

conservation issues

HEN HARRIER

Circus cyaneus



Despite their name suggesting an exclusively wildfowl diet, the hen harrier mostly preys upon voles and small birds, such as the meadow pipit.

Harriers like open areas including heather moorland, and it is here where they may also take red grouse, specially bred for shooting.

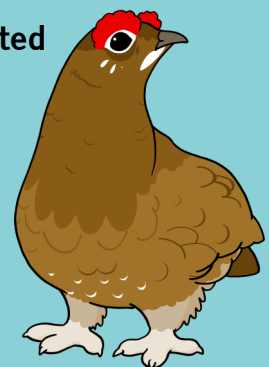


male
hen harrier

Heather moorlands have been artificially managed to maximise the number of red grouse that are available to be shot during the shooting season. As a result, there has long been a deliberate and **sustained persecution** of hen harriers with a combination of **poisoning, trapping, shooting and nest disturbances** (harriers are ground nesting birds).

This has meant a collapse in the populations of hen harriers in the United Kingdom with very few successful breeding pairs. This is despite significant conservation efforts and a much greater capacity for them within these habitats.

A UK Government report showed that **72%** of tagged harriers were illegally killed on or nest to a grouse moor. Hen harriers are **10 times more likely to die suspiciously** on or near a grouse moor than any other type of habitat.



red grouse

female hen
harrier



LEARNING MORE?

Follow and support organisations such as...

Hen Harrier Action www.henharrierday.uk

Wild Justice www.wildjustice.org.uk

Protect the Wild www.protectthewild.org.uk

Young Readers should read *Sky Dancer* by Gill Lewis, available at www.gilllewis.com