



## Newsletter, Summer 2025

### **Summer 2025 Breeding** – Ken Sanderson & John Barrett

The warm and dry spring weather has clearly benefitted our red kites as the number of occupied territories and active nests being monitored is well up on last year when compared to the same stage of the breeding season. **39** occupied territories have been confirmed, and **22** active nests are being monitored. Hopefully, a few more nests will be located before the end of the breeding season.

Further good news from Northumberland: At least 12 occupied territories have been confirmed in the county with 6 active nests being monitored in the west and south east of the county, providing further evidence that the kite's breeding range is, at last, expanding. One of those nests is in the South Tyne Valley.

In early June we ring and wing-tag a sample of chicks from some of the nests under special licence. The wing-tags give a visual identification for an individual (see photos below). This allows us to monitor the birds once they have fledged, giving important information on distribution and breeding.

A more detailed breeding report will appear in the Autumn Newsletter.



A chick, having been processed, ready to be returned to the nest.

*Photo credit: John Barrett*



Kite chicks being ringed and wing tagged at the field station.

*Photo credit: Vic Lawson*

## **Events** – Sylvia Jones

### *Informal Sunday lunch*

An informal Sunday lunch was held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March at the home of FoRK member, Jenny Peace. A two-course lunch was served at a cost of £10 per head. 20 guests attended and the £200 raised was donated to FoRK. A big THANK YOU to Jenny for her labours.

### *Members' Night*

On Monday 7<sup>th</sup> April, 20 FoRK members attended the Skiff Inn for our Spring Members' Night. Although the meal was ordered well in advance, due to staffing issues, changes had to be made on the day. Thanks to Harold, Ken and the Skiff staff this was resolved in time.

The atmosphere was friendly & relaxed. The service was superb and, as always, the food portions were huge. The donated raffle prizes raised £52. Ken gave a red kite update. There were no prizes for his "say what you see" bird quiz because nearly all the teams got top marks.

Thank you to everyone who made this evening such a success.

## **"Party in the Pines"**

We have strong links with the Forestry England and the Go North East bus company (both corporate members). Once again, we join forces to allow families to enjoy the free party which, this year, will be held from 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. on **Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> July** in the Pines area of **Chopwell Wood**.

Go North East will provide a face-painter (not limited to children !!) and bubbleologist provided by their Entertainments Team.

Forestry England will provide archery, a children's marquee (to paint stones, read books, play games, chess, connect4, table tennis, "wingspan" and colour in red kite face masks), live music and catering vans: pizza/crepe expectations.

Friends of Red Kites volunteers will be present to provide information about the red kites and their conservation. We will also run a tombola stall.



## **Annual General Meeting** – Harold Dobson

Our 15<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June at 6.30 for 7.00 pm at **Little Grandmas' Cafe**, Little Ollie's Garden Centre, Bridgefields, Newburn Bridge Road, NE15 8NR. The meeting itself should last no more than 30-40 minutes.

The meeting will be followed by a buffet supper (£12.00 per head). The formal invitation to, and the paperwork for, the AGM are included in a separate mailing.

## **Merchandise** – Lori Smith

Due to popular demand, FoRK merchandise is once again available to purchase. The garments do raise our exposure and create interest when worn out and about.

Items available are:

- sweatshirts
- zip-up Fleecees with zipped pockets
- polo shirts (long and short-sleeved)
- T-shirts
- beanies

They all come in a variety of colours and sizes, are of excellent quality and, of course, all are individually embroidered with the FoRK logo.

Due to a minimum order requirement, the items may take a little longer to arrive.

Order forms will be available on Health Walks, FoRK events. Items ordered could be collected from Thornley Woodlands Centre on Thursdays, between 11.00 and 14.00.

## **Save Thornley Woodlands Cafe**

Thornley Woodlands Cafe needs your help: they have been hit with a huge, unexpected VAT bill which needs to be paid.

The Café offers a warm, safe space for people to spend time and it attempts to keep its prices as affordable as possible. [The Friends of Red Kites holds its Management Committee and Monitoring Team meetings there].

Please help the Café to raise this money otherwise it may have to close!! You can make your donation, however small, via the “GoFundMe” page:

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/save-thornley-woodlands-cafe>