

## Wildlife: Ground Nesting Birds

### Protection of Wildlife - Ground Nesting Birds

There are multiple ground nesting birds in the UK that can potentially be seen on our construction sites. Some common ones include:



Oystercatchers



Geese



Skylarks



Plovers



Lapwings

### Why is awareness important?

Ground nesting birds often choose construction sites because they are similar to natural open habitats. Disturbing them or their nests can lead to legal action, fines, and project delays.

All birds, their nests and eggs are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and it is therefore an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird
- Intentionally take, damage or destroy nests, whilst in use or being built
- Intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird
- Obstruct or prevent a bird from using its nest

The maximum penalty for an offence, regarding a single bird, nest or egg, is a fine of up to £5000 and / or six months imprisonment.

### When is risk highest?

- Main nesting season for ground nesting birds is **March to September** (but can extend beyond)
- High-risk areas include bare ground, gravel surfaces, stockpiles, and flat roofs.

Wildlife: Ground Nesting  
Birds



What to look out for?



- Birds repeatedly returning to one spot
- Loud alarm calls or defensive behavior
- Shallow scrapes or nests in the soil or gravel
- Eggs or chicks on bare soil or gravel
- Birds sitting still on the ground



What you MUST do

**1. STOP** work immediately in that area

**2.** Do not approach or disturb the nest or bird

**3.** Report to your Supervisor / Site Manager



**4.** Follow advice from Ecologist / Environmental Advisor

**5.** An Exclusion Zone to be placed around the nest to prohibit any work within it

What NOT to do

- ❌ Do not touch nests, eggs, or chicks
- ❌ Do not try to move nest / birds
- ❌ Do not continue working nearby
- ❌ Do not assume the nest is abandoned

**If in doubt: STOP WORK AND REPORT IT!**

Control measures on site



Pre-construction ecological surveys and Environmental Management Plan



Marked Wildlife Exclusion Zones



Seasonal planning of works



Regular environmental briefings

Questions for you

**Q: What are the main months that birds nest?**

**Q: What should you do if you find a nest?**

**Q: Who should you notify?**

