

Curlew Eggs and Growing Up

Curlews return to the uplands in spring each year.

Male and female curlews call to each other with a 'Cur-lee' sounding call.

They make a nest on the ground using long grass and lay 3 or 4 eggs. The eggs have colours and markings which make them camouflaged, so predators don't spot them as easily.

The male and female curlew will choose an area to nest in which has plenty of invertebrates for food. It is important that there are areas of long grass – which the chicks can hide in – as well as areas nearby where the grass is shorter and boggy or wet ground which make it easier for the chicks to feed. Curlews don't like to nest near trees because predators can easily hide in the trees and attack the nest when the parents are away.

Both the male and female birds look after the eggs, making sure they are warm enough and protected from predators.

They incubate the eggs (sitting on them to keep them warm) for about 26 days, at which time the eggs hatch and curlew chicks emerge.

The young chicks can run around and feed almost straight away. However, they won't be able to fly until they are between 4 and 6 weeks old.

At the end of summer, the grown-up chicks - as well as the adults - will leave the uplands and spend the winter months in coastal habitats.