



Embargoed until 00:01 hours on date TBC

Award-winning artist produces exclusive new print to support ground-breaking UK conservation project



An award-winning Scottish artist has been selected to create an exclusive print that will play a vital role in helping to protect and grow the population of golden eagles in southern Scotland. The partners behind a ground-breaking UK conservation initiative believe that the “stunning creation” is now more important than ever for the continued success of their project while the country follows the government’s Covid-19 recovery plan.

The pioneering South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project invited professional artists from across Scotland to make submit proposals for the design of a poster, part of an important new informational leaflet to help people understand how they can address concerns about low numbers of golden eagles in the area.

Based in Wigtownshire, printmaker and Associated Member of the Society of Wildlife Artists, Lisa Hooper was selected because of her passion for protecting wildlife and utilising her artwork to beautifully showcase the wonders of the natural world. She created the South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project prints with great skill and precision over several weeks using an intricate process on an antique circa 1860 Colombian Press. In addition to the final striking image featuring as a poster at the centre of the project’s printed leaflet, Lisa will now sell these exclusive A2 South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project prints and make a donation from each sale to support the project’s ongoing conservation efforts.

Speaking about the importance of the leaflet and artwork at the current time, Philip Munro Community Outreach Officer at the South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project said: “The understanding and proactive support of people and communities throughout Scotland is absolutely essential for conservation efforts. We need to keep building on the support of our 10,000 plus special project participants and volunteers, even in the middle of this

unprecedented global crisis, so that we can ensure that we can see even more of these magnificent birds across the south of Scotland's skies for generations to come."

"We have designed our interactive leaflet to help us achieve this by reaching those who cannot access our beautiful natural world while they stay safe indoors at this time. With Lisa Hooper's stunning creation at its heart, we hope it will truly inspire people to take golden eagles under their wings and protect them for generations to come."

Artist Lisa Hooper, based in Wigtownshire, added: "I don't normally do commissioned work, but this brief really grabbed me because of the subject matter and the great cause it was supporting".

"Up until 2006, I worked in conservation and have a lifelong passion for natural history. So as a professional artist specialising in the creation of local landscapes of the south of Scotland and wildlife art, this project was the perfect fit for me. Wildlife art can awaken interest in and concern for the natural world and for me that's important. I aim to create loose, observational art depicting creatures in their element."

Lisa used a "reduction linocut" process to create the exclusive South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project print. She gradually and carefully cut away one piece of lino around 15 times, putting it through the printing press at each cut, sometimes multiple times with different colours, to add different layers and bring the image to life. Lisa added: "It was really pleasing to see the eagles emerging as the process evolved over several weeks".

Leading graphic designer Kirsten Murray initially designed the South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project's leaflet featuring Lisa's poster for use at schools, community venues, and various events and festivals throughout 2020. However, the Covid-19 lockdown began before the design was complete and with some uncertainty behind when normal community engagement work can resume, the leaflet has been transformed into an interactive digital download so people can learn more about how to protect golden eagles in the south of Scotland safely from home. The digital version of the leaflet and an A4 size download of Lisa's artwork is available to download from: www.goldeneaglessouthofscotland.co.uk

The pioneering South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project has been set up to address concerns about low numbers of golden eagles, which play a vital role in helping to maintain a healthy local ecosystem, in the south of Scotland.

The project team has successfully translocated four golden eagles from the Scottish Highlands to the south of Scotland. The four birds have settled into their new habitats and are fending for themselves. Support from volunteers, land managers, raptor specialists and other participants plays a pivotal role in helping the iconic species continue to grow in numbers and thrive in the area.

Project partners include RSPB Scotland, Scottish Land & Estates, Scottish Forestry, Scottish Natural Heritage, and the Southern Uplands Partnership. Funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, project partners, Scottish Power Renewables, the Scottish Government and and Scottish Borders and Dumfries & Galloway LEADER Programmes. The initiative is a key

project under the Scottish Government's 2020 Challenge for Scottish Biodiversity (which sets out a route map to protect and restore Scotland's biodiversity).

For the latest news on the project visit: www.goldeneaglessouthofscotland.co.uk

For more information about Lisa Hooper and to purchase one of her exclusive golden eagle prints visit: www.hoopoeprints.co.uk

Ends

For further information contact:

Kirsty Innes, tel 07790 910 646, email kirsty@kirstyinnespr.com

Notes to Editors

About the South of Scotland Golden Eagles Project

- Before the project began, there was only between two and four pairs of golden eagle across Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish Borders, however a supporting study by Scottish Natural Heritage shows that the local habitat is suitable for up to 16 pairs.
- The project has also identified that the best way of enhancing this fragmented and vulnerable population of golden eagles is through increasing the supply of young eagles, which will eventually recruit into the breeding population. Recent satellite tagging work of golden eagles in Scotland has shown that the south of Scotland golden eagle population is greatly isolated from larger populations of this species from the Highlands.
- For the next four years, the Project will bring between three and ten young eagles south.
- The project team is using tried and tested methods for rear and release of the young golden eagles derived from previous white-tailed eagle and red kite reintroduction projects, and through the cooperation of raptor experts and estates.
- The project team has collected single eagle chicks from broods of young in the Highlands and raised and released them in an undisclosed location in the Moffat Hills area.
- Work is focussing on ensuring former and potential nesting sites are re-occupied; to identify any additional habitat management measures that will bring further improvements in food supplies in these areas; and wider work with local communities, schools, and enterprises to bring much wider benefits.
- Each released golden eagle will be satellite tagged to ensure the project team builds up as much information as they can on the ranging behaviour, survival, and health of the birds.
- Project staff are working with a variety of expert advisers, including specialists from the Edinburgh University Dick Vet School, and from Ireland and Spain who have been heavily involved in successful raptor reintroduction programmes.
- The South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project is:
 - supported by Scottish Land & Estates, RSPB Scotland, Scottish Forestry, Scottish Natural Heritage, and The Southern Uplands Partnership.
 - funded by:
 - £1.37 million from The National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund;
 - the Scottish Government;
 - more than £150,000 match funding from the Scottish Government and the European Union – LEADER 2014-2020 programme;
 - Scottish Power Renewables.
 - licenced to undertake the work by Scottish Natural Heritage.
- The [Scottish Raptor Study Group](#) are supplying considerable expertise of golden eagle conservation to the project.
- Thanks to National Lottery players, the Heritage Lottery Fund invests money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology

under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife.

- In 2019, the project revealed that over 10,000 volunteers and special project participants of all ages (aged 4 to 92) have taken the golden eagles under their wings, as they've supported the project through a wide range of tasks and initiatives.
- Those who have participated in the initiative to date come from a range of backgrounds and organisations, including: the UK's first ever Golden Eagle Scout Champions at the Scottish Borders Scouts; over 360 pupils from primary schools across the south of Scotland and one in the Scottish Highlands; Borders College; the Scottish Raptor Study Group; Kielder Bird of Prey Centre; HMP Dumfries; and local businesses like Wild Tree Adventures. Earlier this year, the Philiphaugh Estate near Selkirk also announced that it plans to open a Golden Eagle Centre which will support the project's conservation and community engagement work.

About Lisa Hooper

- In 1992, whilst working full time for a national conservation organisation, Lisa joined an evening class in etching at what is now the University of Gloucestershire. Over successive years her commitment to printmaking grew and in 1998 she bought her own press. She became a full time artist in 2006 when she moved to Port William, in South West Scotland, following redundancy.
- Following a ten year grounding in zinc plate etching, she started to explore relief printing techniques starting with wood and linocuts. After moving to Dumfries & Galloway, she used these new methods, alongside collagraph and monotype and began to produce more prints of birds and wildlife; her lifelong personal and professional passion.
- Four years ago, she purchased an antique relief printing press, which sits alongside her etching press and enabled her to produce complex multi-coloured linocuts, of which the South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project print is an example.
- She specialises in creating landscapes of Dumfries & Galloway, and wildlife. She finds inspiration is never far away in the south of Scotland. Increasingly she is interested in using her art to raise awareness of the plight of the natural world, and birds in particular in the face of numerous human-induced challenges from land use change to food shortages and global warming.

Lisa during the Covid-19 lockdown:

- As well as working on the eagle print, in recent months Lisa has been enjoying:
 - spending more time looking at the natural world.
 - painting, something she put on hold thirty years ago when she took up printmaking.
 - Working with galleries and other organisations, including Spring Fling (Scotland's leading open studios weekend in Dumfries) and the Scottish Ornithologist's Club, to maintain a strong online profile for her work.

Career highlights:

- 2007 solo exhibition at the Wildfowl and Wetlands HQ, Slimbridge (followed in 2011 by a second exhibition).
- 2007, 2008 and 2014; prize winner at the National Exhibition of Wildlife Art (NEWA) on the Wirral.
- Contributor to Wildlife in Printmaking, published in 2012 by the Langford Press. Her own book, First Impressions, was published by Langford Press in August 2014 and was followed in 2016 by the publication of her second book; Printing Wildlife.
- Solo exhibitions at the Scottish Ornithologist's Club HQ at Aberlady in 2012, 2014, 2016 and 2018.

- Visual Arts Award to study Japanese Woodblock printing at Edinburgh Printmakers (Summer school) 2012.
- Residencies at Nature in Art, Gloucestershire, 2012, 2014 and 2017
- Artist in Residence at the East Neuk Festival, 2013
- Contributor to The Artful Hare, published in 2015 by the Mascot Press and subsequently to the Little Chicken, The Elegant Fowl, Norfolk Gems and Wings over Water by the same publisher.
- Winner of the Artist Magazine Award at the David Shepherd Wildlife Artist of the Year exhibition 2015 (Mall Galleries, London). Also Highly Commended overall.
- Winner of the Langford Press Printmaking award, 2017 at the Society of Wildlife Artists' exhibition, The Natural Eye at the Mall Galleries, London.
- Winner of the Dry Red Press Printmakers award at The Natural Eye, 2019.
- Elected Associate Member of the Society of Wildlife Artists, October 2019.
- Greetings cards published by Art Angels and the Dry Red Press.
- Part of Dumfries and Galloway's selective Open Studio event, Spring Fling, for the past consecutive 13 years.

