



## GARDA PROBE LAUNCHED AFTER BUZZARD AND OTTER SHOT NEAR COUNTRY ESTATE



By [Debbie McCann](#)

19/11/2017

**Gardai have launched an investigation after a buzzard — a protected bird of prey — was shot and subsequently had to be put down.**

The force is also involved in a joint operation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service after two red kites and a number of buzzards vanished from a country estate in Co Waterford.

An otter — a protected species that has been in Ireland since the Ice Age — was also found shot dead near the same estate.



A woman saw a man and a boy lure a buzzard in Co Carlow before they shot it. Pic: REX / Shutterstock

The first incident happened in Tinryland, Co Carlow, in late September when a woman witnessed a man and a boy lure a buzzard with a distress call of a rabbit.

As the bird flew over their car, it was shot with a shotgun and fell into the field she was walking in. She shouted at the man and boy and they fled in a silver car.

BirdWatch Ireland recovered the buzzard, badly wounded but alive, and brought it to Kildare Animal Rescue. It was assessed by a vet, but the severity of its injuries meant it had to be put down.



3

An otter was found shot dead near a country estate in Carlow. Pic: REX / Shutterstock

A statement was taken and gardai are continuing to investigate.

Meanwhile, two red kites had nested in the Ballynatray House Estate in Waterford. They were making good progress and adapted to life on the estate with a number of buzzards.

However, in recent weeks the kites and buzzards have disappeared. An otter was also found shot dead. Gardai are working with the NPWS on the matter.



John Lusby of BirdWatch Ireland said we need to keep a record of the illegal killing of our wild animals. Pic: RTE

Buzzards have reintroduced successfully across the country over the past 10 years and pairs are often sighted. As a protected species, it is illegal to hunt them.

Superintendent Martin Walker urged people to contact gardai straight away if they witnessed the capture or decoy of birds. A report last month found illegal killing of birds of prey is a major threat in Ireland.

John Lusby of BirdWatch Ireland said a more robust system of recording illegal killing of birds was needed. ‘We have seen some horrific cases of persecution of raptors in recent years. However... it is likely that monitoring efforts only record a proportion of incidents and although the legislation in Ireland is robust, enforcement remains an issue.’

<https://extra.ie/2017/11/19/news/irish-news/garda-probe-launched-after-buzzard-and-otter-shot>