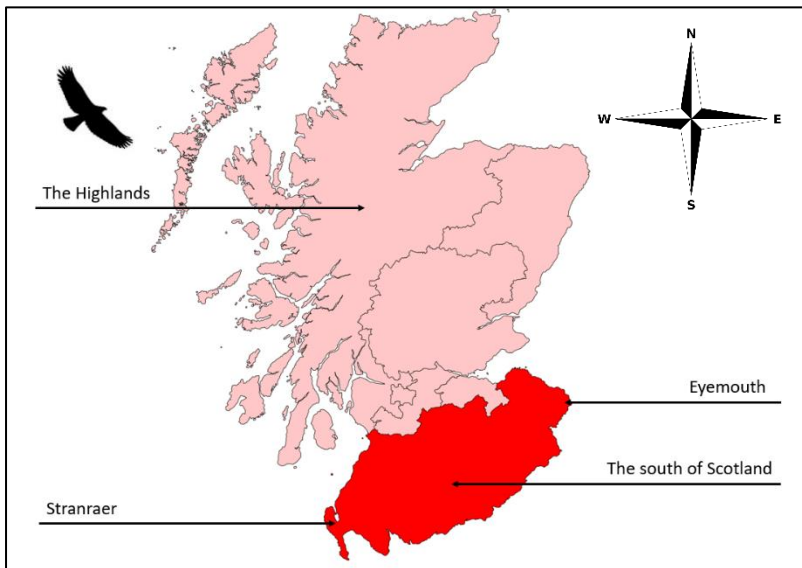




Eaglets Blog #1: Emily's Journey South

Many, many years ago there were lots of golden eagles in the south of Scotland; maybe over 100! From Stranraer in the west all the way to Eyemouth in the east, Golden Eagles ruled the skies.

Today there aren't so many. In fact, there could be fewer than **10**. Imagine only 10 people in your school! It would be very quiet and very lonely. You might walk around all day and not see anyone else. This is a little bit what it's like for golden eagles in the south of Scotland; very lonely!



To help golden eagles in the south of Scotland find more friends, a group of experts got together and came up with an idea. Whilst there might be less than 10 golden eagles here in the south, up in the Highlands there are over **1,000**! Our idea is that we can bring some of the young golden eagles down from the Highlands and release them into southern skies.

A brave team is assembled to make the journey to the mountains of the

Highlands to collect the young eagles from their nest. In the team there is a **vet** to make sure the eagles are looked after and are healthy, a **vet's assistant** to help make the health checks, a **climber** who will abseil off the side of the mountain to collect the young eagles and our **eagle officer**, John, who will drive the young eagles back down to the south.

The team set off up the mountain on a warm, sunny day in June. They are as quick and as quiet as possible to ensure we don't disturb the eagles too much. The climber is in a harness attached to some ropes as he scrambles down the side of the mountain and into the golden eagle's nest, known as an **eyrie**. He puts the young eagles, or **eaglets** as they are known at that age, safely into a basket and brings them back up so that the vet can give them a health check.



The collection team heading out to the eyrie

The vet checks the eaglets' wings and talons and will also look at their beaks and eyes. He listens to the eaglets' breathing and heartbeat using a **stethoscope**. We keep one eaglet with us and the other is returned to the eyrie.



Whilst all of this is going on, the eaglets' parents are nearby keeping an eye on us. They will return to the eyrie, once we have gone, to look after their remaining eaglet.

The chosen eaglet is carefully taken to a waiting vehicle where it is placed into a special transport box. The box is lined with a comfy bed of **moss** and some **twigs** for the eaglet to grab hold of. The box also has small holes all around it so the eaglet can breathe.

John then begins the drive back from the Highlands to a secret location in the south of Scotland. Here we have built some aviaries which are a sort of pen where the eaglet will stay for another 6 weeks until it is strong enough to be released. John will check on the eaglet every day and feed it plenty of food.

One of the first golden eagles to be collected was named Emily by Priorsford Primary School in **Peebles**.

Check back for our next Eaglets Blog where we will follow Emily's journey in the aviary and her release into southern skies.

In the meantime, have a go at the quiz and why not come up with your own story for Emily. If you send it to us, we will feature it on our blog and send you an Emily the Eagle pin badge!



Eaglets in the eyrie just before we make a collection



EAGLETS BLOG #1: EMILY'S JOURNEY SOUTH

QUIZ

Question 1: How many golden eagles do we currently think there are in the south of Scotland?

A: Fewer than 10 **B:** Fewer than 10,000 **C:** Fewer than 1,000,000

Question 2: How many golden eagles are there in the Highlands?

A: over 10 **B:** over 100,000 **C:** over 1,000

Question 3: Along with the eagle officer, vet and assistant who else is on the collection team?

A: Scientist **B:** Pilot **C:** Climber

Question 4: What is the name given to a golden eagle's nest?

A: Eyrie **B:** Burrow **C:** Lair

Question 5: What is a young eagle also known as?

A: Eaglet **B:** Kid **C:** A wee eagle

Question 6: What does the vet use to listen to the eaglet's breathing and heartbeat?

A: Trumpet **B:** Stethoscope **C:** Headphones

Question 7: What is put in the special transport box?

A: Bubblewrap **B:** Moss and twigs **C:** Cotton wool

Question 8: Priorsford Primary School named Emily, but where are Priorsford from?

A: Edinburgh **B:** Dumfries **C:** Peebles

1:A, 2:C, 3:C, 4:A, 5:A, 6:B, 7:B, 8:C

ANSWERS