



### **The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981**

All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law and it is thus an offence, with certain exceptions (see Exceptions), to:

- intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird
- intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is in use or being built
- intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird
- have in one's possession or control any wild bird, dead or alive, or any part of a wild bird, which has been taken in contravention of the Act or the Protection of Birds Act 1954
- have in one's possession or control any egg or part of an egg which has been taken in contravention of the Act or the Protection of Birds Act 1954
- use traps or similar items to kill, injure or take wild birds
- have in one's possession or control any bird of a species occurring on Schedule 4 of the Act unless registered, and in most cases ringed, in accordance with the Secretary of State's regulations (see Schedules)
- intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

### **Fines**

The maximum penalty that can be imposed for an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act - in respect of a single bird, nest or egg - is a fine of up to £5,000, and/or six months' imprisonment.