

Hanmer & Wood Owl Boxes RESULTS 2022 (2007 = 30% nesting; 2008 = 22%)

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Nesting	28%	29%	20%	33%	20%	33%	22%	30%	64%	22%	36%	53%	15%	39% (39)
Successful nest	26% (26)	22% (22)	18% (18)	26% (26)	16% (16)	33% (33)	21% (21)	23% (23)	58% (58)	13% (13)	32% (32)	51% (51)	10% (10)	34% (34)
Eggs per clutch	5	4	4	3.5	3.3	4	3	3.5	3.7	4	3.9	4.5	3.6	4.4
% eggs hatched	69%	68%	96% (69)	73% (85)	83% (55)	93% (127)	92% (57)	69% (73)	69% (196)	36% (32)	69% (97)	76% (182)	43% (23)	67%
Average hatched	3	3	4	2.5	2.8	4	3	2	3	1.5	2.7	3.4	1.5	2.9
Average fledged.	3	2	3	2	2	4	2	2	2.8	1.4	2.5	3.2	1.4	2.7
Percent of eggs 'ringed'	59% (74)	55% (59)	88% (63)	66% (73)	61% (40)	89% (121)	84% (52)	84% (61)	92% (181)	34% (30)	65% (92)	76% (168)	39% (21)	63% (107)
Eggs were mostly laid	Second half of May	April, May & June	April to May	April and later	May but some later.	March & April	April	May but many later.	March & April	May	April & May	Early April	Late May	April & May
Weather (Met Office summary)	Warmer, dryer and sunnier than average in April & May. June was warmer and dryer than average.	Heavy snow in late winter & early spring.	Heavy snow in early Winter (Nov & Dec 2010)	Exceptional warm March & April; followed by above average rainfall; which continued.	Very cold spring. Below average temp. in June. Fine weather from July.	A mild winter followed by early warm spring; with hardly any frosts. Fine summer weather only declining in August.	A benign winter was followed by a short period of dry sunny and warm weather in April. However, May onwards was cool and wet.	Winter was the second wettest since 1910. Spring was dryer. April was cool and summer did not become settled until later.	Mild winter followed by a dry spring. Warmer than average from March to June. From mid July the weather was cooler and wetter.	Winter and spring had low average temperatures and late snow. May was warmer and the Summer very dry & hot.	Winter was milder & dryer than average. Temps fluctuated in April & May but the summer started warm; eventually becoming unsettled.	Winter was mild & dry. Spring was warmer & sunnier than average. The summer gradually became unsettled and finished wet.	Winter started mild but deteriorated in February becoming colder with snow. This continued into the spring. April started wet and got colder. May was little better and June was very mixed.	Winter was exceptionally windy but by the Spring things were more settled and it started to warm in April & May. By July there were some dry and hot spells which continued throughout the summer.

BARN OWL BREEDING SEASON 2022:

My study of around 100 sites in **North Northumberland** (outside the National Park) indicates that this was a much better year than 2021, although not as good as 2020. At 39% occupancy it was above the long-term average of 30%, although only 34 were successful at raising young. The exceptionally stormy weather of the winter may have disrupted some nest sites and pairs. Indeed we recorded three instances in the spring when pairs seemed to have changed partners during the early stages of nesting! We did lose some sites. However, the weather did eventually become calmer and most eggs were laid in April and May.

As the summer moved on it became hot and dry. This initially seemed to encourage some late broods, although of five which could be said to fall into this category, only three were successful with young being ringed in August. This can probably be explained by the exceptionally dry weather in August suppressing the numbers of small mammals. One of the late nests, near Longhorsley, was a replacement brood. The pair originally had 3 eggs in May but, for reasons that we can't understand, stopped incubating these and laid 6 more in June from which they raised 4 at the end of August. Another of the successful late broods was raised by a male who occupied a nest site all year. His mate died early in the year but he continued to occupy the site and eventually attracted a new mate towards the end of June. We were able to ring 4 young at the end of August.

The average number of eggs laid per clutch was up at 4.4, although four '6's' were recorded. The average number of owlets fledged was 2.9, although three pairs did raise 6. A total of 107 owlets were ringed and apparently fledged. 32 new adult Barn Owls were ringed and 28 re-trapped/controlled, including a pair that seems to always nest *early* near Bamburgh. Another that was evicted from their usual box by *Tawny Owls* but went onto to use the tawnies own box instead!

As well as damage and disruption caused by the winter storms, Jackdaws were still a problem occupying owl nest sites. The attempt of this species to bury owl eggs under 'jackdaw sticks' was again observed. Kestrels were exceptionally thin on the ground with only one pair using an owl box, although they were seen around two other sites.

Tawny Owls did take over one barn owl box and turned up in some slightly odd sites (probably the result of losing nest sites to the winter storms). However, they had a successful nesting year and they did compete (as is usual) with our rare breeding Goldeneye ducks for nest sites.

Successful Barn Owl nests were near: Whittingham, Doddington, Wooler, Alnwick, Allerdean, Fallowdon, Newton, Bamburgh, Craster, Bilton, Warkworth, Rothbury, Coltpark, Netherwitton, Longhorsley and Longframlington.

Thanks are due to all those who have helped with this project and those that have donated money for the making of boxes etc.

Best Regards

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