 – Buzzards are often seen _____ in the air