

GOSHAWK

accipitergentilis

Of the two British species of true hawk (accipiters), the Goshawk is by far the largest being up to 6 times heavier than the Sparrowhawk. A large Goshawk can weigh over 2 kilos and have a wingspan in excess of 1.5 metres. It is predominantly a woodland bird and has adapted to living in conifer plantations where, to its great credit, the Forestry Commission is actively protecting known nest sites.

The Goshawk is completely fearless and will take prey on the ground or in the air. It is capable of remarkable speeds over distances of up to 500m with deep, rapid beats of its comparatively short, broad wings. Prey ranges from songbirds to hares. Victims are grasped with large, powerful feet and held with increasing pressure until all movement ceases.



Large, fast & fearless.

FactFile

Length: 48cm –62cm

Wingspan: 135cm –165cm

Weight: 0.62kg –2.05kg

Habitat: Mixed woodland with open glades and breaks for hunting.

Nests in trees, sometimes refurbishing existing nests but, in conifer plantations, always building a new one. Between two and five eggs are laid (an unusually large clutch for a larger raptor). Fledging occurs at about 40 days and independence at 70 days. The male will often provide food for his mate and the entire brood for the whole breeding period but, if prey is scarce, the female will assist once the young are large enough to be left alone.