



giving  
nature  
a home

**Name:**

**White-tailed eagle**



## History

In the 1700s, white-tailed eagles lived in parts of England, Ireland and Scotland. Some people killed them, and in 1918 the last UK white-tailed eagle was shot on Shetland in Scotland.

It took until 1975 to successfully reintroduce them on islands in Scotland. In 1985 the first white-tailed eagle chick fledged on the Isle of Mull. Further successful reintroduction schemes have followed in Scotland, and the Isle of Wight in 2019, but the population remains very small.

## What is special about this bird?

The white-tailed eagle is the largest bird of prey that lives in the UK.

## General info

**Scientific name:** *Haliaeetus albicilla*

**Size:** Massive! Around 80cm long with a wingspan of around 2.2m – wider than the armspan of an adult human!

**Weight:** Males are an average of 4.3kg, while females weigh around 5.5kg.

**Where they live:** Mainly Skye, Mull and the Western Isles in Scotland. In 2007, they were reintroduced to Fife in Scotland and Kerry in Ireland. In winter, birds from Scandinavia occasionally visit eastern England. In 2019, they were reintroduced to the Isle of Wight off the south coast of England.

**How long they live:** Between 20 and 25 years.

**What they eat:** White-tailed eagles will eat almost anything, including seabirds, ducks, geese and mammals. They can even grab fish that are swimming close to the surface. In winter, they also feed on carrion (dead creatures).

**Conservation status:** White-tailed eagles are on our Red List as we are very concerned about them.

## Fascinating fact

In Iceland, generations of white-tailed eagles have used the same nest for 150 years.