

Morven's Movements in 2008

Summer

22nd July 2008

Beautiful sunny day with very good visibility. Morven was fishing in Findhorn Bay at 7am and an hour later was on the seaward side of Culbin Forest, then she headed north over the Moray Firth. At 10am, she was 22 miles north of Findhorn and 11 miles NE of Tarbatness, flying NNW at 46 km/h and 97 metres above the sea. An hour later she was north west of Dunbeath, having passed Morven and the Caithness mountains, and reached an area of lochs south of Thurso in Caithness, about 60 miles to the north of her Forres haunts.

23rd July 2008

She ranged quite widely today, as far east as Loch Watten and Loch of Toffingall.

24th - 26th July 2008

Her daily flights ranged between Loch Calder in the north to smaller lochs near Strathmore Lodge in the south, with daytime roosts near Scotscalder and night time roosts west of Braehour.

27th July 2008

At 10am probably eating a fish at Black Loch, Scotscalder, then flew south west, being west of Loch Caluim at midday and flying south over the Flow Country, SW of Glutt Lodge at 1pm. She passed west of Morven, the highest mountain in Caithness, and an hour later was flying SSW at 58km/h over the beach at Brora at 154 metres above the sea. She then crossed the Moray Firth to arrive back over Culbin Forest in Moray at 2pm.

28th July - 6th August 2008

She again ranged around the area inland from Forres and fished along the river Findhorn and out into Findhorn Bay. On 7th August, I found a new osprey nest at the location of a group of her GPS fixes. A new nest and not used for breeding - not able to say if she built it by herself, or with a young male. Hopefully she will use it next year if she returns.

7th August 2008

Off to Caithness again! It was a grey cold day clearing from overnight rain - she was in the Findhorn Bay area until midday but an hour later she was at Loch Eye in Easter Ross, 2pm at The Mound south of Golspie, 3pm over Carn Garbh south of Glen Loth (of Sutherland wolf fame), 4pm just north of Scraben in Caithness, 5pm at Sand Loch where she rested before heading north to her previous haunts of July.

10th -17th August 2008

Still in same area of Caithness - fishing in Lochs Calder or Olginney, and day and night roosting in the Flow Country near Scotscaider and Braehour.

19th August 2008

Morven was at her normal roosts in the morning, but then left for Moray - she was flying SSE at 48km/h over the Flow Country, south of Loch More, at midday. She flew just east of Morven and then out into the Moray Firth so that at 1pm she was flying SSW at 71km/h just 1 mile off Tarbatness, but she kept on over the sea and an hour later was back in her normal roosts in woodland south of Forres - a day's flight of 60 miles. She knows the journey well.

22nd -23rd August 2008

During this spell of heavy rain, Morven remained around the Forres area; today at 3am she was roosting in a regular haunt. At 6am, it's a cloudless sky - possibly a good day for her to migrate - and a good day for topping up solar batteries.

23rd August 2008

Data received on morning 26th. Morven did not migrate on Saturday, which was a beautiful clear sunny day, she went back to Caithness - northwards instead of south! She roosted overnight normal place south of Forres, at 10am she was soaring to the east of Findhorn village at 1380 feet (she had probably eaten by this time) and an hour later she was at 1200 feet above the inner part of Findhorn Bay, then she flew direct to the north over the Moray Firth, being 10 miles NE of Tarbat Ness at midday, flying due N at 75km/h at an altitude of 1400 feet above the sea. From that height she would have been able to see the whole of the north of Scotland, north to the Orkney Isles; by chance, we were at Tarbat Ness at 1pm and it was a bright sunny day with fresh to light southerly winds. Morven made landfall north of Helmsdale and flew north over Scaraben. At 1pm she was over Loch Thulachan, and at dusk was back at the same nighttime roosting location south of Shurrery. This is 60 miles off last night's roost - amazing that she hops back and forth between Moray and Caithness.

24th -27th August 2008

Morven was round her usual haunts; north as far as Loch Calder to fish.

Autumn Migration

29 August 2008

Morven's off! Her transmitter is still on a 3 day reporting schedule, but switches to daily on 1st September. She left Caithness at midday on 27th August and had reached Mossat in Aberdeenshire by 3pm and roosted that night in a small wood near Ceres in Fife. Next day she crossed the Firth of Forth and migrated fast down the east coast to roost on the night of 28th/29th August on hedgerow trees in farmland near Willingham on Stow, south of Gainsborough. Yesterday, she continued flying strongly south, passing over Thrapston Gravel Pits, east of Corby at 1pm, and last night roosted in a row of trees in farmland by the rail line just NW of Fleet in Hampshire. She looks to be an experienced and bold navigator crossing the Moray Firth and Firth of Forth. If by chance, Logie is lost, then if Morven survives she should return to Logie's old nest next spring - it's going to be very interesting watching this osprey. Which way will she go? Where will she winter?



30 August 2008

At 7-8am Morven was perched to the west of Fleet, then an hour later was flying S at 42km/h west of Farnham. The next signal was not until 4pm (schedule on this transmitter changing) when she was in France after a direct crossing on the English Channel to the Cherbourg Peninsula. She was flying SSE near Bauple and at 5pm was over Coutnaces Cathedral, before flying across the Mont Saint-Michel bay. at 6pm - 8pm this evening she is roosting in a wood near Maulevrier, east of Cholet. Day's flight 323 kilometres.

31 August 2008

At 2pm she was NW of Angers flying at 55km/h SSE. Just 175 kilometres today.

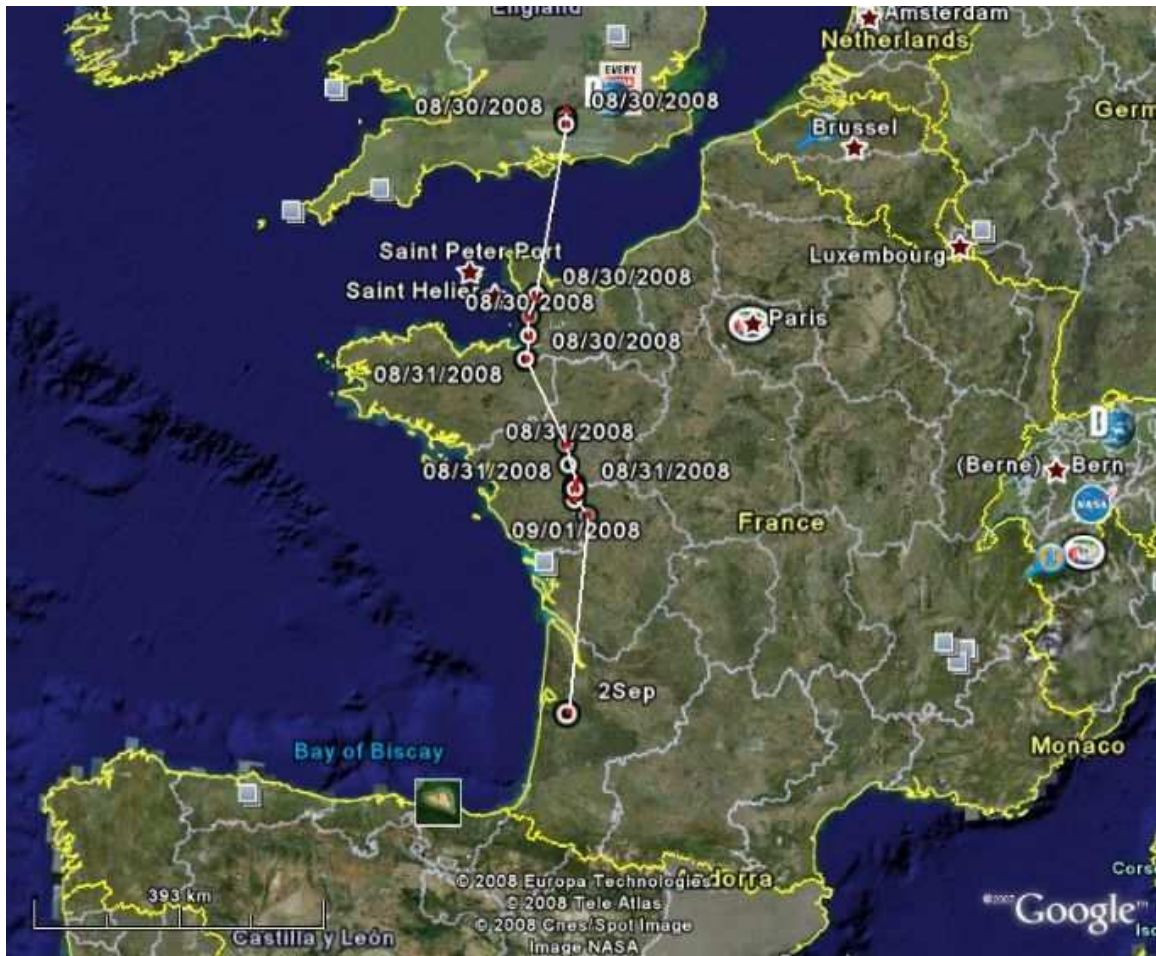
01 September 2008

Morven was flying S at 9am, and at 10am was flying S at 50km/h south of Bressuire, no more signals until 8pm when she was roosting on the edge of a wood, west of Beliet, near Lugos SW of Bordeaux. Day's flight 289 kilometres.



02 September 2008

Crossed the Pyrenees. She left her roost after 9am and was 6 kms south at 10am; at midday she flying SSE at 66km/h over Arjuzanx and two hours later was still travelling fast south, flying at 44km/h near Orthez. At 4pm she was gaining heights in the mountains, flying at 61km/h SW at 914 metres towards the Spanish border. An hour later she had crossed the high passes and was flying at 53km/h SSW SW of Burguete at 1414 metres. She settled for the night to roost at 7pm in scattered trees in the Valle de Aranguren-Tajonar, 2.5 kms east of Nouin, SW of Pamplona. Day's flight 225 kilometres.



03 September 2008

She was still at the roost at 6am - 9am; then Morven set of south at 10 am, passing Olite; she continued south flying strongly and at 1 pm was still flying at 50 km/h south near Tarazona 1238 metres. At 3 pm she was flying along the mountains to the north of Villaroyal de la Sierra at 1717 metres and followed the ridges southwards and then turned south west past Calatayud; two hours later she was still flying strongly south, at 70 km/h at a height of 1706 metres. An hour later she was roosting in open farmland near La Yunta. The day's flight was 202 kilometres.

04 September 2008

She left a roost after 9 am and by 10 am was heading for Molina de Aragon; she flew strongly south with speeds of 57km/h at 3 pm and 68km/h at 4pm near Pajaron; at 5 pm she was west of Cardenete and at 8pm, she was roosting in

boundary trees in open arid farmlands, 5 kilometres SSE of Iniesta, in Eastern Spain, about 100 kilometres west of Valencia. Her day's flight was 190 kilometres.

05 September 2008

Morven left the roost after 8am, and at 9am was flying at 45km/h south, an hour later she was flying at 59km/h south at 1050 metres, at midday she was to the east of Ontur flying west at 61 km/h and at 1pm she was over the Murcia Highway. She turned SW at 2 pm, when she was circling high over Caravaca de la Cruz; at 6 pm she was still flying SW at 25km/h but an hour later turn back north-west to roost in scattered trees on some low hills, where she spent the night. Her day's flight was 213 kilometres.

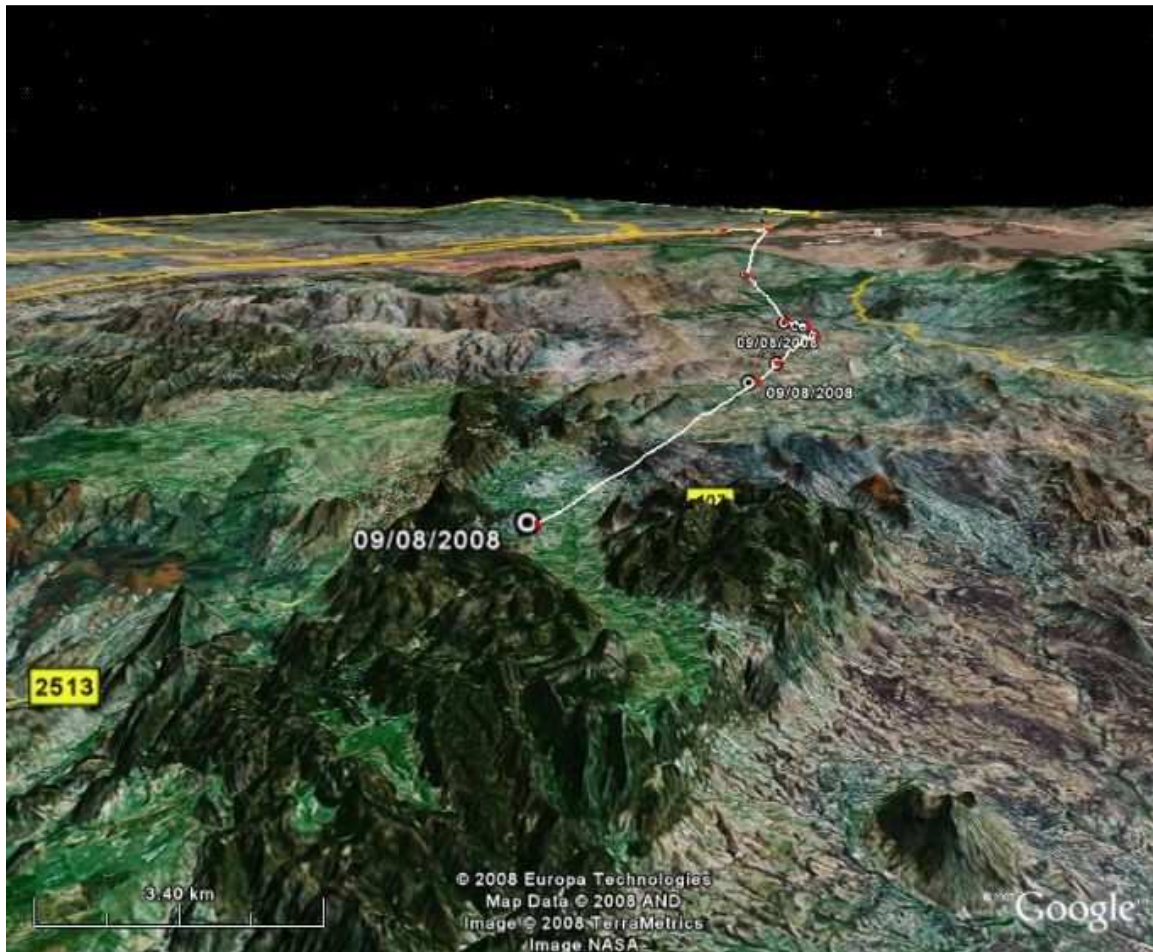
06 September 2008

At 7am - 8am, she was perched on open farmland about four kilometres to the southwest of her roost, just SE of La Canada de Canepia; at 10 am she was flying at 23km/h to the southwest at 1212 metres and had turned south over the motorway west of Chirivel. An hour later she circling over Macael, and sometime after midday she turned west along the coastal mountains. At 2pm, Morven was flying at 40km/h at 1058 metres north of Adra and an hour later flew out over the sea just east of Castel de Ferro at a height. At 4pm she was out over the Mediterranean Sea flying SSW at 53km/h at 1275 altitude above the sea, but an hour she was still flying strongly but was now only 12 metres above the water. At 6pm and 7pm she was still flying strongly over the sea, on her 170 kilometre crossing, at just 2 - 3 metres above the waves, and her speed dropped to 37 km/h to 26 km/h, showing the exertion of the flight. She came ashore in good weather in northern Morocco and at 8 pm roosted 14 kilometres inland in small trees in a dry river bed. Her day's flight was 361 kilometres, and she had overtaken Beatrice on her migration to Africa.

07 September 2008

She started migrating just before 10am and an hour later was flying SW at 70km/h at 1108 metres; two hours later she north of Oued el Hadar flying SSW at 71km/h at 1963 metres altitude. Her journey was up and down over mountain ridges and at 3pm - 4pm she was at large lake at Matmata, and her speed and direction at 4pm suggested she was hunting. At 5pm, she was 15 kilometres SW of Fes and finally at 7 pm she settled down to roost for the night in mountains

north of Jebel Bouskla, north of Taggourt Izem. She was 25 kms west of Ifrane, starting the ascent over the Middle Atlas mountains in Morocco. Her day's flight was 293 kilometres.



08 September 2008

At 8am she was 4 kilometres SSW of her roost; then she set off SSW to S through the mountains and by 11am was 36 kilometres further on, 28 kilometres NW of Kheinfra. At 2pm, she was near Kasba Tadla circling over mountains but generally heading SW. She reached a big river near Chorfa and then flew on through cultivated lands and passed Beni Auon. At 5pm she was flying at 42km/h SSE at 1671 metres altitude near Fetnassa, she continued flying at good speeds for the next few hours and at 8pm she was still flying after 12 hours flight, being at 1951 metres near Asni; she then descended to roost by 9pm in the southern slopes of the High Atlas near Aouzar, with the high mountain, Jebel Toubbkal (4167 metres) above her. Her day's flight was 347 kilometres, although the ups and downs over the mountain ranges would have made the actual flight longer.



Roost in High Atlas



Crossing to Africa 6th-8th September

09 September 2008

Morven moved 500 metres where she stayed until 10am. Soon after she set off SW around the mountains and then turned SW through the mountain passes. At midday she was flying at 52km/h west and at 4pm was flying at 60km/h SW, some 25 kilometres SW of Agadir; at 5pm, she was at 1167 metres altitude and turned west to visit a lake. At 6pm she was perched beside a reservoir lake called Youssef Ben Tachfine near Inkass; and then she continued flying SW until 9pm, when she was roosting in low trees in semi-desert north of the village, Ait ou Hormuch, beside the N1 highway south. By now she is only 37 kilometres from the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. Her day's flight was 271 kilometres.



Morven's migration through Morocco 8th -9th September.

10 September 2008

At the roost til 8am, and by 9am was perched 600 metres to the south, and an hour later was flying SW. At 11am Morven had passed Jebel Taiert and was flying at 26km/h SSE. At midday she was flying over a series of incredible rock formations in the desert and had crossed Segdit. She was flying S at 65km/h (with a tail wind) at 1017 metres - the daytime temperatures are around 100F!. She flew on mainly south throughout the afternoon, and passed over Echdeira on the P42 road at 4pm; she carried on more SW and reached a roosting site in the desert by 8pm; it was a series of dry rivers beds about 18 kilometres SW of Tifarita in Western Sahara. The day's flight was 394 kilometres.

11 September 2008

At the roost to 7am; then perched further south to 9am, and did not start migration until after 10 am when she crossed into Northern Mauritania. She was tracking SW and in the afternoon veered more to the WSW away from the desert and towards the coast; at 3pm she had crossed back into Western Dahara and was flying fast 72 to 76km/h with a tail wind. She had reached a roost in the desert at 8pm and had covered 422 kilometres. She is now about 450 kilometres

from the big coastal bays in Northern Mauritania. The weather is clear, 84F at night, 104F in the day with a 15mph N wind.

12th September 2008

Morven was migrating SW by 10am, flying downwind at 80km/h WSW; she continued at these speeds over the Western Saharan deserts and crossed into Northern Mauritania between 1pm and 2pm, then she turned towards the coast. At 3pm and 4pm she was flying at speeds over 80km/h and at a height of up to 1323 metres, which would have allowed her to see the Atlantic Ocean ahead. She came close to the coast near Louik, but turned well in from the coast and travelled south to reach a roosting site by 8pm. This was in the desert, some 9 kilometres from the Atlantic coast and 100 kilometres north of the capital, Nouakchott. Her day's flight was 552 kilometres - a very good flight and more towards the coast than Logie's southern migration last autumn.



Winter 2008-2009

13th - 14th September 2008

Morven remained in the desert to roost and then mid morning moved down to the coast and worked up and down the sandy coast of this part of Mauritania fishing, and later in the evening flew 9.5 kilometres back to the same desert roost as last night; this morning she flew back to the coast. From the battery state, it's probably cloudy on the coast and that's why she has stopped migrating - or is this where she's going to winter?

15th - 27th September 2008

Morven has remained on this part of the desert, earlier the weather was cloudy, with some rain, west wind 15mph. She has spent her time on 5.5 kilometres of coast, 5 kilometres south of the coastal village of Lemhaisrat. At 4pm on 15th she was fishing a few hundred metres off the coast and her main night roost is 9 kilometres inland. The desert dunes reach the coast in this area. Is this going to be her winter home?

28th September - 16th October 2008

Morven has remained on this section of coast - roosting inland on the dunes at night and fishing along the coast during the day. In the last week she has been on a section of coast 1.5 kilometres long and has been staying closer to the coast with roosts just 1.5 kilometre inland. It's looking as though this might be her wintering site, as she has now been there for more than a month. In the last week, her daily movements have been kept to a smaller area and the inland roost is now just half a kilometre from the sea.

17th - 27th October 2008

Morven is now well settled into her wintering site on the Mauritanian coast. Often her night time roost is about 10 kilometres inland in the sand dunes; and on one occasion at 3pm on 24th she was 4 kilometres down the coast from her normal fishing and loafing area; flying north at 21km/h just 50 metres above the Atlantic Ocean.

1st November 2008

Morven is well settled on the coast. Her main night roost is 10 kilometres inland in stony sand desert scattered with bushes. During the day she is mainly along one kilometre of the shore, with some daytime roosts just inland. At 3pm on 28th October, she was 3.24 kilometres to the south offshore flying at 66km/h SW at 138 metres above the sea.

2nd - 10th November 2008

Morven is wintering in a small area on the Mauritania coast, all on 1.7 kilometres of coast. At 1pm on 3rd she was flying 18km/h NNE at 344 metres 1.3 kilometres out to sea heading back to normal coastal roosts- presumably after fishing. Morven's locations end of October.

20th November 2008

Still in usual haunt - roosting 10 kms inland in dunes at night; and spending daytime on 300 metres of coast, at 5pm was heading back to beach at 55km/h at 49 metres above the sea, 300 metres from beach.

4th December 2008

Still in same wintering area; no signals since then.

26th December 2008

After a break in transmissions a new set of data came through showing that Morven was still in the same part of the Mauritanian coast and with the same diurnal habits. She continues to roost in the desert 10 kilometres from the coast and spends her days on the edge of the South Atlantic, in just 800 metres of coast, occasional day time roosting (or eating) about 400 metres in from the shore line. At 7pm on both 19th and 24th she was recorded flying inland to her night roost at 36kms/h and 42 kms/h, and at 17 metres and 11 metres above sea level. Cannot understand why the battery levels are low - could it be obscured sunlight due to blowing sand and dust. I remember, when I visited the eastern Cape Verde islands, that the sun was obscured by Saharan sand blown on easterly winds - 400 kilometres out in the ocean!

23rd January 2009

The last batch of signals were for the 7th January and showed Morven still in the same area, roosting inland in the Sahara and living along the coast during the day. Blown dust and sand still obscuring the solar panel.

3rd February 2009

Morven is still on the same part of the coast of Mauritania, spending her days on the shores and roosting at night about 9 kilometres inland in the desert. Over the last few days she has ranged further along the coast than normal, being 13.5 kilometres south of her normal place at 5pm on 1st February and 14.5 kilometres north at 9am on 2nd February. A range of 28 kilometres north to south along the coast. A better series of GPS signals and better battery readings this week so the dust storms must have settled down a bit.

17th February 2009

Signals have been intermittent, probably due to dust, but on 9th February she overnight roosted two kilometres inland from the normal bit of coast, while earlier at 3pm she was 1.18 kilometres out to sea, flying back to shore at 14 km/hr at 265 metres above the ocean.

27th February - 5th March 2009

Some good fixes with the same routine - roosting 10 kilometres inland in the desert and spending the day on the coast - although some change on 26th February with Morven roosting 8 kilometres to the south.

14th March 2009

Still no movement, with Morven using the desert roost at night and on the coast during the day.

17th March 2009

She's off! As usual Morven roosted overnight in the desert, and flew to the Atlantic coast just before 7am. At 8am she was on the coast and an hour later was perched in from the coast 5 kilometres south where she stayed until at least 10am, probably eating a fish. At 11am she was back 8 kilometres north on the coast, and by midday she had started her migration, being 7 kms inland flying ENE at 59km/h and was already at 420metres above the land. Morven flew strongly into the Sahara Desert, being 21 kms further on at 1pm flying ENE at 32km/h, she was flying the same speed at 2pm, and increased height to 725 metres. She continued in this direction and the last GPS signal of the transmission at 5pm showed her soaring to 1239 metres - she completed another 59 kilometres before roosting overnight in the desert. Her day's flight was 258 kilometres.