



giving
nature
a home

Name:

Golden eagle



History

Golden eagles used to be seen all over the UK and Europe, but in the 18th century, they were killed by farmers who mistakenly thought the birds were attacking their sheep.

Sadly, this persecution continued in the 19th century when some gamekeepers illegally killed the birds because they eat grouse, which people like to shoot for sport. This is why there are almost no golden eagles in England or Wales.

General info

Scientific name: *Aquila chrysaetos*

Size: Length up to 82cm; wingspan up to 2.1m – wider than the armspan of an adult human!

Weight: Males weigh an average of 3.7kg; females weigh an average of 5.3kg.

Where they live: Golden eagles live around mountains, moors and forests. In the UK, you can only see them in Scotland.

How long they live: Up to 23 years.

What they eat: Golden eagles will eat animals, such as deer and sheep, that have died of natural causes. They will also catch mammals and birds, including rabbits, grouse and wading birds. Despite what some people believe, golden eagles can't kill and carry off healthy lambs – hares are the biggest prey they can tackle.

Conservation status: The golden eagle is on the Green List, as it has recovered from previous declines.

What is special about this bird?

Golden eagles are very big and powerful, but also very graceful and have spectacular display flights. They soar up high and dive down at amazing speeds – it's an unforgettable sight.

Fascinating fact

Golden eagles are very popular across the world. They appear on more than 10 different countries' coats of arms, including Egypt, Ghana and Mexico.