

Movements of Vega in 2010

02 September 2010: Vega leaves home

Vega was still at the nest site until 2nd September. Her sister Freya had left on 27th August but we do not know when her two brothers departed, probably earlier as they were the first to fledge. She was still at the nest area at 3pm but by 6pm had flown to the riverside farm of Balliefurth, between Nethybridge and Grantown. Here she stayed for the rest of the day and roosted overnight on trees beside the River Spey.

Next day, she headed north to Dava moor, and at 9am was at the SW corner of Lochindorb, and spent several hours around the north and west side of the loch, before flying east to be on Tulchan estate at 6pm. At 7pm she was at Delliefure heading west over Grantown and then roosted the night back at Balliefurth.



08 September 2010

Vega has started to choose her favourite roost sites which are on the lower ground and in trees and woods.



Vega's night roosting sites in Strathspey

09 September 2010: Vega heads south to Perthshire

Vega roosted last night in Curr Wood and had left the roost before 8 AM, when she was over the south side of Dava Moor. She spent from 9 AM to midday on the hills to the east of the Slochd Summit, as far north as Balvraid, Tomatin. At 1 PM she had come south to Black Mount near Carrbridge and then flew south along the Dulnan River and then west of Aviemore at 2 PM. She carried on over Loch Insh and at 3 PM was near an old peregrine eyrie south of Insh. Next she flew down Glen Tromie and crossed over the hills between Gaich and Cuaich at 5 PM. An hour later she was at Carn na Caim in the east Drumochter hills, where she turned SSE and landed in a conifer plantation just north of Dalnacardoch Lodge, where she roosted the night. Her flight covered at least 89.5 km and it looks as though she was heading south.



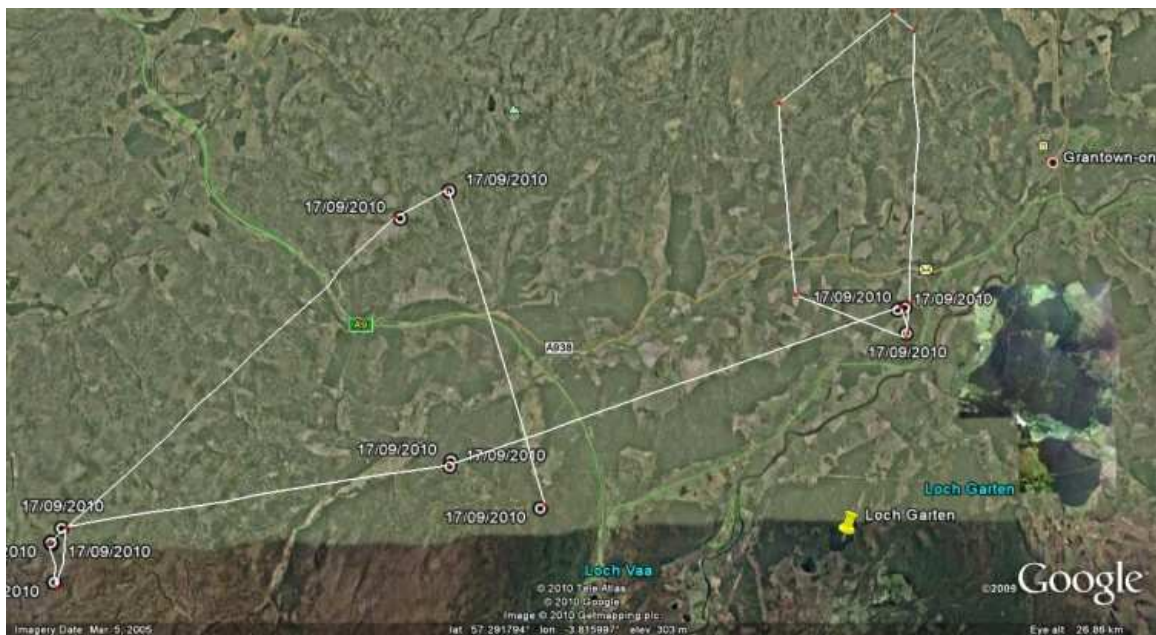
10 September 2010: Vega returns to Strathspey

Instead of flying on south, Vega turned back north. She was still in the roost wood at 6 AM but an hour later was flying up the east side of the A9 trunk road, before flying up over the summits of the East Drumochter hills and then down to Dalwhinnie at 9am. She then flew an amazing 32 km flight to the high ground of Alvie Estate by 10 AM. She then remained in the upper Dulnain River watershed and the Monadiaths, before flying down river at 7 PM and then roosting in the forest at Kinveachy from 8 PM. Her day's return flight was at least 74 km. What an interesting behaviour by this young peregrine, with some signs already that she is 'calling in' at traditional breeding cliffs.



20 September 2010: Busy day on the 17th

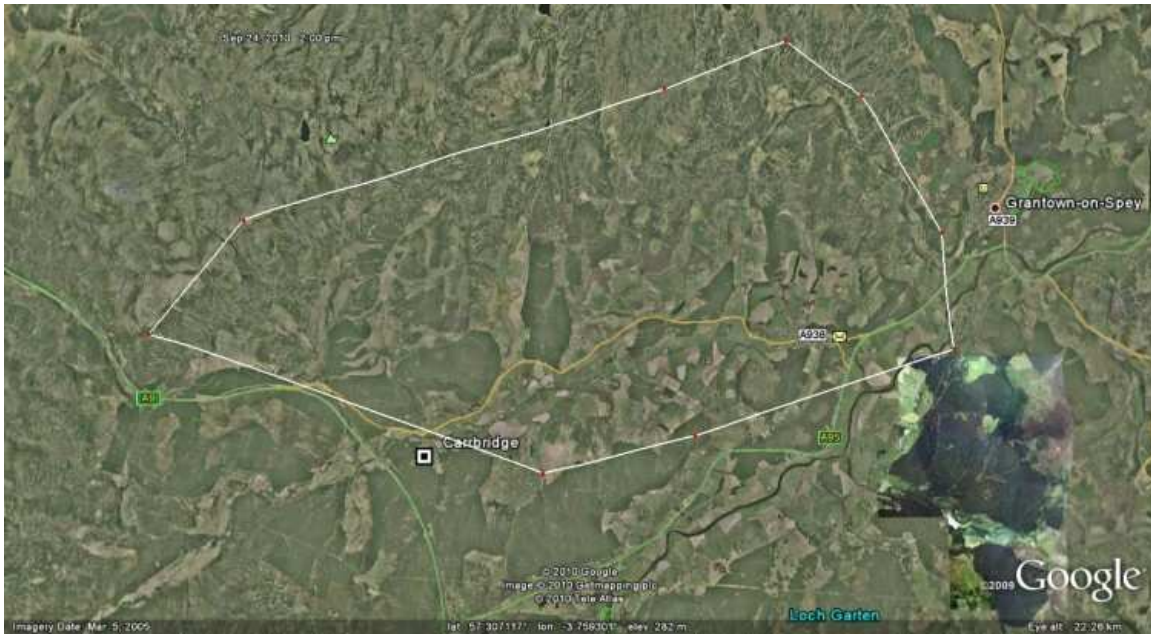
On 17 September Vega had a busy day flying around the moorlands. She'd roosted overnight in the old Scots pine forest of Kinveachy, near Boat-of-Garten, and in the morning headed north to the hills to the east of the Slochd summit of the A9 trunk road. She then headed west and spent several hours on the high ground between Dalmingavie and the Dulnan River, before heading east past Kinveachy to spend the night in Curr Wood, near Dulnain Bridge. Before roosting to the night she was over the croft lands along the public road. Her journeys during the day were at least 47 km. Over the next few days, she followed a much more leisurely daily routine roosting in the low ground woods and flying up onto the moors during the day, all within a range of 22.5 km² as shown on the map.



Range on the right 16th-20th, and long flight 17th September

24 September 2010: No change

Vega continues to use the area north of the River Spey and the southern part of Dava Moor – an area of 93 sq km in the last four days.

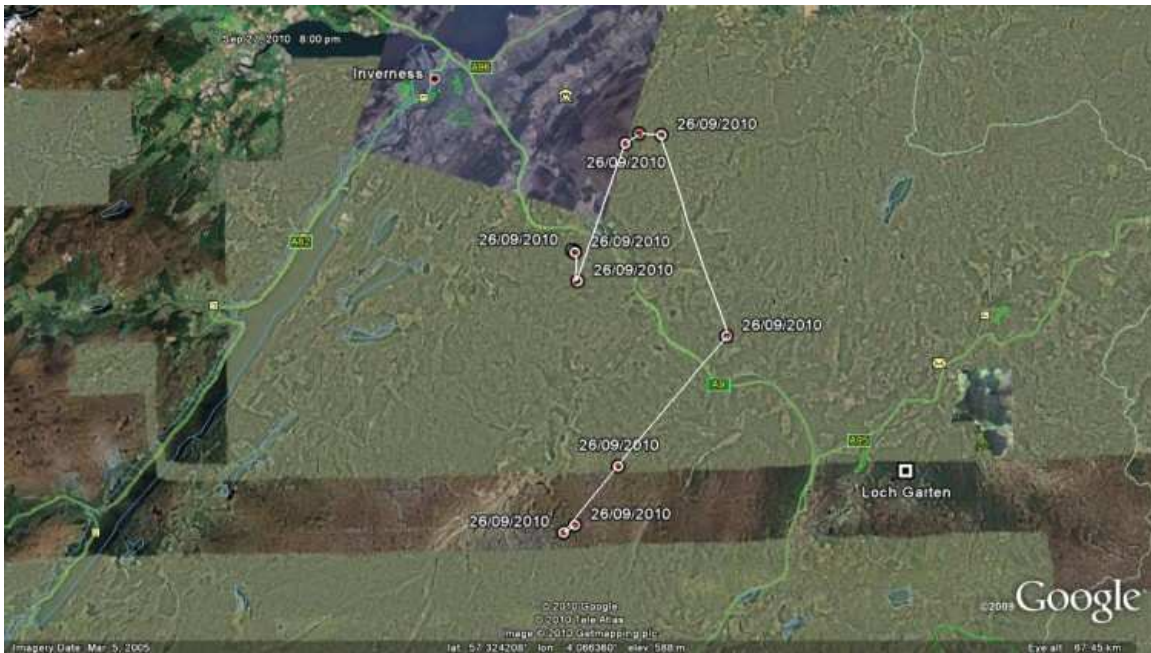


28 September 2010: Ranging more widely

Vega was back at the roost she used earlier on the banks of the River Spey near Balliefurth overnight on 23rd/24th of September, then she ranged much more widely and was on the Dulnan moors on 24th, and then up in the Monadliaths on the 25th to 27th. She made a long flight on 26th, when after roosting in the hills just south of the A9 trunk road at Moy, she flew north to Ben Buidhe Mor, south of Clava, and then flew SW via the Slochd to the Monadliaths south of Dalmigavie, where she roosted the night. Her day's flight was at least 46 kms. Her range over the four days was 385 square kilometres, 27 km north to south and 32 km east to west.



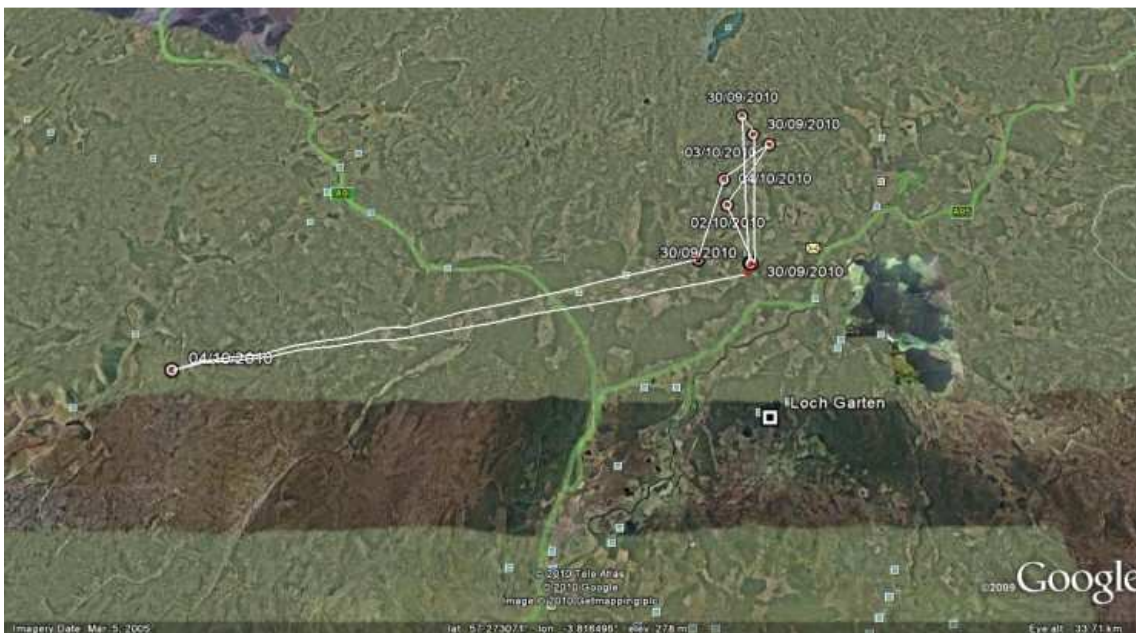
Vega's range 24th to 28th September 385 sq kms



Vega's track on 26th September – at least 46 km

04 October 2010: Another flight to Monadhliaths

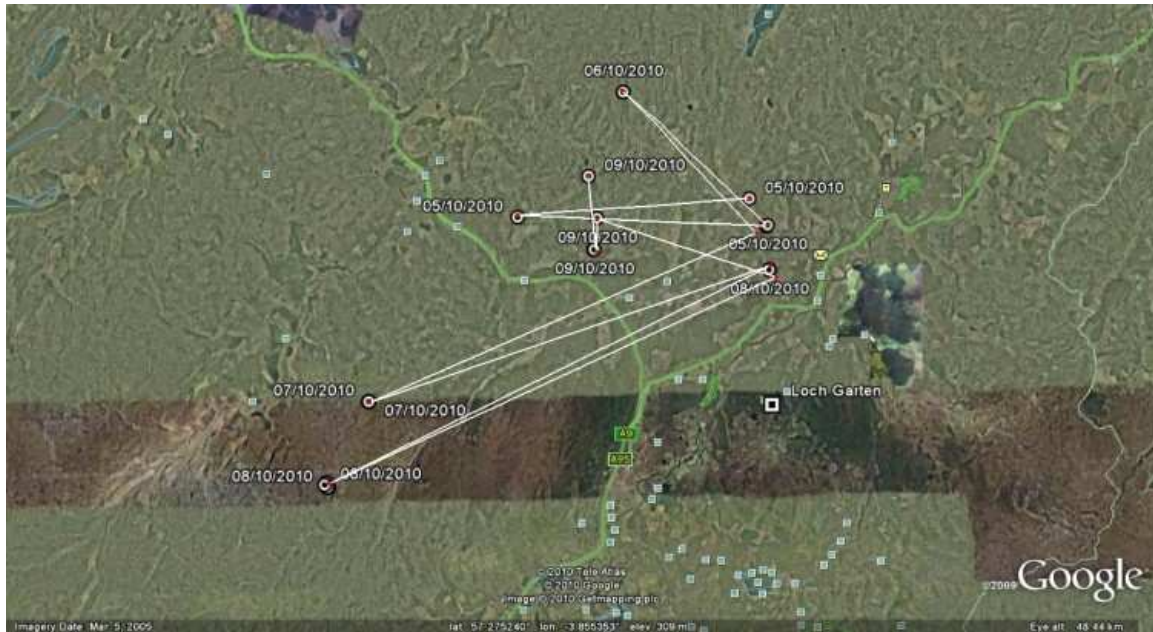
Vega continued to roost at night in woods near Dulnain Bridge and then visit Dava Moor during the day; that was her routine on 30th September but there were no signals on 1st October. On 4th October she was over farmland near Balnacruie, Duthil, at 1pm, and then flew west to be in the Monadhliath Hills above Dalmigavie at 3pm and by 5pm had flown 21 kms back to her roost near Curr Wood.



Locations 30th September to 4th October

10 October 2010: Several big flights

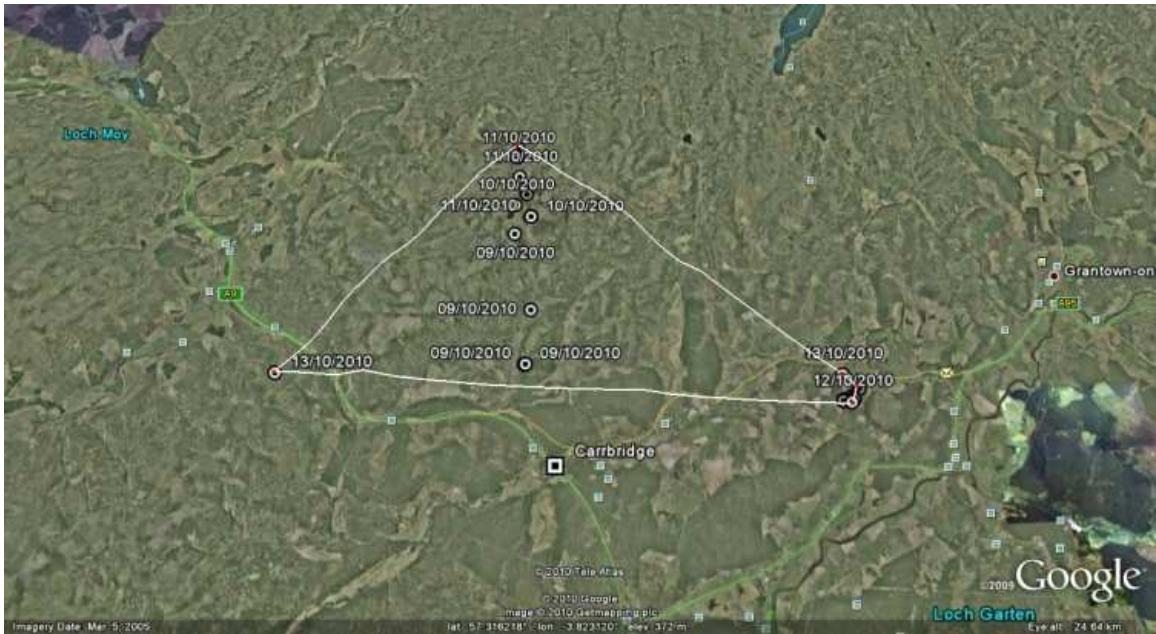
On 5th Vega was up on the hills just east of the Slochd, then SW of Lochindorb on 6th; returning each night as usual to Dulnain Bridge/Curr Wood area. On 7th October she flew west again and from 11am to 3pm was in the Monadhliath hills east of Coignafearn; on 8th she again flew west into the Monadhliaths and was in the area north of the Dulnan River, west of Cnoc Fraing from 11am to 5pm, before returning 23 kms to her roost near Curr Wood. Next day, she flew locally to the moors north of Carrbridge.



Locations on 5th to 9th October

14 October 2010: Same daily routine

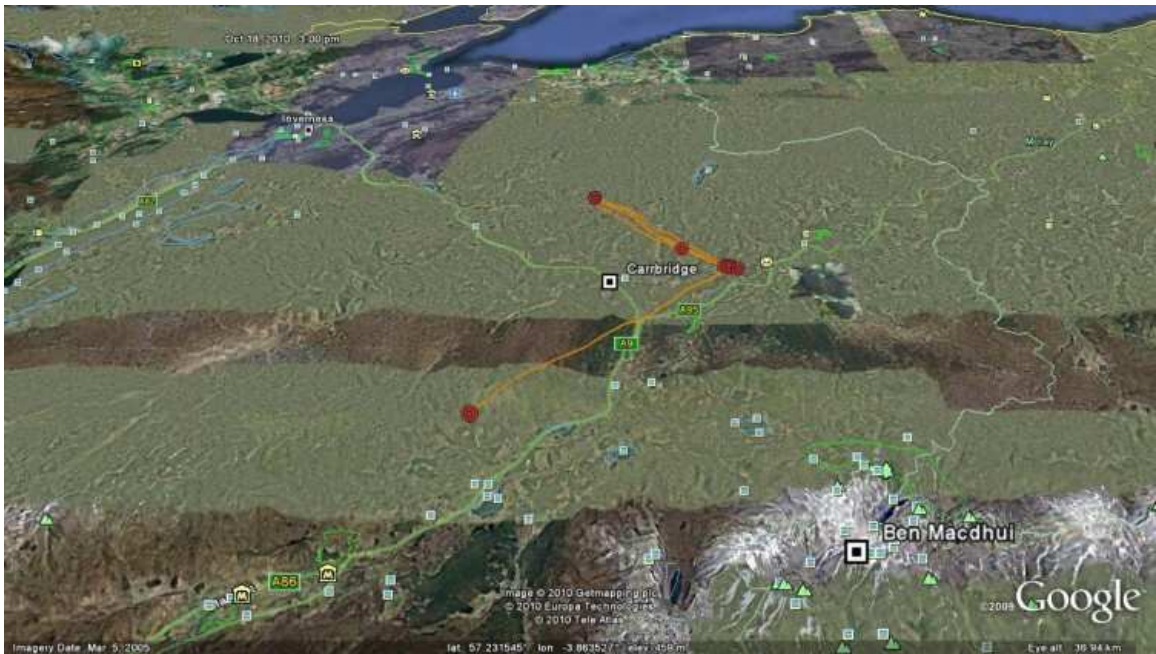
Vega has continued to roost in woodlands in the Strath and the hunt out over farmlands and the heather moorlands of the southern Dava Moor. She made no big flights and has remained in her well used range of 52 square km.



Range during 9th - 13th October

17 October 2010: No change

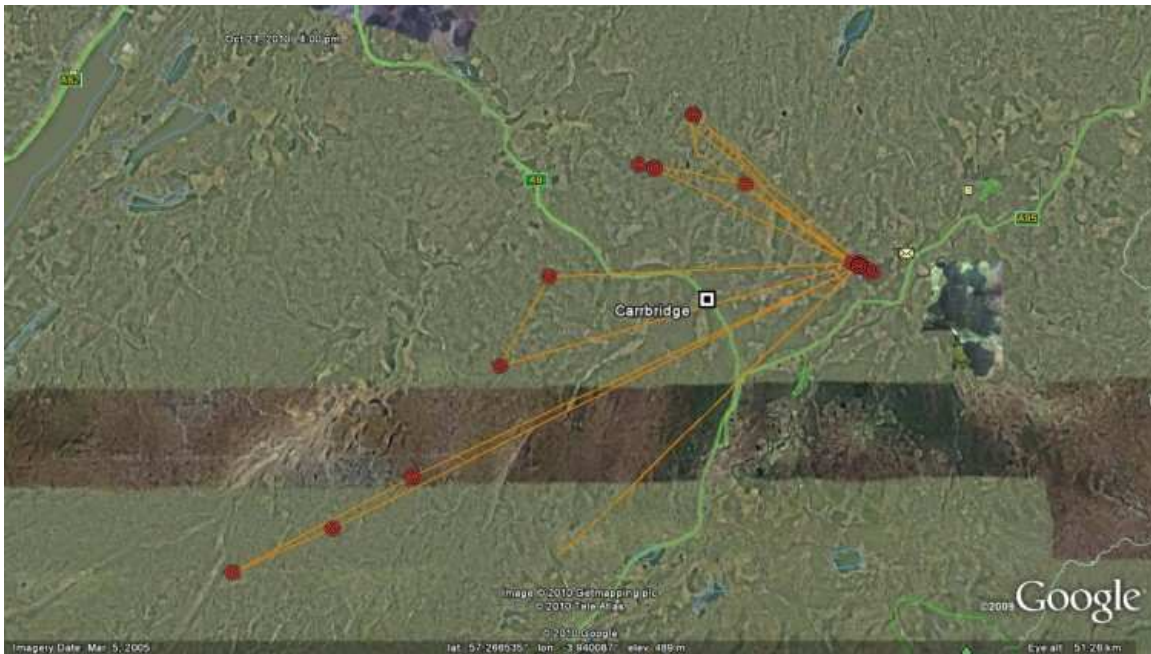
Vega remained in much same area; with a flight west to the hill above Alvie House at 5pm on 15th October, and between 3pm and 5pm on 16th was in the hills between the A9 and the Dava road.



Locations 14th - 17th October

21 October 2010: Vega makes 35km flight to Cro River and back

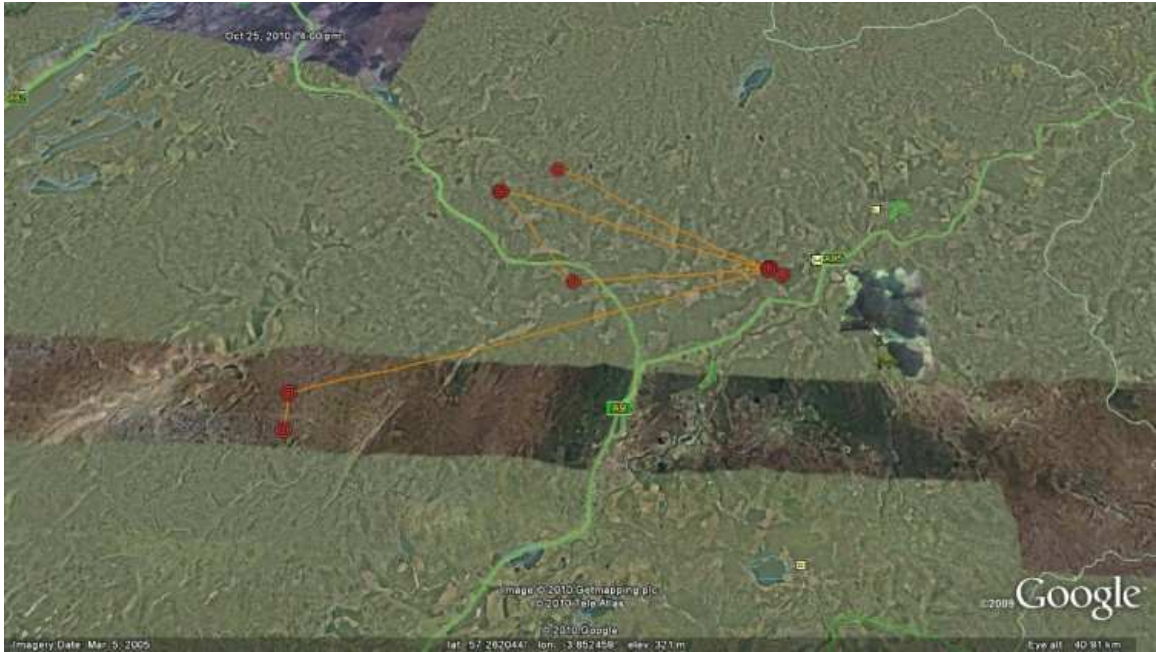
Despite the change to cold wintry weather with snow on the hills and strong NW winds, Vega has continued to roost in the valley near Dulnain Bridge and fly up onto the moors during the day. On 19th October, she made her longest flight – reaching the hills above the Cro River on Coignafearn Estate – a journey of 35kms direct route each way. She reached there at 3pm, and was a third of the way home at 5pm.



Locations and flights 16th - 20th October

25 October 2010: No change

Vega continues to roost at night in woodlands in Strathspey and then fly up onto the moors in the west of Dava Moor during the day, with another long flight into the Monadhliaths.



Location 20th to 25th October

Here's one of my winter photographs of the Monadhliaths from an aerial survey plane.



The Monadhliath Mountains looking SE across the River Findhorn

As I was checking the satellite data today for the peregrines, an email popped in from Dave Grubb of the Worcester Peregrines and included in it was a photo and news of one of their young. “The nest site here is at St Andrews Spire in the centre of Worcester, access for the BTO ringers over the last couple of years has been straightforward as the nest box is situated on the tower top below the spire. Sadly we did not get a breeding season this year. The adult female left the area in March, we believe with a new male. One of last years chicks (‘Bobbin’ – darvic ring T2) has returned we believe to claim the territory so we are hopeful of a breeding season next year. We realise success may be hit & miss as this could be her first attempt but like to be prepared.” The following photo dramatically showed the difference between Vega’s hunting range and Bobbin’s. See www.worcester.gov.uk/peregrine



Bobbin on St Andrews Spire, Worcester Cathedral

29 October 2010: No change

Vega using the same areas but some missing data due to poor weather affecting the solar panel charging the battery.

01 November 2010: Usual routine

Vega has been in her usual locations, but on 1st November she flew 19 km WSW to the central Monadhliath mountains, where she was located at midday. She then returned to Dulnain Bridge area by late afternoon.



07 November 2010: No change

Vega in much same area, no GPS locations, but non GPS showed her still roosting near Dulnain Bridge.

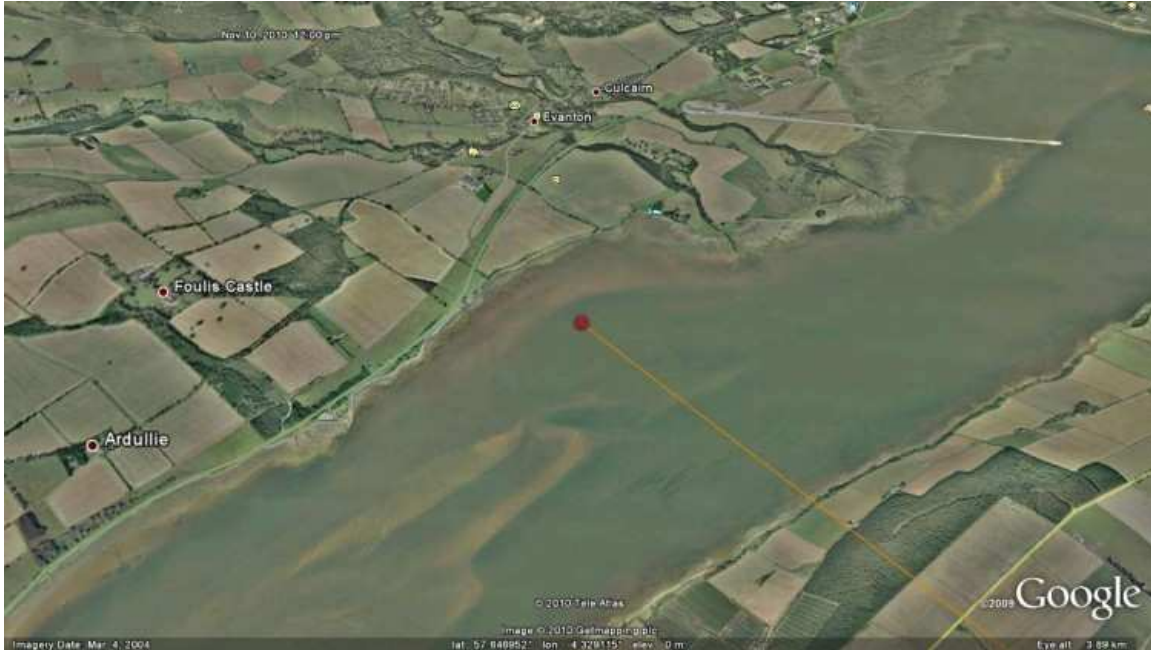
10 November 2010: Bigger trips

Vega made some big flights in this period from her wintering area near Dulnain Bridge. On 7th November she was 54 km NW at Ardullie Bay in the inner Cromarty Firth at midday – a long flight there and back over the moors, then the Inverness Firth and the Black Isle. She went to a great place for hunting waders and wildfowl. Next day, at 10am and 12am she was in the Monadhliaths, and then on the 9th November flew 16 km SSE to Abernethy Forest, where she was on the edge of the hills north of Geal Charn. On 10th, she stayed near her roost on Duthil moors.

It's interesting to wonder what sets her off on big trips in succession like the last few days, and why at other times she makes regular local movements onto Dava Moor. Is it the weather, or is she stimulated by other peregrines passing by?



Vega's movements 7th - 10th November



Vega's location Inner Cromarty Firth midday 7th November

21 November 2010: No change

A few signals on 15th but none good enough to give a firm location; but the dark days of November can be a problem as very little sun hits the solar array on the transmitter, so information is scarce.

23 November 2010: Still in the mountains

Vega's transmitter gave a B class signal from Coignafearn in the heart of the Monadhliath mountains at midday today. This is not an accurate location signal but shows that she is probably in some of her normal haunts in this wild area. Her battery is also showing low voltage due to lack of sun and November gloom.



28 November 2010

Vega's transmitter is not charging very much with the low light levels of November, but poorer quality fixes came in for north of the Old Lodge at Coignafearn at midday on 23rd and roosting at night in the Dulnan river valley upstream from Carrbridge 2am on 27th November.

05 December 2010: Little change

It looks as though Vega has changed her night roost location to the Carrbridge area. Overnight 4th/5th she was roosting in isolated pines on moorland west of Carrbridge near the River Dulnan. At 1.26pm she was on the south side of the River Findhorn between Dalmigavie and Coignafearn, and then at 2.03pm was on the Monadhliath plateau half way back to Carrbridge.



09 December 2010: Near Carrbridge

Vega's transmitter has not been giving GPS signals last few days but other signals showed that at midday and mid afternoon today she was just NW of Carrbridge on a moor covered with dead old Scots pines, the result of a big fire years ago.

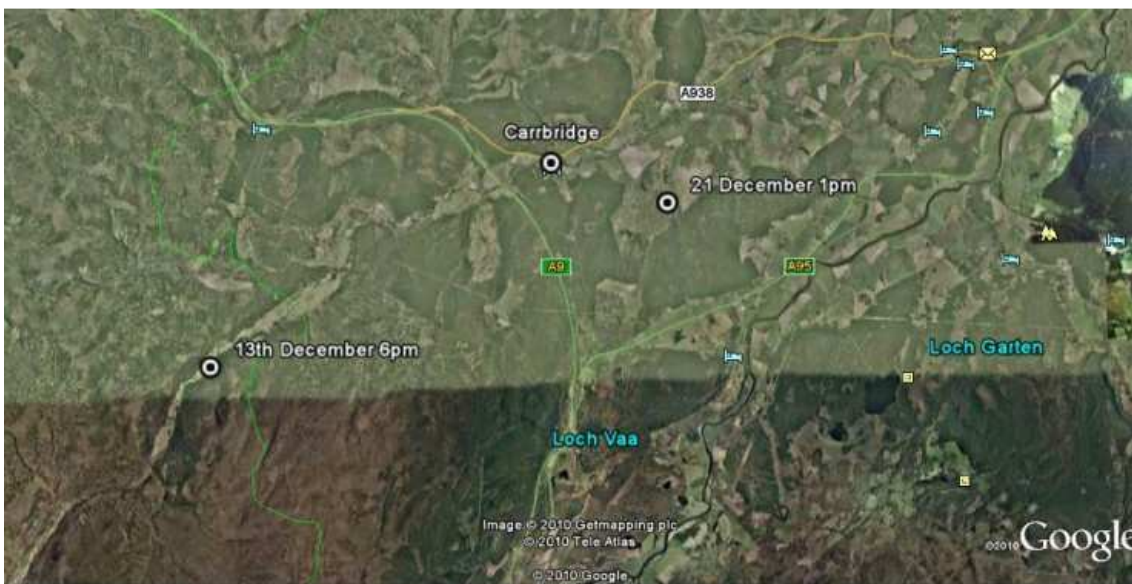


13 December 2010: No change

Vega remained in Carrbridge area – flying to Monadhliath mountains during the day.

21 December 2010: No change

Vega remained in the Carrbridge area and at midday today was over farmland east of Carrbridge, probably hunting.



Locations on 13th and 21st December