

## **Natural England Response to changes to Schedule 4 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).**

Defra has announced changes to the legislation relating to the **registration** of birds in England. The changes, which take effect from 1 October 2008, mean that:

- 50 species of bird (and all hybrid birds) will be removed from Schedule 4 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (the 'Act'). As a result bird keepers will no longer be required to register specimens of these species.
- For specimens remaining on the schedule, birds marked with a CITES approved ring or mark (e.g. a microchip) will be considered marked for the purpose of registration and will not require a separate ring issued by the Wildlife Licensing and Registration Service (WLRs).
- After this change, the following bird species remain on Schedule 4: Golden Eagle; Goshawk; Marsh Harrier; Montague's Harrier; Honey Buzzard; Osprey; the White-Tailed Sea eagle; Merlin and Peregrine Falcon. For Merlin and Peregrine Falcon only, specimens that have an Article 10 certificate issued by the UK Management Authority will be considered to be registered for the purposes of Schedule 4.

If you are keeping birds listed on Schedule 4, you should consult the detailed guidance on the changes on the Defra website – <http://defraweb/wildlife-countryside/gwd/birdreg/index.htm> or <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalhealth/CITES/news/080922-birdregchanges.htm>

Most of the activities relevant to the keeping, sale and exhibition of birds, including those listed on Schedule 4 of the Act, are permitted under general licences issued annually by Natural England <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/conservation/wildlife-management-licensing/genlicences.htm>. Providing the terms and conditions of the general licences can be met, people do not need to apply for an individual specific licence. The bird species that are removed from Schedule 4 as a result of this change will now be treated in the same way as other bird species. This means that activities like competitive showing and sales are covered by the general licences provided the bird is captive bred and marked. Please check the general licences to ensure that you can meet the terms and conditions. NB If your bird is listed on Annex A of CITES, you will of course also need to obtain an Article 10 certificate if it is being kept etc for commercial purposes.

Natural England is making some minor amendments to a number of the general licences to reflect the fact that CITES compliant rings or marks will now be acceptable as proof that birds are legally held.

For further advice on general or individual licensing, please contact Natural England on Wildlife Management and Licensing on [wildlife@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:wildlife@naturalengland.org.uk) or 0845 6014523.

For queries about Schedule 4 species, registration and ringing, please contact the Wildlife Licensing and Registration Service on 0117 372 8744 or [wildlife.licensing@animalhealth.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:wildlife.licensing@animalhealth.gsi.gov.uk).

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30 Sep 2008