

Wendy Mattingley 2017 - TRSG

Wendy Mattingley is one of Scottish Raptor Study Groups' most modest unsung heroines. Her passion for the cause burns as deep as anyone in this room, and she goes about her work quietly, diligently, and often unnoticed to the majority of us.

Wendy first caught the raptor bug when working with Sandy Payne who was at the time a roving raptor fieldworker in Perthshire in the late seventies. She began to monitor several species developing a passion for hen harrier, merlin, raven and golden eagle.

Until three years ago she was the hen harrier coordinator for Perthshire and continues to submit the majority of breeding records for the area. Of the 67 harrier sites in 2016 Wendy monitored 23 of them which included 17 pairs, no mean feat. She worked with Bruce Anderson in the early 2000s to provide information to SNH for the classification of the Forest of Clunie SPA for hen harriers and has monitored winter roosts for many years.

She is merlin coordinator for Perthshire and is an active golden eagle fieldworker in the West Perthshire region. She is also the raven coordinator and is responsible for the majority of the Perthshire records with a fantastic memory for territories, alternates and winter roost sites and published a paper on raven diet in 1995.

As well as her special interest in these species Wendy is always available to help with national surveys including the last 3 peregrine surveys and helped confirm honey buzzard as a breeding species in Perthshire. She also covered a lot of ground as a roving RSPB raptor worker in the early 1990s.

Her knowledge of hen harrier and golden eagle nests as well as the number she monitors means she often provides sites where birds can be satellite tagged. She has also contributed to many scientific papers over the years and advised several authors.

Despite her many days in the field Wendy spends a great deal of time on the nitty gritty of SRSGs and the monitoring scheme. She was chair of Tayside RSG from March 1998 until 2013 and played a key role in setting up the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme in the early 2000s. Attending all of the initial meetings with SNH, RSPB and the BTO when the proposal was discussed and formulated. She continues to be one of the three SRSG members to sit on the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Group and has been omni present at the meetings. Wendy often supports Patrick at meetings with other organisations and has met with successive Ministers for the Environment, (and there have been a few!) putting the raptor case forward.

She has worked tirelessly with the police in combating wildlife crime which includes some incidents quite close to home which has caused her and John a lot of personal distress and upset but not dissuaded her from reporting incidents.

Her knowledge of Perthshire raptors makes her a professional, knowledgeable and patient adviser to RSPB on dealing with developments that may affect birds. She has also been involved in the Operation Countrywatch project working with estates since 2002.

In amongst all this work she and John run an extensive garden at their home in Aberfeldy, which in itself is a major physical undertaking yet she still finds time to undertake so much fieldwork.

Wendy and John are always very welcoming to visiting ornithologists, regularly putting up guest speakers and visitors from overseas and she is a great ambassador for us. (Most importantly she now organises the annual curries before and after the conference!) Wendy is a great friend to many RSG members providing help, counselling and coaching to so many people over the years.