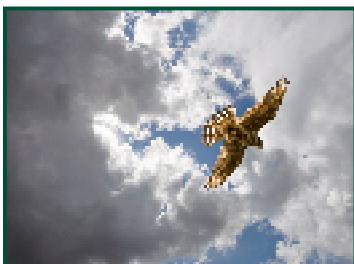




Planning & Environmental Consultants

Bird Surveying For Wind farms



Bird surveys are a key part of any wind farm Environmental Impact Assessment. Surveys should be undertaken at the appropriate time of year and to recognised standards if they are to withstand scrutiny during the planning process. McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan staff have extensive bird survey experience on wind farm sites, and can advise on the best strategy for assessing bird populations on a potential wind farm site.

Undertaking bird survey work to recognise standard at the appropriate times of year limits potential delays in the planning phase. A request for additional survey work received outside the optimal survey window, could result in significant delays for a project. The typical birds surveyed for on wind farm sites include:

Hen Harriers

Hen Harriers breed on upland sites with bog, scrub and young forestry plantations and are sensitive to disturbance. Hen Harrier surveys are generally carried out using fixed point surveys during the summer months (April-July). Surveyors observe bird activity at particular vantage points for a set period of time and count any birds seen during that defined period. Further information such as direction and height of flight and behaviour is often required, in addition to survey work in the wider area around a proposed wind farm site.

Red Grouse

Red Grouse are found on heather dominated habitats such as are found in upland areas. The areas in which these habitats are typically found, are of obvious interest to wind farm developers because of their upland nature and good wind speeds. Red Grouse surveys can be undertaken between January and March, using a tape lure, which requires a licence issued by the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Upland Birds and Waders

Surveys for upland birds and waders are undertaken in the winter months (Oct-March). They generally involve monthly surveys of lakes, estuaries, turloughs or mudflats from fixed vantage points. These kinds of habitats are of importance for wintering wildfowl and monthly surveys taken over the full winter season provide evidence of patterns of bird usage and is used to evaluate the significance of a particular site.

For more information on bird surveying please visit our website or contact us on the details provided below.