



1

Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation-RDWF

- Founded 1995
- Non membership, charitable Trust
- Wildlife Conservation and Research
- Species Recovery

Roy Dennis WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

2



A quick question...

- Have you seen a white-tailed eagle?
- a) yes, in Scotland
- b) yes, on the south coast of England
- c) yes, but not in the UK
- d) I don't know if it was an Eagle

3



4

White-tailed Eagle(*Haliaeetus albicilla*)

- Only 35-40% survival to adulthood
- They breed close to their natal site – behaviour known as “natal philopatry”



5

- Juveniles are initially brown all over before gradually moulting to adult plumage after four years.



6



7



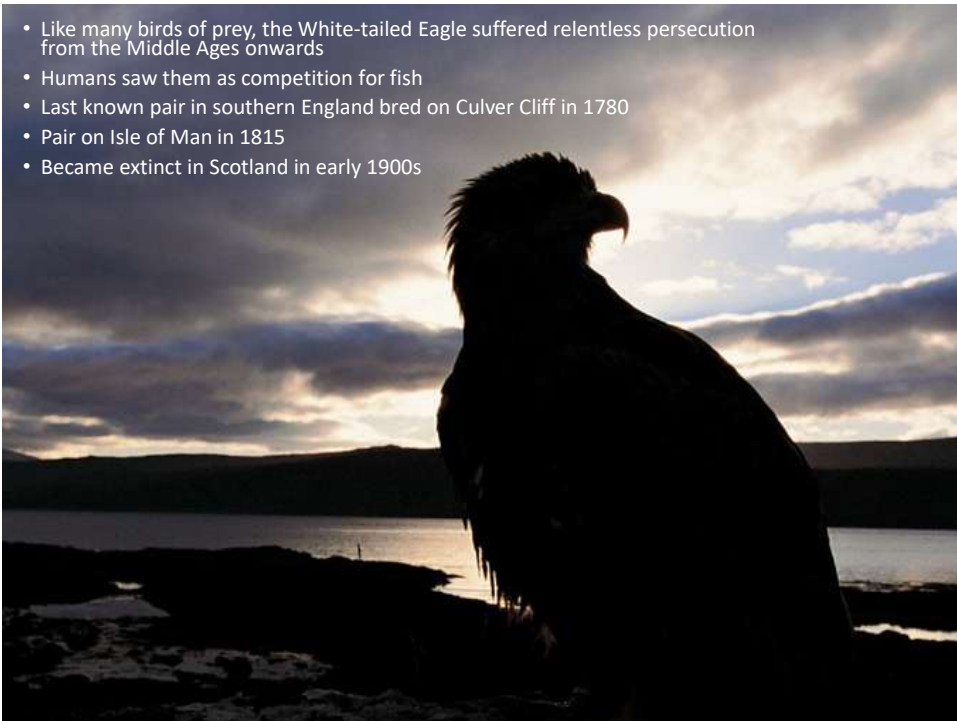
8

- Ranges from Greenland to northern Japan.
- Efforts being made to restore it to its former range in Europe
- Species of Conservation Concern (Red List) in the UK.
- Government included reintroduction in 25 year Environment Plan.



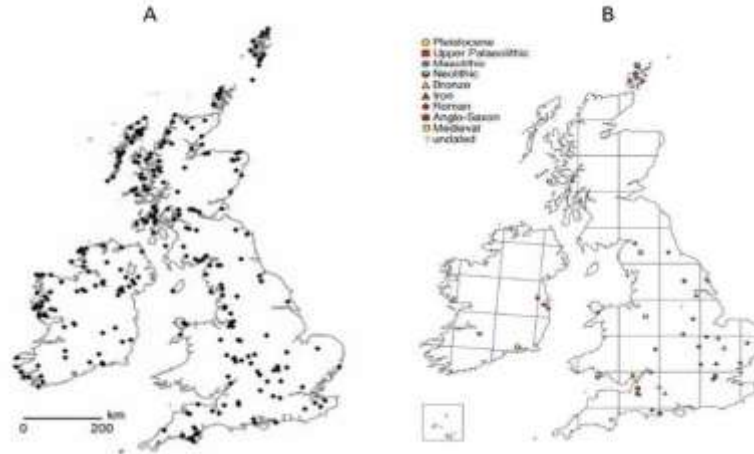
9

- Like many birds of prey, the White-tailed Eagle suffered relentless persecution from the Middle Ages onwards
- Humans saw them as competition for fish
- Last known pair in southern England bred on Culver Cliff in 1780
- Pair on Isle of Man in 1815
- Became extinct in Scotland in early 1900s



10

White-tailed Eagle records in the UK



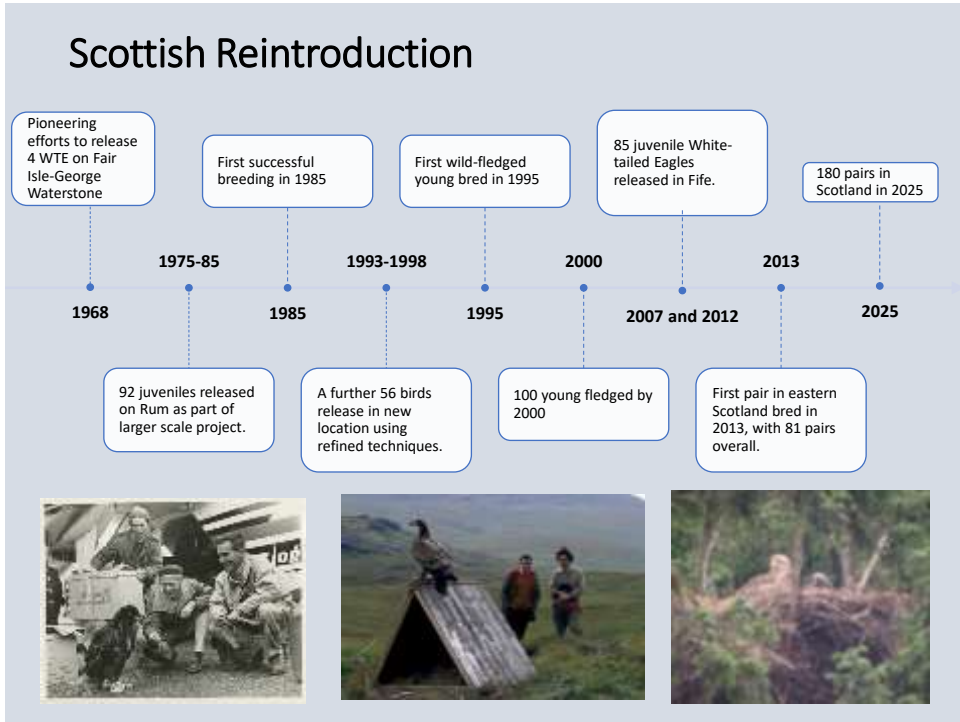
A) Geographical location of place names interpreted as indicating the presence of White-tailed Eagles (Evans et al. 2012); B) Map showing the archaeological records of White-tailed Eagles in the UK (Yalden 2007).

11

Recovery in neighbouring countries

- Reintroduced in Scotland
 - 180 pairs
- Reintroduced in Ireland
 - 10+ pairs across SW Ireland
- Reintroduction in Spain
 - 1 pair 2025
- Natural expansion in north-west Europe
 - 40+ pairs Netherlands
 - 3-5 pairs NE France

12



13

The feasibility of reintroducing White-tailed Eagles *Haliaeetus albicilla* to the Isle of Wight and the Solent

By Dennis, Jay Dyer, Tim Maxwell and Louise Bergman
March 2019

Translocation Plans

- 2019- 2024 (+2 years)
- Natural England & Nature Scot awarded licences
- 60 Juvs over 5 years
- Population modelling – 6-8 pairs within 50km of release site

14

50Km radius



15



The Translocation Process

16

Nest Sites

- White-tailed Eagles nest on sea cliffs or trees
- Tree sites preferred – usually in wooded areas close to water (Evans 2010)
- Height of 16-19 metres (Sandor et al. 2015).
- Birch, Oak, Scot's Pine



17



Nic Dennis 2019

18

Chicks collected at 10 weeks old

Nests with 1 must be left



19

Eagles are flown from Scotland to the Isle of Wight



20



21



22



23



24

White-tailed Eagles released on IoW to date

Year	Number released			Mortality			Survival			
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Percentage
2019	4	2	6	3	0	3	1	2	3	50%
2020	4	3	7	2	1	3	2	2	4	57%
2021	4	8	12	4	4	8	0	4	4	33%
2022	<i>No translocation due to Avian Influenza in Scotland</i>									
2023	2	2	4	1	1	2	1	1	2	50%
2024	6	2	8	0	0	0	6	2	8	100%
2025	5	3	8	1	0	1	4	3	7	87%
Total	25	20	45	11	6	17	14	14	28	62%

Survival is higher than the expected 35-40%, based on the Scottish reintroduction

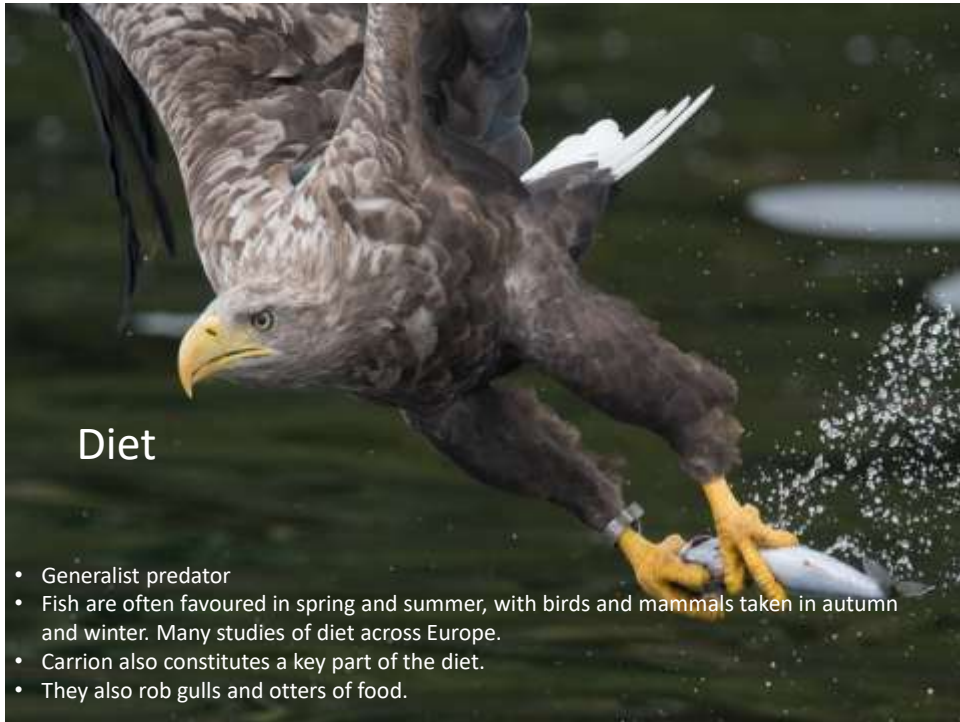
25



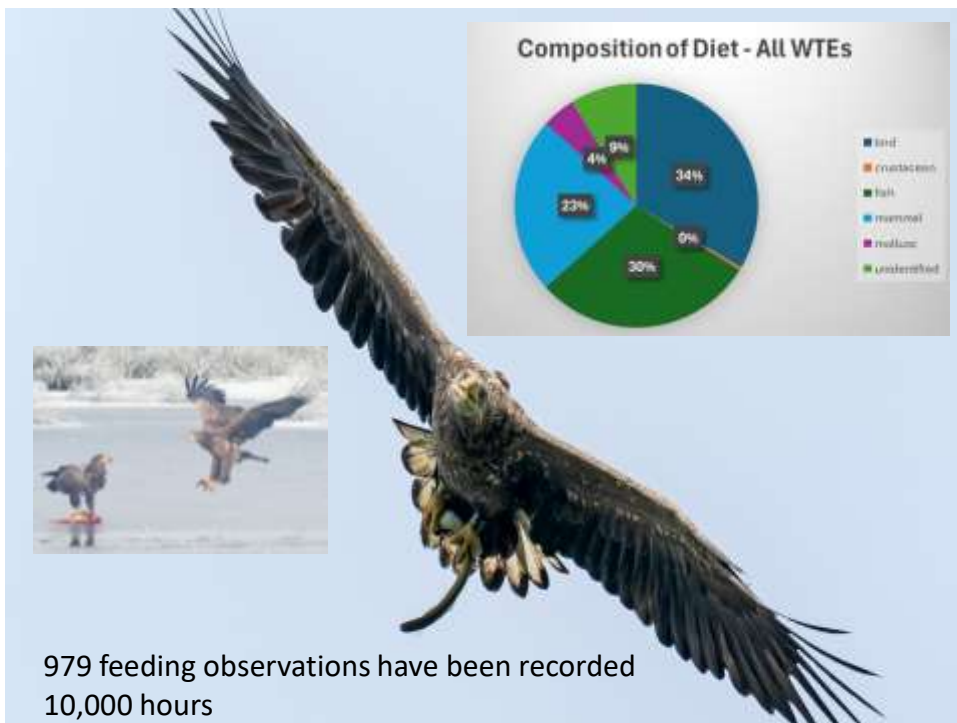
- Poisoning x 2
- Lead poisoning
- Bill deformity/secondary poisoning
- Train collision
- Powerline collision x 2
- Avian influenza
- Aspergillosis

Mortality in White-tailed Eagles

26



27



28



Common Cuttlefish *Sepia officinalis*

29

WTE'S Netherlands

- Diet of White-tailed Eagles in the Netherlands consists predominantly of waterbirds and fish (van Rijn and Dekker 2016). Evidence that fish are preferred when available.



- No conflict with sheep/livestock farming in Netherlands – or elsewhere in Europe.

30



What role do they play in the ecosystem?

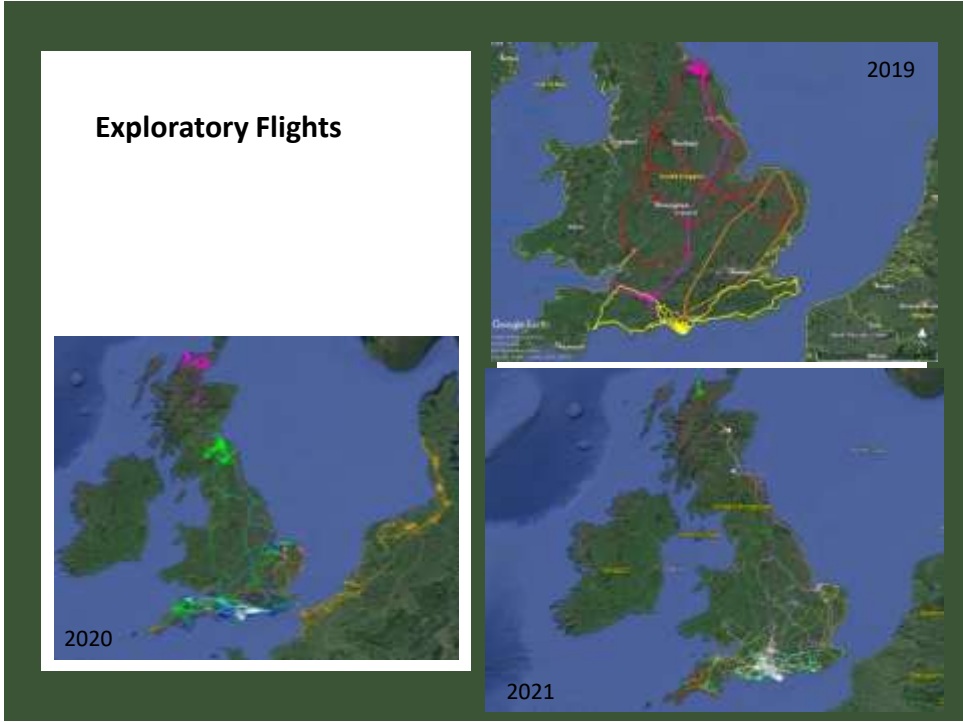
- Apex Predator, with a generalist diet
- Largely lives in wetland habitats, preferred prey items are fish and waterbirds
- They feed on carrion
- Suppress mid-level predators- Buzzards

31

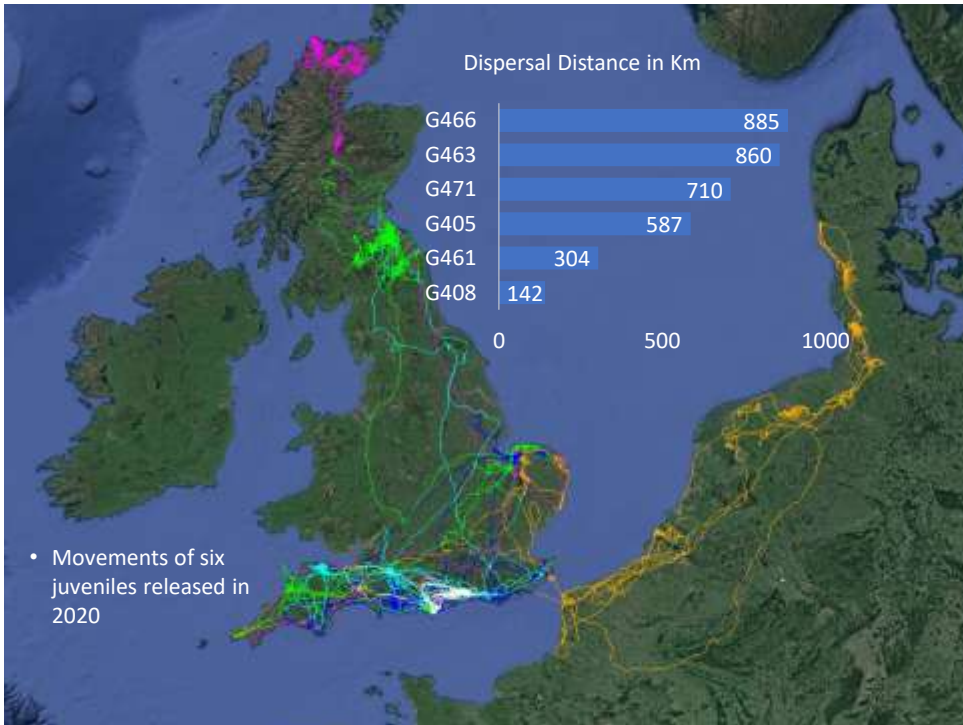


Dispersal of White-tailed Eagles from the Isle of Wight

32



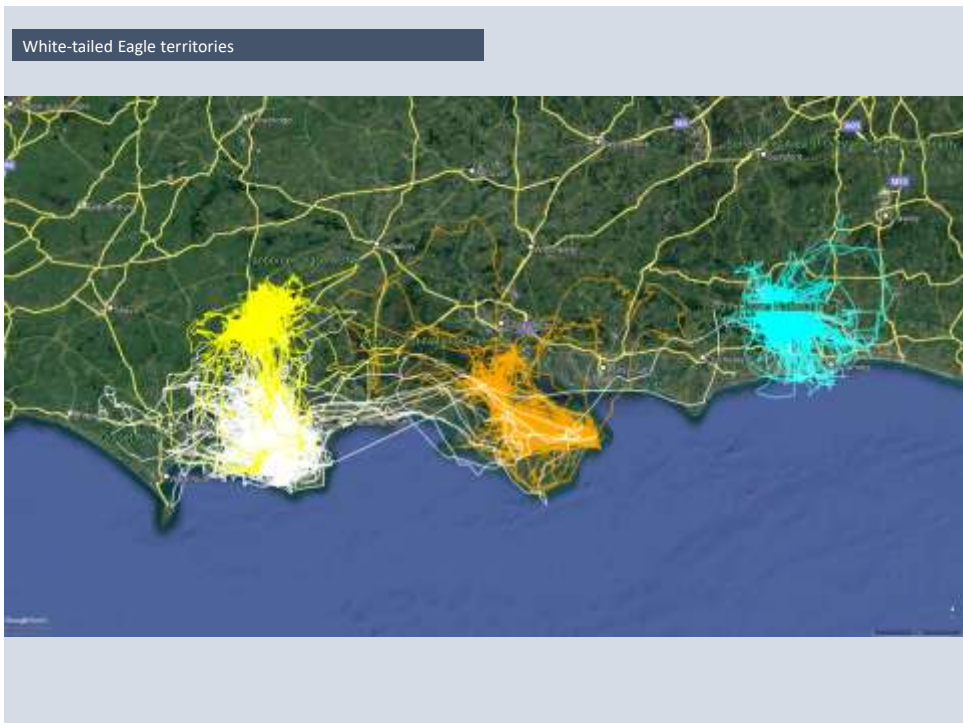
33



34



35



36



37



Chick hatched on 29th April 2023

38

2025 Two chicks both female



39

The Next Steps...

Eagle Reinforcement Project



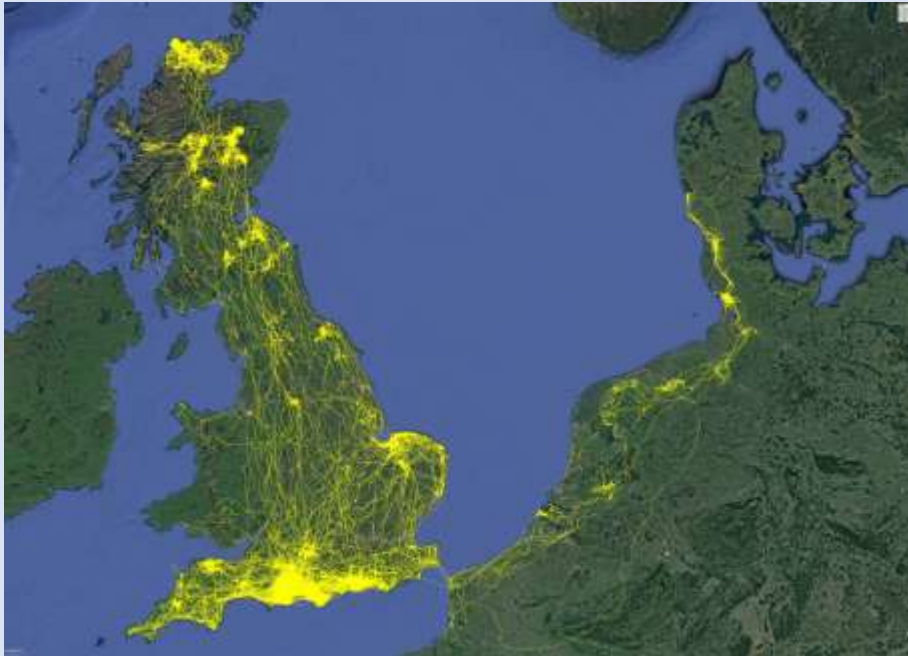
40

Why do we need a species reinforcement?

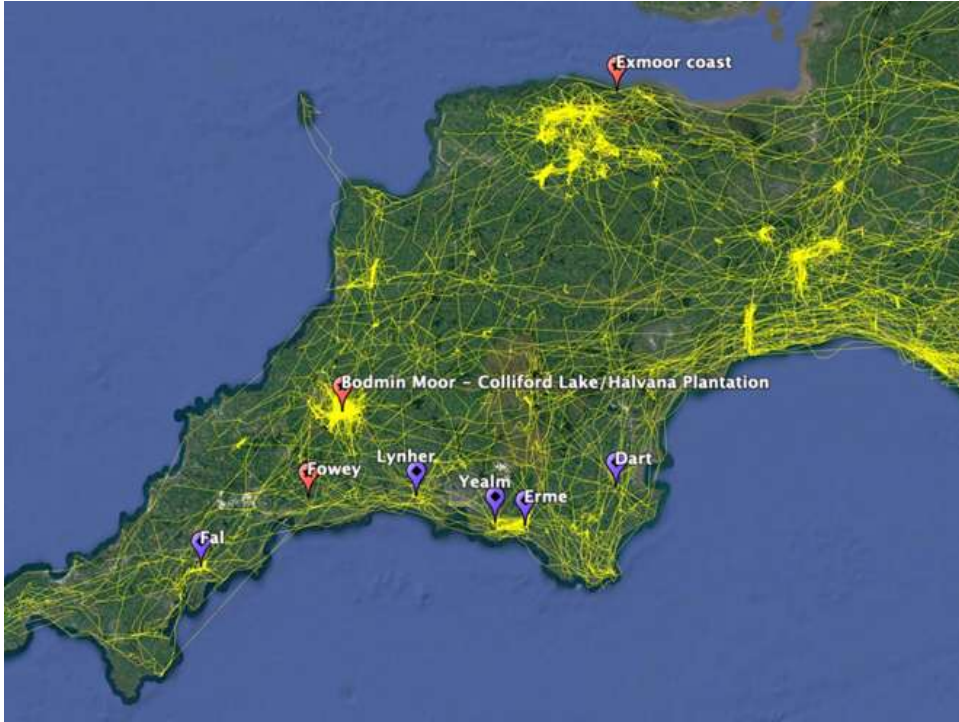


41

All movements of all birds from 2019-2024



42



43



EXMOOR WHITE-TAILED EAGLE PROJECT



44

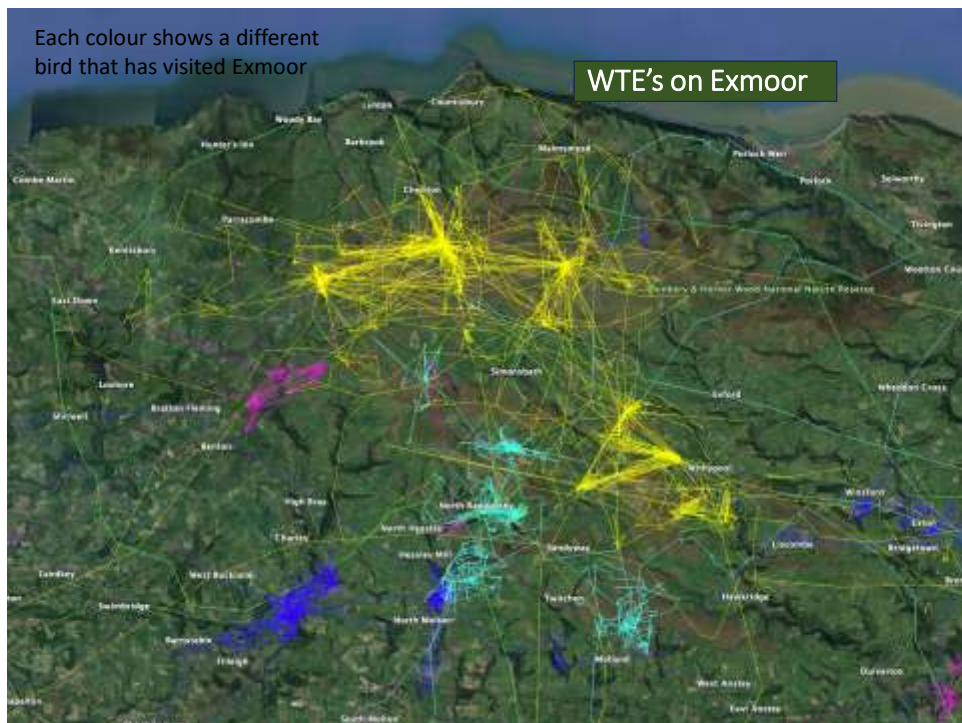
Why choose Exmoor?



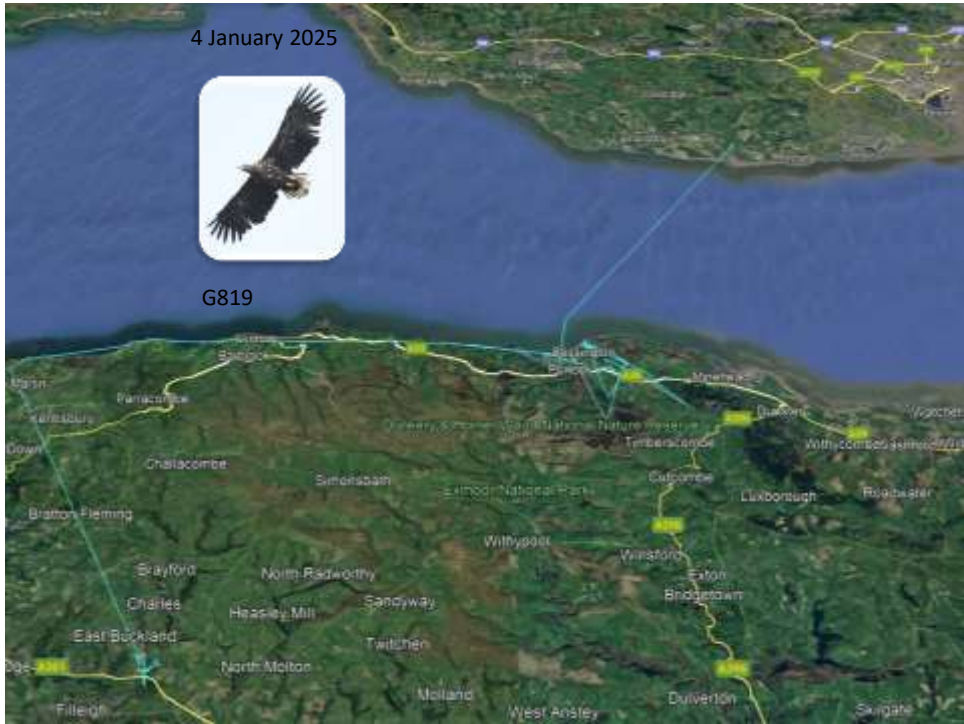
- Undisturbed Landscape
- Great Prey availability
- Coastal woodland
- Deep wooded valleys

- 14 WTE have visited Exmoor some spending up to 7 months

45



46



47



48

How many pairs could breed on Exmoor?

- 18-20 birds max would be released over 3 years
- 35-40% will survive to adulthood
- A total of 2-3 pairs could breed on Exmoor



49

Public Engagement/ Report a Sighting



<https://www.roydennis.org/report-white-tailed-eagle-sighting/>

50



Eagle Tourism in Scotland is worth between £4-8 million

51

Economic data

Isle of Mull 2022

22 WTE Nesting Pairs


Annual tourism spend 4.9- 8 million

110-160 full time local jobs

2.1- 3.5 million local income generated for residents

Percentage of tourists visiting for WTE increasing

2023 Forest research noted increase in WTE tourism to the IoW



Will Evans

52

Ecotourism Opportunities for Exmoor

- Boost in visitor numbers
- Revenue for B+B's, air bnbs and Restaurant's
- Boat trips for Eagle tours
- Increase in jobs
- Attractions for Exmoor Safaris




53

The best place in England to see WTE's is ..



- April 2025- March 2026
- Sold 14,000 tickets
- Revenue £280,000
- Boat trips, guided walks, etc

54



**Nest
Webcams
and
watchpoints**

Peregrine Falcon
Nest March- June

Visitor numbers:
30,279

Webcam views:
1,295,104

55

Summary



- 45 Eagles translocated to England
- 28 birds remain alive
- 2025 three territories/ two breeding pairs
- All pairs settled within expected natal dispersal area, 60km of IoW
- Six chicks have fledged to date from two nest sites
- Eagle Ecotourism is increasing
- Future plans -species reinforcement in the SW
- Starting on Exmoor National Park in 2026

56



Thank you for listening, any questions?

- www.roydennis.org
- seaeagles@roydennis.org
- www.birdsofpooleharbour.co.uk