

REDKITE

milvus milvus

FactFile

Length: 60cm –66cm

Wingspan: 175cm –195cm

Weight: 0.76kg –1.60kg

Habitat: Roosting & nesting in ancient oakwoods but hunting over heath, moorland and pastures. Normal clutch size is 3, taking 5 weeks to hatch, up to 70 days to fledge and a further month to independence. Breeding success is very low. The parents are susceptible to disturbance and will often abandon the nest. The young are prone to die of cold, damp or illness.



Our most elegant
bird of prey.

The Red Kite was once a common sight in British skies and, during the middle ages, it was legally protected because of its practice of clearing human refuse from towns and cities. Unfortunately it was also a major predator of domestic fow and this led to its relentless persecution with the result that by 1905 the total British population was reduced to only 12 birds.

The Red Kite is once again a protected species and, with the introduction of birds imported from Sweden and Spain, a reintroduction scheme has successfully brought them back to many parts of Scotland, central Wales and central England especially the Chilterns.

With a wingspan of almost 2 metres, a slender body and long forked tail, the Red Kite is our most elegant bird of prey and one of the most skilled in flight. It will eat almost anything (dead or alive) and will often steal food from other birds of prey.