

Successful house hunt!

A breeding pair of red kites has found a nesting place for its offspring near the wind energy test site. After setting up their new home on one of the trees, the birds wasted no time in making a start on planning their brood. There have been eggs in the nest since the beginning of April where they are protected from the snow and the cold by the female. It is almost always the female red kite which sits on the eggs until they hatch. This process takes about 30 days. The female does not leave the nest in the first two to three weeks, keeping the eggs warm, guarding them under her wings, providing shade, and feeding the nestlings with the food brought by the male, which consists mainly of small mammals and birds. After hatching, the fledging period is between 48 and 54 days, depending on weather conditions and food supply. In extreme cases, it can take up to 70 days for the young birds to fly the nest.

Almost 60 per cent of all the red kites in the world breed in Germany therefore this species enjoys a very privileged status here. This is why there is a special focus on this bird of prey in our nature conservation research at the wind energy test site. We have set our sights first and foremost on the red kites which breed in the immediate vicinity of wind turbines and which also regularly fly over the wind test site, and we are observing these birds more closely in the interests of our research into their behaviour. Cameras were installed at some nests in order to gain a better understanding of their breeding habits. The pictures here are taken from a camera installed above a tree hollow used for nesting.



Pair of red kites (photograph: ZSW)



Red kite sitting on the nest (photograph: ZSW)



Red kite sitting on the nest in the snow (photograph: ZSW)