

## “Flying barn doors”

Sea eagles are massive – twice the size of buzzards. Young birds, less than five years old, have mottled or dark brown plumage. In flight, all sea eagles have long, broad wings with “fingered” ends and wedge-shaped tails. Adults have a brown body with a pale head and neck, white tail and yellow beak.



Sea eagle

Buzzard

### Sea eagle facts

- Size:** Wingspan 2–2.4 metres; overall length 0.7–0.9 metres; weight 3–5.5 kg (male), 4–7 kg (female)
- Breeding:** The birds will settle on territories and pair up when they are 3–5 years old.
- Food:** Sea eagles are versatile. As well as hunting fish, gulls, ducks, geese, rabbits and hares, they scavenge dead animals such as deer and will even steal food from other birds and otters.

## What do I do if I see one?

If you see a sea eagle, first enjoy it! Next, make a note of the date, time, place and what the bird was doing, plus any information you can see on the wing tag, including the colour. Finally, please get in touch with us at [eastscotlandseaeagles@rspb.org.uk](mailto:eastscotlandseaeagles@rspb.org.uk)

### Find out more

Visit [www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk) to see the East Scotland Sea Eagles Project page and read the latest blog post.

### Contact us

RSPB Tayside and Fife Office  
1 Atholl Crescent  
Perth  
PH1 5NG  
Tel: 01738 630783  
[eastscotlandseaeagles@rspb.org.uk](mailto:eastscotlandseaeagles@rspb.org.uk)

The East Scotland Sea Eagles Project is a partnership of RSPB Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and Forestry Commission Scotland.

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# SEA EAGLES

## ...in East Scotland



a million voices for nature

Sea eagles are the UK's largest birds of prey. Also called white-tailed eagles, they were a common sight across Scotland in the 19th century, before they were persecuted to extinction. Now, through the East Scotland Sea Eagles Project, they are being re-introduced to the estuaries and coast of East Scotland. Here the shallow waters provide plenty of food for them all year round.

## Is there one near you?



## Then and now

The map shows where sea eagles are commonly seen now, and also indicates their historic locations in the 19th century.

## Why re-introduce?

The sea eagle is a globally threatened species: there are only around 10,000 pairs left in the world, a third of which live in Norway. Re-introducing sea eagles to their former haunts helps to expand their range and ensure their survival.

## How are we doing it?

The sea eagle chicks that arrive in Scotland are collected at 6–8 weeks old from nests in Norway. Each chick comes from a nest containing twins, so that one chick can be left in the nest. When they are 12–14 weeks old and ready to fly, the young birds are released in the Tay/Forth area.

Between 2007 and 2012, 15–20 chicks have been re-introduced to the east coast each year, to allow a breeding population to become established in East Scotland.

## The wider picture

The first sea eagles were successfully re-introduced to Scotland on the Isle of Rum in 1975, and more were released in Wester Ross between 1993 and 1998. There is now a well established and rising breeding population of over 50 pairs of breeding sea eagles on the west coast.

The re-introduction of up to 100 of these magnificent birds to the east coast will help make the Scottish sea eagle population stronger and allow them to re-establish across the country much sooner.



We give each chick a unique wing tag and a radio-backpack that allows us to follow them for up to five years. The colour, letter or number identify the bird (see the above turquoise tag).



The Firth of Tay – a perfect landscape for sea eagles.