

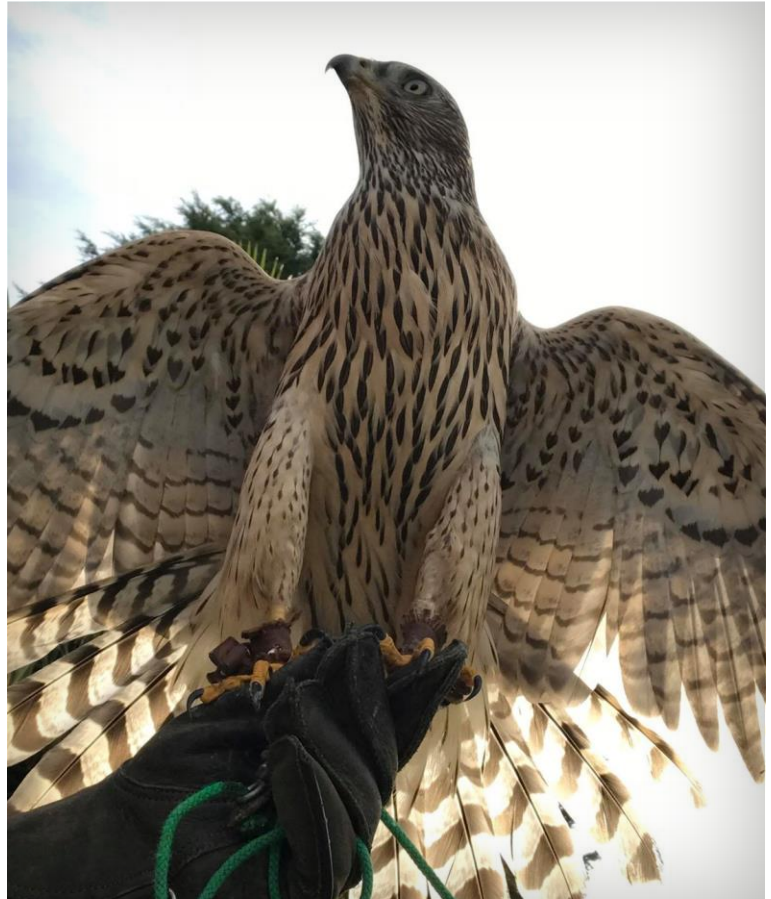
# British Birds of Prey

# GOSHAWK

#3

The goshawk is a diurnal raptor (active during the day) with broad wings and a long, rounded tail. There are several species of goshawk, with the northern goshawk being native to the UK and by far the most widespread.

They belong to the *Accipiter* genus, known as the 'true hawks'. Their scientific name *gentilis* means 'noble': in the Middle Ages, only the very highest social classes were permitted to use goshawks for falconry.



▲ Tequila, juvenile male goshawk

## SCIENTIFIC NAME

*Accipiter gentilis*

## DISTRIBUTION

UK, Europe, North America, Asia

## WILD POPULATION

400 UK pairs estimated? Not well studied

## WINGSPAN

Approx. 100 to 115cm

## SIZE & WEIGHT

Approx. 50 to 60 long, 600g to 1.2kg

## LIFESPAN

Up to 10 years in the wild, 20 in captivity

## DIET

Birds, mammals, invertebrates, reptiles

# Goshawk

In the UK, the goshawk population all but disappeared towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, due to habitat loss and being hunted to protect game birds. Numbers have since risen, with about 400 pairs estimated in the UK, though may well be more due to the goshawk's secretive nature. They are distributed most commonly throughout Wales, northern England and into Scotland.

Juvenile goshawks have a brown colouration with vertical 'stripes' down their underparts, whilst the adults look very different, with slate-grey wings and horizontally barred underparts. Their eyes also turn from a pale yellow to a dark orange colour, usually after their second year.

## COLOURING PAGE

How can you tell which of these goshawks is the adult?



Paint the world  
**SUPER  
COLORING**

# Goshawk

Northern goshawks have a reputation for being feisty and fearless. Highly territorial, they will defend their nesting site fiercely. The females attract a mate through vocalisations and by performing aerobic displays, with a bonded pair typically remaining together for their whole lives. Their nests are built very close to the tree trunk, and measure a metre wide!



## WORD SEARCH

GOSHAWK  
ACCIPITER  
RAPTOR  
PREDATOR  
CARNIVORE  
TALON  
FALCONRY  
DIURNAL

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

# Goshawk

Goshawks, like most birds of prey, are opportunistic hunters, meaning they'll attempt to catch and eat almost anything smaller than them if they have the chance. Their preferred hunting grounds are woodlands and the forest edge, where they will make short but fast flights in pursuit of prey, reaching nearly 40mph. It is believed that, whilst pursuing birds, goshawks can position themselves in flight so that the prey cannot see them past its own tail!

## ANAGRAMS

The name 'goshawk' originates from 'goose-hawk', referring to their habit of preying on birds.

Unscramble these words to reveal more of what they hunt.

▼ Tequila, 18 days old!



M E G A

D S I R B

N O S E P I G

S W O R C

W O F T L A W E R

L I S Q U E R R S

B R I B A T S

S N O D T E R

E E L S T R I P