



PEAK DISTRICT BAP FORUM 2008 Workshop Summaries

Workshop 1 – Lapwings

Farmland birds, particularly breeding waders such as lapwings, have shown a population decline in the Peak District in the last five years despite conservation efforts. What can we do differently to tackle this?

The first group began by discussing what had changed:

- Changes in managements
- Lack of over-grazed/poached land
- Changes in stock type from cattle to sheep
- Loss of/lack of arable land
- Smaller areas of habitat
- Presence/increase in predators
- Failure of breeding grounds and drop in productivity – 0.6 chicks per pair required to maintain the population
- Critical mass of colonies/populations
- Shift to larger scale dairy farming
- Increase in slurry spreading

They then discussed what we could do to address the declines:

- Use a landscape approach, joining up of habitats, and the potential for HLS to deliver this
- Targeting of HLS
- Linking management to Landscape Character Assessment types
- Focusing in three landscape 'blocks' where there is currently success (in lapwing populations)
- Important to get the habitats right first
- Then the use of predator control

The second group discussed the reasons for the decline in lapwings:

- Breeding success was thought to have declined nationally
- Winter declines were also evident
- Productivity more of a factor than habitat
- Predation was a problem and could be associated with the decline in traditional game-keeping
- Changes in patterns of land ownership, and farmers less able to undertake predator control
- Improvement of in-bye land
- Changes in habitat had led to less favourable conditions for colonial species like lapwing to thrive and put them under greater threat from predation

They then discussed possible action:

- Working with landowners is key
- A toolkit of successful measures has been developed over recent years through the Peak Birds Project, this needs to develop into a targeted approach
- Follow a landscape approach to benefit a suite of species (not just birds)
- Need for collation of data including productivity information
- Involve farmers in recording