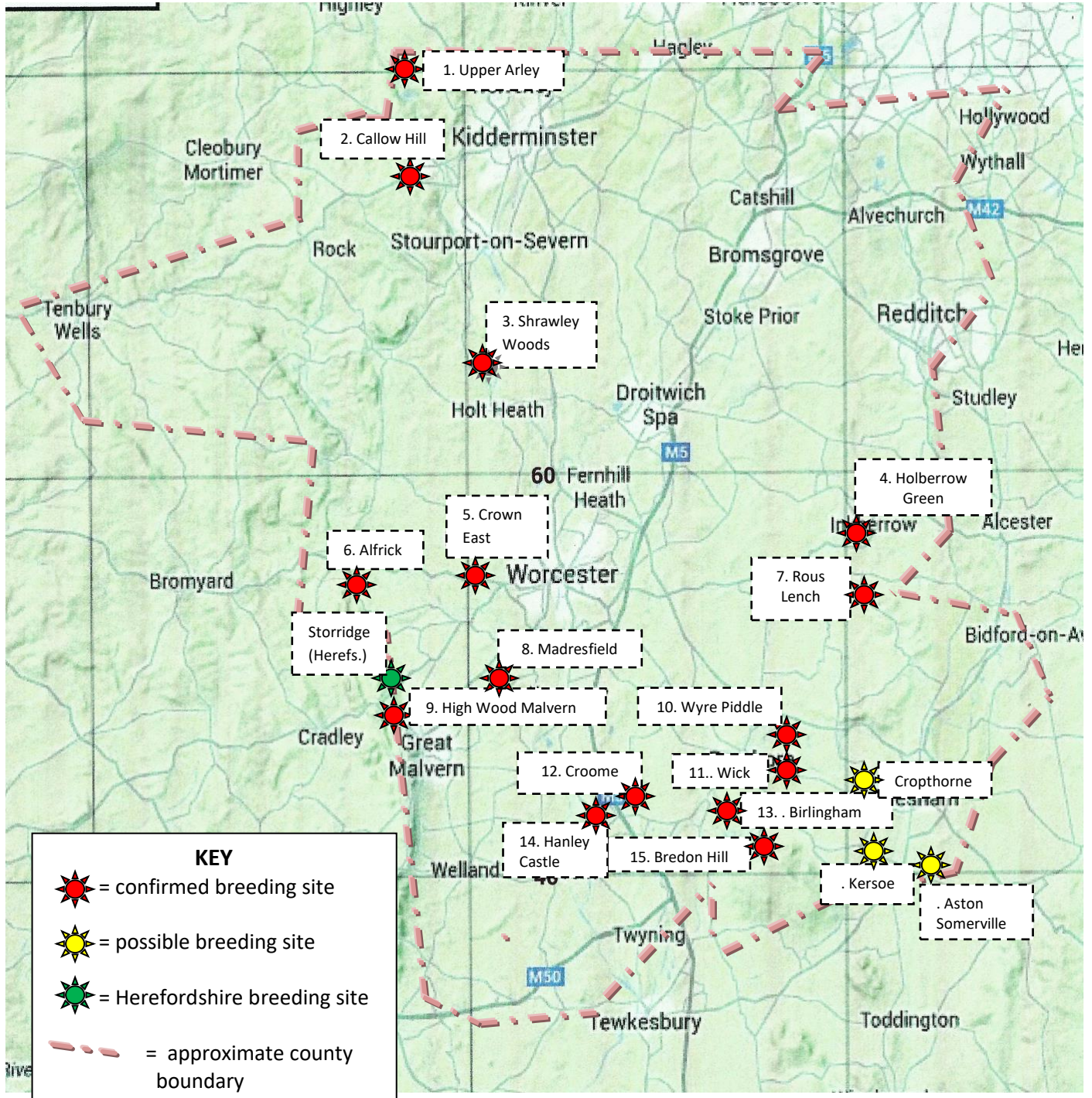


Ravens *Corvus corax* breeding in Worcestershire – 2022 update

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I haven't found any increase in the breeding population of Raven *Corvus corax* this year although some new sites have compensated for the loss of other established breeding territories. The findings are

detailed in Map 01 and tables below and follow the same criteria as previous years (e.g. Metcalf 2022) "Confirmed" breeding sites (Table 01) are where adults were observed at the nest, or with young, and "possible" breeding sites (Table 02) are where adults were displaying territorial behaviours by a suspected nest site or where a family was observed but the nest site was not located. A "confirmed" record does not imply successful breeding, as information on success or failure remains incomplete.



Map 01. Confirmed and possible breeding Raven sites in Worcestershire – 2022

CONFIRMED

1.	Upper Arley	Pair nested in tall conifer and three fledged young were seen in mid-May begging for food.
2.	Callow Hill	Pair on territory defending Douglas Fir nest-site in late April. At least two juveniles heard begging from adults in mid-May.
3.	Shrawley Wood	Nest seen in early April and both adults seen in nest tree in mid-May with juvenile(s) calling nearby.
4.	Holberron Green	Traditional nest used again. Three juveniles and moulting adult seen in neighbouring tree mid-May.
5.	Crown East	Nest seen and adult feeding nestlings in early May.
6.	Alfrick	Four young in nest were successfully ringed this year. (For photo see Metcalf 2022)
7.	Rous Lench	Moulting adult seen at previous territory and begging calls heard from juveniles at presumed nest site mid-May.
8.	Madresfield	Two adults and at least one fledged young seen in private grounds. Adult contact calls and juvenile begging calls clearly heard. This has been a suspected nest site for several years.
9.	High Wood Malvern	Nest found and three chicks seen inside in late April.
10.	Wyre Piddle	Male making quiet calls while guarding female on nest in early April.
11.	Wick	Nest intact and one gaping chick's head seen in mid-April. Both adults seen in nest tree in July.
12.	Croome	Traditional nest still in good condition. One adult collected food from field and returned to defend nest site in late April. No juveniles seen this time.
13.	Birlingham	Adult seen provisioning chicks in nest in mid-April. Chicks' calls heard clearly.
14.	Hanley Castle	Nest intact and adults at site in late March. Nest seen again with surrounding pale droppings in early July but birds not present.
15.	Bredon Hill	Nest still intact with one adult guarding close by in mid-April. Other adult vocal and mobile nearby. Outcome unknown.
	Storrige (Herefordshire)	Female sitting in nest and male in nearby trees making contact calls in late March. Adult seen at nest site in late July.

Table 01. Confirmed Raven breeding sites - 2022

POSSIBLE

1.	Crophorne	Two adults with three fledged juveniles flying and feeding together in smallholdings by previous nest site in mid-May. However nest not located so exact location uncertain.
2.	Kersoe	Adults patrolling and defending nest site area in mid-April. Access to wood now denied. No further information.
3.	Aston Somerville	Very ragged bird flew round suspected nest site and attacked a nearby Carion Crow before flying off in mid-May.

Table 02. Possible Raven breeding sites - 2022



01. Raven *Corvus corax* at Croome, March 2020. Dave Hull

Ravens v. Red Kites

Red Kite *Milvus milvus* numbers in the county have increased considerably and I regularly see them while visiting Raven nest sites. There are also emerging signs of competition for nest sites. In Shelsey Beauchamp I was told the Ravens abandoned their traditional nest after several attacks by the kites, who were then seen at the nest and rabbit carcasses were found under the tree. Although the Ravens have been present in the same area I have not found an alternative breeding site. Similarly in Shakenhurst Kevin McGee observed Red Kites attacking the resident Ravens but did not use their nest. It seems ironic that the Red Kites did not subsequently use either nest to breed and these conflicts have apparently not yet resulted in any breeding advantages for the kites, only disadvantages for the Ravens.

As always, I would really welcome any observations from *Worcestershire Record* readers about possible nest sites and any encounters between Red Kites and Ravens.

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Images

01. Raven *Corvus corax* at Croome, March 2020. Dave Hull