

Ravens breeding in Worcestershire – 2017 update

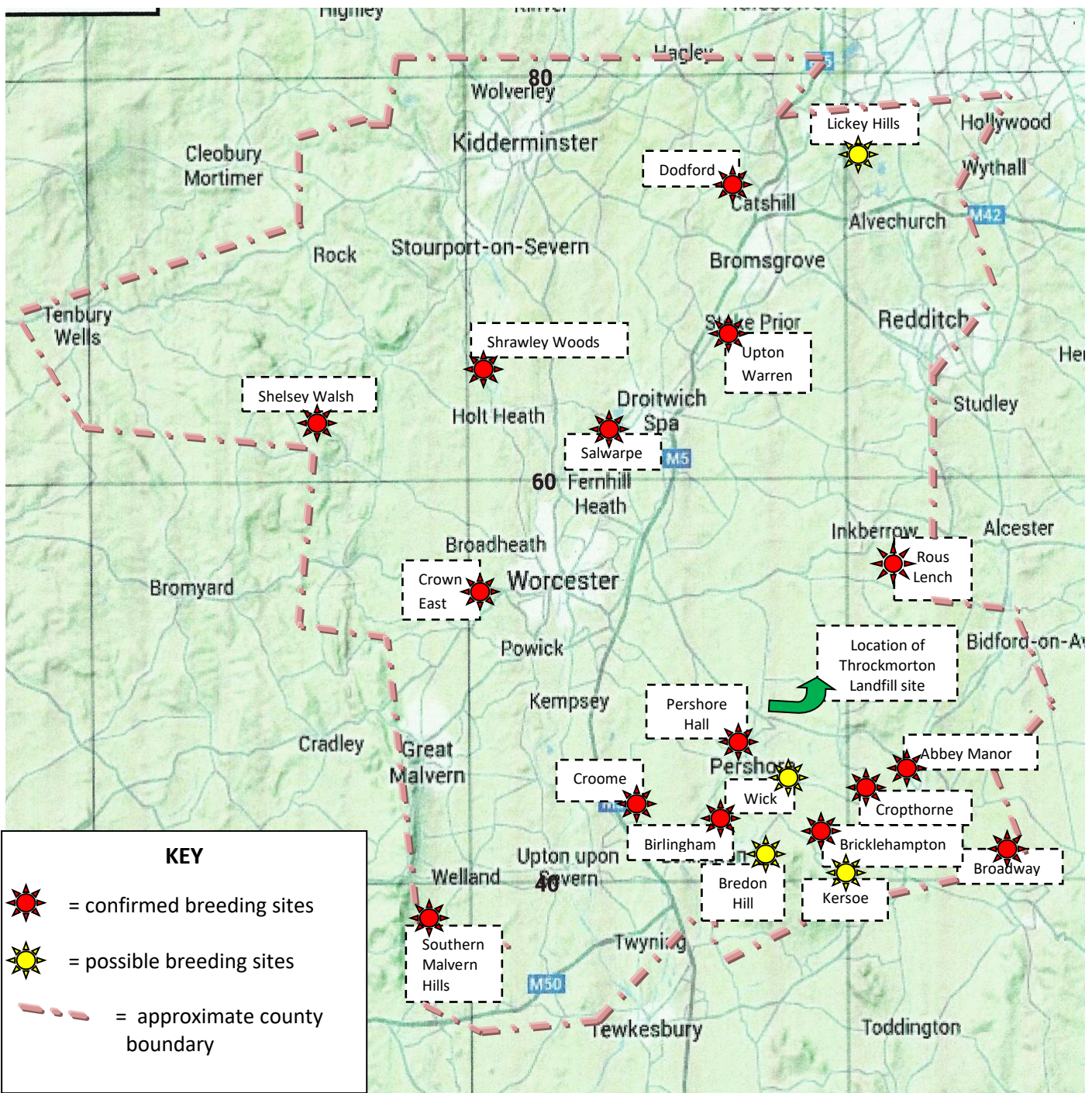
Mike Metcalf
mikebirder@hotmail.com

One year ago, I reported eight confirmed raven breeding sites, and eight possible sites. This year, I have been fortunate to enlist the help of a wider network of Worcestershire bird enthusiasts and improve the reliability of the raven data. It may not, perhaps, surprise readers to hear that the total for confirmed nesting pairs in 2017 has almost doubled when this expanding range of observations is factored in. The quest to narrow the gap between those breeding pairs surveyed and the real total continues. Monitoring changes over time will then be achievable.

The map (01) locates both confirmed breeding sites (where adults and the nest, or with young were observed) and possible breeding sites (where adults were displaying territorial behaviours by a suspected nest site). At this stage the “confirmed” epithet refers to a pair’s breeding attempt and not necessarily to successful fledging. Information on the latter is incomplete.



01. Ravens. Mike Metcalf



01. Confirmed and possible breeding raven sites in Worcestershire 2017.

CONFIRMED

| | | |
|-----|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | Dodford | Adults seen at nest site. Two presumed juveniles preening at later date. Nest also used in 2016. |
| 2. | Shrawley Woods | Two/three young being fed in nest. Fledging success unknown. Nest used in previous years. |
| 3. | Upton Warren | Adults fed two young in nest. Nest also used in 2015 and 2016. |
| 4. | Shelsey Walsh | Nest seen with adults defending aggressively. Fledging success unknown. Site used in previous years. |
| 5. | Salwarpe | Adults seen nest building at site used in several previous years although no fledged young seen this year. |
| 6. | Crown East, Worcester | Adult seen noisily defending nest area with second bird silent in tree (presumed juvenile). Nest site in previous years. |
| 7. | Rous Lench | Possible nest defended by two adults circling and calling. Nest site in previous years. |
| 8. | Pershore Hall | Nest seen with adult defending noisily. |
| 9. | Abbey Manor, Evesham | Successful nest in deciduous tree in woodland. |
| 10. | Croome | Pair seen by nest with one chick nearly fledged. Nest used in several previous years. |
| 11. | Crophorne | Two adults aggressively defending nest site behind Holland House. Nest site in previous years. |
| 12. | Birlingham | Successful nest in flat top cedar in church yard. |
| 13. | Bricklehampton | Nest seen with two adults present, one circling and defending. |
| 14. | Southern Malvern Hills | Nest seen with two nestlings and adults nearby. |
| 15. | Broadway | Courtship, feeding flight and presumed family groups observed again where breeding has occurred previously. |

POSSIBLE

| | | |
|----|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | Lickey Hills | Adult seen carrying food towards previous years' nest site, but exact nest location unknown. |
| 2. | Wick | Two nests seen and adults present, but silent and not visibly defending. |
| 3. | Bredon Hill (Woollas Hall) | Pair patrolling above potential nest site. |
| 4. | Kersoe | Two adults patrolling suspected nest site. |

Ravens are regularly seen foraging on the large landfill site at Throckmorton, and the proximity of nest sites shown on the map is interesting. Nonetheless, other factors may be more significant such as the availability of suitable nesting trees and other habitat preferences. In addition, even if landfill food resources had skewed the breeding distribution in Worcestershire, it may become a mere historical factor if the amount of food waste sent to landfill decreases in line with national policy.

Some obvious gaps in this summary of breeding sites remain despite efforts to fill them - notably Wyre Forest and around Tenbury Wells. Once again, I would invite readers of the Record to send any comments or observations to the email address above. Many thanks in advance.

As I mentioned, the 2017 information combines my own observations with those of experienced birdwatchers around the county, to whom I am indebted and wish to acknowledge here: Digby Bartlett, Arthur Cundall, Dave Cunliffe, Harry Green, Graham Martin, Rob Prudden, Phil Rudlin, Chris Thomson, Mark and Christine Turner. Dave Walker.



02. Ravens. Mike Metcalf

Images

- 01. Confirmed and possible breeding raven sites in Worcestershire 2017.
- 02. Ravens. Mike Metcalf.
- 03. Ravens Mike Metcalf.