

# SPIRIT OF SUTTERBY

## Barn Owl report June /July 2020



Geoff and I first put out the trail cameras at Sutterby about mid June 2020 to see if we could film the barn owls, we also placed a wooden perch near to the west wall. Last year the barn owls spent some time perching on the trail cameras so we thought we may get some good shots with a perch. This time we had no film of any barn owls at all and very little bird movement on any of the cameras and we began to think the worst.



Geoff and I returned to try to film the owls at the beginning of July 2020 and placed the trail cameras pointing at the owl box in the west wall and the owl box on a tree at the rear of the church. This time again no owls in the boxes BUT owls were using the perch.



There were two adult barn owls who returned several times during the night. It is very difficult filming white owls at night we could not get the film any clearer, the black light from the camera just reflected off the birds.



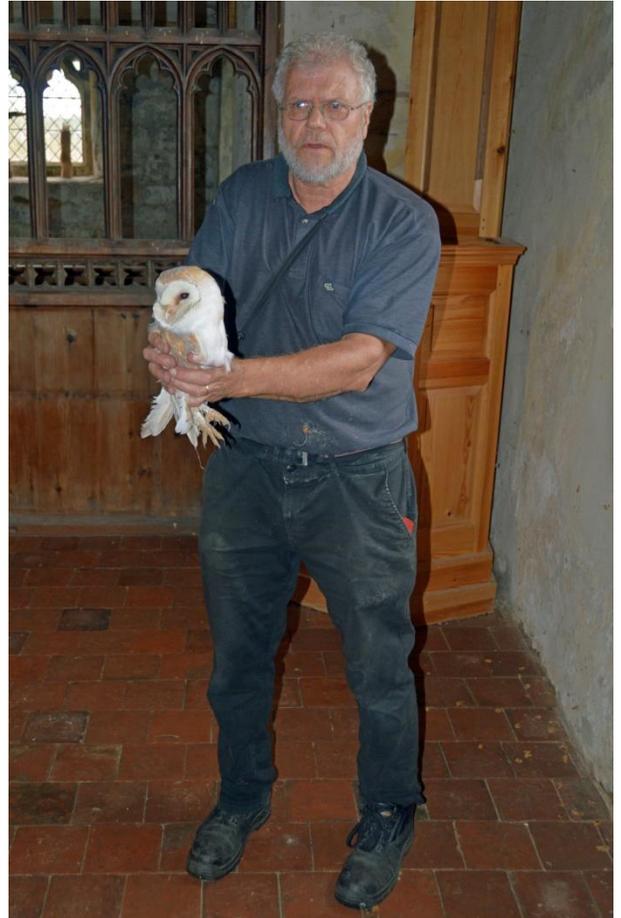
A couple of nights later we returned to try again, the perch seemed to work quite well, we had the same pair of barn owls off and on during the night, but after the owls went to bed an adult kestrel and a juvenile turned up to use it.



We had been keeping Garry Steele (the man who rings our owls) informed of our finding with the owls. He was keen to come and check the owl boxes, we arranged a visit for the 21<sup>st</sup> of July 2020. As is usual Garry blocks the entrance to the owl box with a piece of foam to stop any birds from flying off, and then he opens the back of the box to see what is in there.

We had not filmed any birds entering or leaving the box so we were not very hopeful. BUT there were 2 barn owls in the box in the church wall.

Garry who is licenced to handle the birds removed the two owls to see if they were ringed. One of the birds was not ringed so Garry fitted a ring, the second bird did have a ring but not one that Garry had fitted, so he will check the number and see where it was ringed





One of the adult owls being held by Garry

After checking the 2 owls they were returned to their box, when they had settled, the foam blocking the entrance was removed.

Then Garry fought his way through the scrub to the owl box on a tree at the rear of the church, in this box there were lots of kestrel pellets so it seems the kestrels used it this year, we had had kestrel in here before, I took a picture of one in this box in 2015.

Garry then had a quick check of the bat boxes to see if they had been used, possibly a couple had, Geoff and Denise are going to take the bat detector up there in the near future.









The films that Geoff and I took of the barn owls and the kestrels are all available on pcloud, please contact Geoff or Denise if you need access and do not have it.