

TAWNY TROUBLES!



Why there is concern about one of Britain's
best-loved owls - and how you can help.

TAWNY TROUBLES: RESCUE, REHABILITATION & RELEASE

Securing the future of tawny owls through our nest box scheme is an important part of what we do (*see overleaf*) but we also make every attempt to get those birds brought into the S.O.S. Raptor Hospital in an injured, ailing or traumatised state back in the wild, fit and flying free. In this way we are able to help preserve current population levels of tawny owls when and where we can.



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GOOD TO GO This tawny owl arrived at our hospital in a very dazed and confused state - like so many others, the victim of a road traffic accident and suffering from a damaged eye. After some calming medication and a spell in a recuperation aviary, the eye gradually healed and we were able to release him fully capable of fending for himself when back in the wild.



UP, UP & AWAY
The best part of our job is being able to release injured birds back to their natural environment once fully recovered. This trio of tawny owls came to us independently but having spent time in recuperation together, showed no hesitation in setting off for their new life together!

A WING AND A PRAYER...

This beautiful tawny owl came to us with a broken wing via a local vet. It had been found by the roadside, so had probably collided with a car.

Luckily after a few weeks in one of our secluded rehab aviaries with the wing in a cast, it started healing and over a period of weeks gradually built up its strength.

It wasn't long before we were able to take it to a suitable woodland habitat for release, ready to resume a natural lifestyle.

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK: HELP FOR HILDA REQUIRED!



Of necessity, the location of the boxes in our wild owl nest box scheme are often located well off the beaten track in remote locations where they can sit away from intrusion and interference. Our trusty truck, Hilda - seen here in better days - has unfortunately now passed her sell-by date and we are desperately hoping to raise money to buy a suitable replacement.

If you would like to help with funding Hilda's replacement as part of the ongoing running costs of our wild owl nest box scheme, your sponsorship of a nest box will be much appreciated - please see the form provided herewith. THANK YOU!

BOXING CLEVER TO HELP SECURE THE FUTURE OF THE TAWNY OWL

Recent surveys of our national wildlife population have shown a worrying national trend for the gradual but consistent decline of the tawny owl.

As a result, over the last few years the conservation status of Britain's rarely seen but most prevalent owl has been elevated from Green to Amber.

In an effort to combat this, together with volunteers from the Thornham Owl Project, the Suffolk Owl Sanctuary funds, maintains and monitors a network of some 300 wild owl nest boxes.

The purpose is to provide safe and secure man-made nesting sites for owls whose natural habitats have been eroded, either by the vagaries of nature or the encroachment of man on the landscape.

The effect of the scheme has been largely successful, encouraging population growth and contributing to the conservation of oft-threatened species like the iconic barn owl.

As project founder Roger Buxton explains, "There is also an urgent need to expand our knowledge of the tawny owl so that we are in the best possible position to provide advice on issues that may impact them, whether they are changes in planning policy, alterations to agri-environment schemes, the management of our woodland estates or climate change."

The BTO (British Trust for Ornithology) is currently undertaking a survey to investigate the demise of tawny owls more closely. Their programme is designed to bring interested parties into contact with tawny owls, improve their knowledge of the bird's condition and support the monitoring work undertaken by local groups like that of the Suffolk Owl Sanctuary. Hopefully, this proactive initiative will kick-start long-term projects and ultimately contribute to increasing the breeding success of tawnies.

Suffolk Owl Sanctuary and its supporters are indebted to volunteers Roger Buxton and his colleague Kevin, who devote many, many hours to the nest box scheme; building, erecting and maintaining boxes and weighing, measuring and ringing pulli to support and encourage positive outcomes for our local owl populations.

Please support S.O.S and our conservation efforts to lend a hand in securing a firm future for this magnificent creature.



Nest boxes are securely sited out of predators' reach



A young tawny owlet is carefully ringed - details of our annual nest box survey are forwarded to a national census



This fluffy youngster was soon fully fledged and off looking for a mate and somewhere to set up home!