

WHITETAILED EAGLE

haliaeetus albicilla

FactFile

Length: 55cm – 58cm

Habitat:

Coastal areas but nesting as much as 10km inland. The huge nest built of wood, heather and seaweed is used to rear two chicks from eggs laid in March or April. Incubation usually takes about 38 days and the young do not fledge until they are about 75 days old.

Wingspan: 145cm – 170cm

Weight: 1.10kg – 2.00kg



Making a recovery
but still persecuted.

The White Tailed Eagle has the greatest wingspan of any British bird, spreading to almost 2.5m. It is a classic sea eagle with its dark body and contrasting white tail, unfeathered legs, large powerful beak and high pitched call.

It was persecuted to extinction in this country when the last survivor, an elderly female, was shot in 1918. In the late 1970s, the R.S.P.B. started a process of reintroduction on the Scottish island of Rhum using stock imported from Norway. This programme has been a great success with breeding from these imported birds in 1985.

Sadly, the persecution continues. In 2000 a White Tail nest was raided and the eggs stolen. These eggs were only about a week away from hatching. In the same year, 2 immature birds were seen in the skies over Norfolk & Suffolk.