

Movements of Joe in 2011

Autumn Migration

22 August 2011: Off on migration

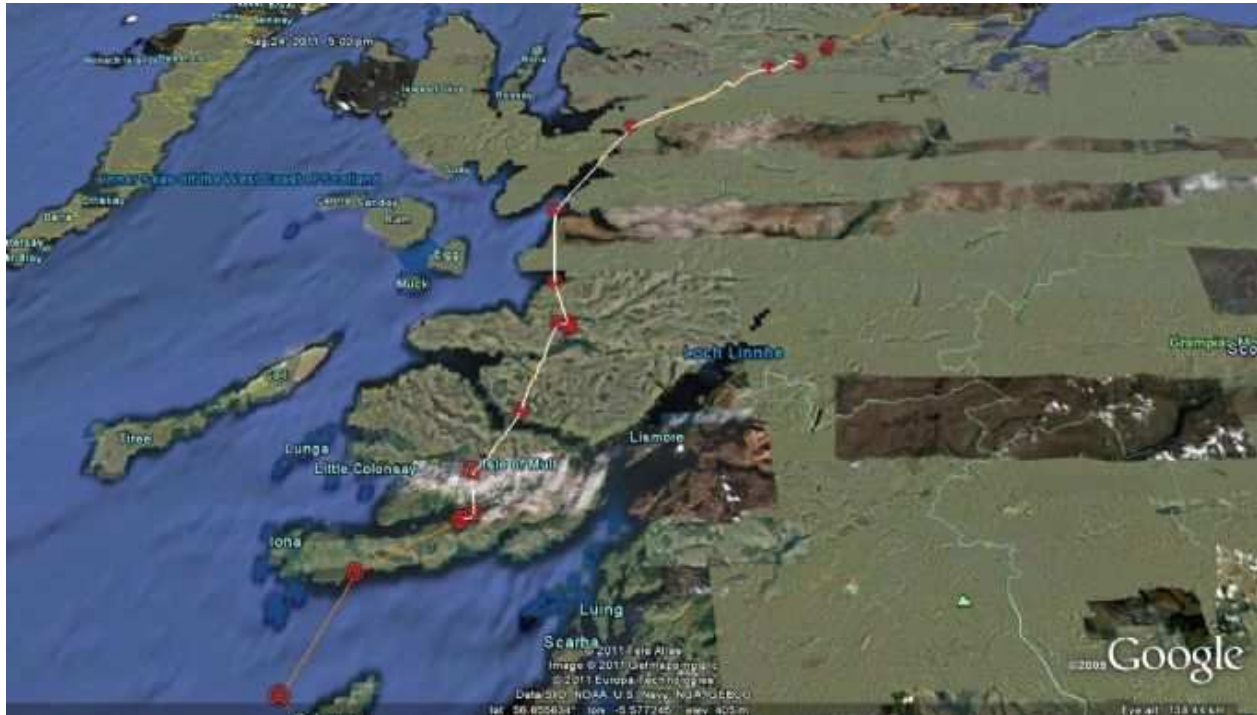
Joe set off on migration this morning by 9am - I am giving the start point as Thurso. He flew down to the south coast of Caithness at Latheron by 10am and then turned SW and coasted to the Ord of Caithness where he was 2 kms offshore. He was off Loth Point an hour later and came ashore at Loch Fleet at 1pm when he was flying WSW at 41km/hr at 530 metres altitude. He then flew on over Dornoch firth, missed the Struie windfarm, over Ben Wyvis and so by 6pm was in upper Glen Moriston at Dalnacraich woods where he stayed to 8pm. At 9pm he had moved on SW and roosted overnight by the loch at Scradrop at the end of Strathconon. A flight of 160 kms.



23 August 2011: Continues SSW

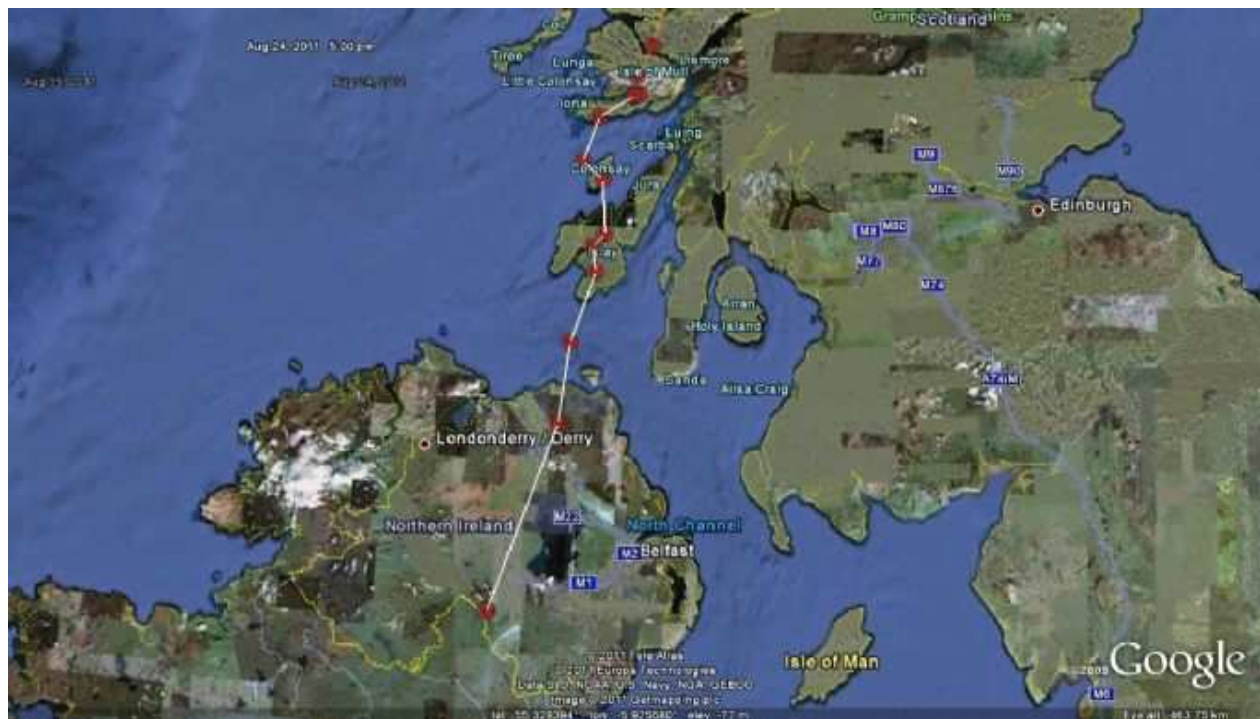
Joe continued with this hazardous SSW heading - by 10am he was over Loch Duich in Wester Ross and then flew down the Sound of Sleat and at 11am was 2.5 kms north of

Mallaig flying SSW at 41km/hr at 126 metres above the sea. He flew on south over Ailort and landed at the west of Loch Sheil for two hours, then at 4pm was over Acharacle flying WSW and flew over Morvern and so across to the Isle of Mull finally coming to rest for the night in woods near Pennycross, Isle of Mull. A day's migration of 163 kms but this is a dangerous route - he could get lost in the Ocean.



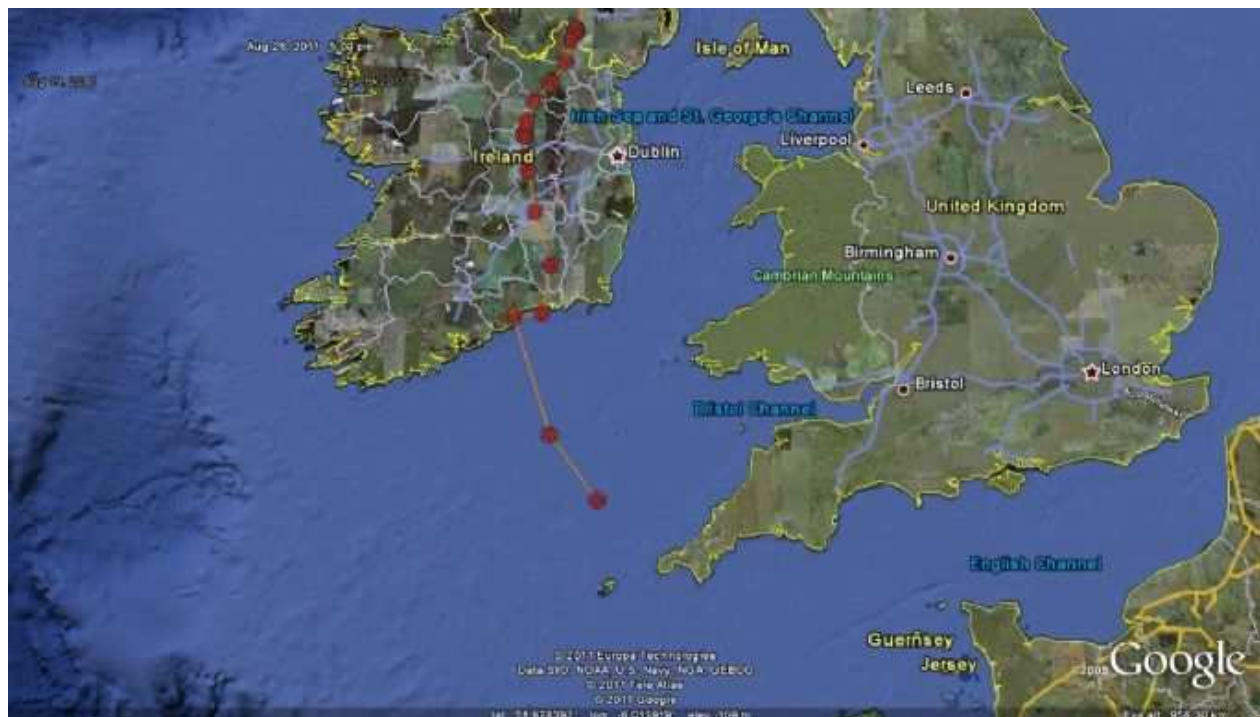
24 August 2011: To the Isle of Ireland

Joe flew SSW from the Ross of Mull but at 8am when out over the Minch he turned SE to head for Colonsay. At 9am he left the south of Colonsay and headed for Islay. At 10am he was flying SSE at 38 km/hr over Ballygrant and left the south end of Islay and headed SSW to Ireland. At 1pm he was over the North Channel flying S at 46km/hr at 100 metres and came ashore in Northern Ireland. At 2pm he was just NE of Ballymoney and at 6pm was resting near Caledon after a flight of 244 kms. The weather was settling in with rain and further south the winds were SW so hopefully he will be blown east rather than head out into the Atlantic Ocean. This is the dangerous time which many Scottish ospreys face - do they head out over the wide ocean or do they re-direct and head for Wales or Devon. Let's hope Joe makes that SE turn.



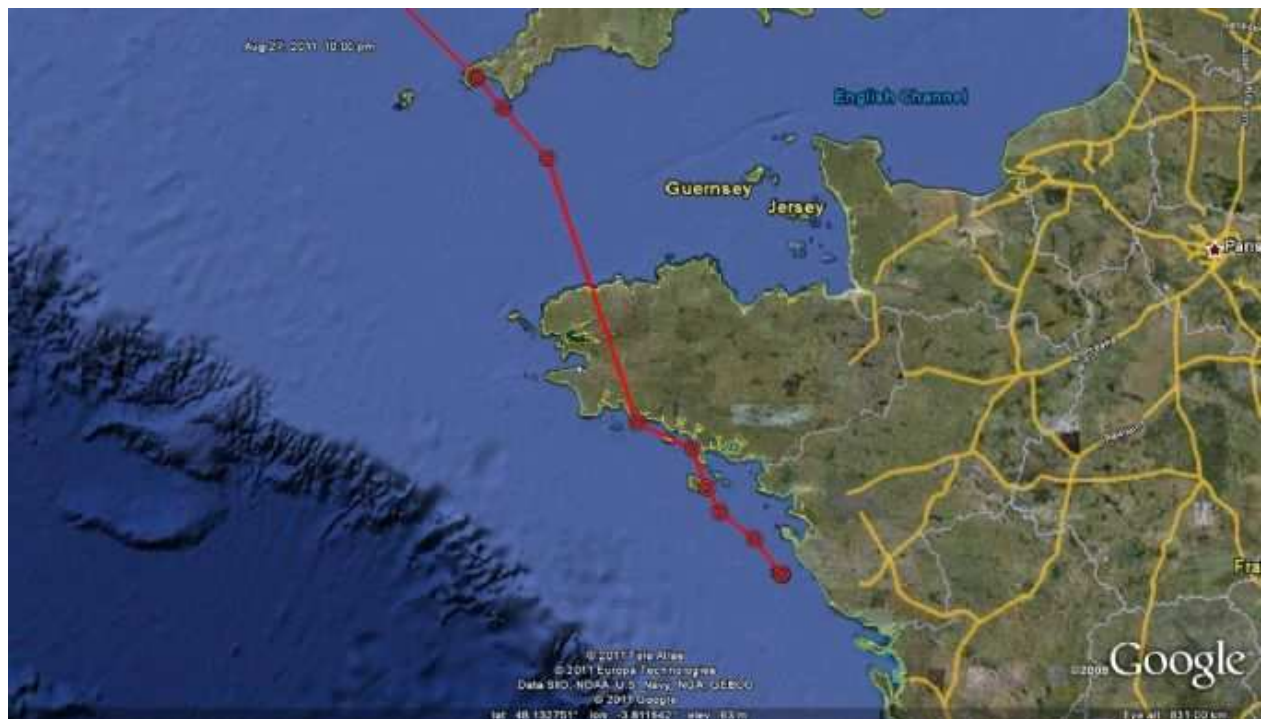
26 August 2011: Flying SE from Ireland

Joe flew down through Ireland and was circling over Dungarvan beach on the south coast of Ireland at 2pm and sometime later set off over the Irish Sea flying SSE. At 5pm he was heading well for Cornwall and was flying SSE at 86km/hr 507 metres above the sea and an hour later was 76 kms NW of Lands End flying ESE at 64 km/hr 251 metres above the sea. With NW winds he should have made landfall before dusk - I was in Wales where the weather was showery, with heavy rain showers later in SW England. Now eagerly waiting the next news and will update his journey through Ireland when I get home on Saturday.



27 August 2011: Wow – master navigator

Joe made a fantastic migration recovery - he was off again soon after 6am and headed SE for France - no hanging about in Cornwall - with a NW tail wind and good visibility he was well south of The Lizard at 7am flying SSE at 77km/hr 298 metres above the sea. By 1400GMT he was on the south coast of Brittany and turned SE to follow the coast southwards. He flew to Belle-Ile en Mer and left there at 1600hrs flying S at 41km/hr and at 1900hrs he was flying south over L'Île-d'Yeu where he settled to roost in woods on the south-east shore after a journey of 470 kms. What an epic flight for a young osprey with less than 2 months flying experience. And after going west to Ireland he has made a remarkable recovery to get back on track.

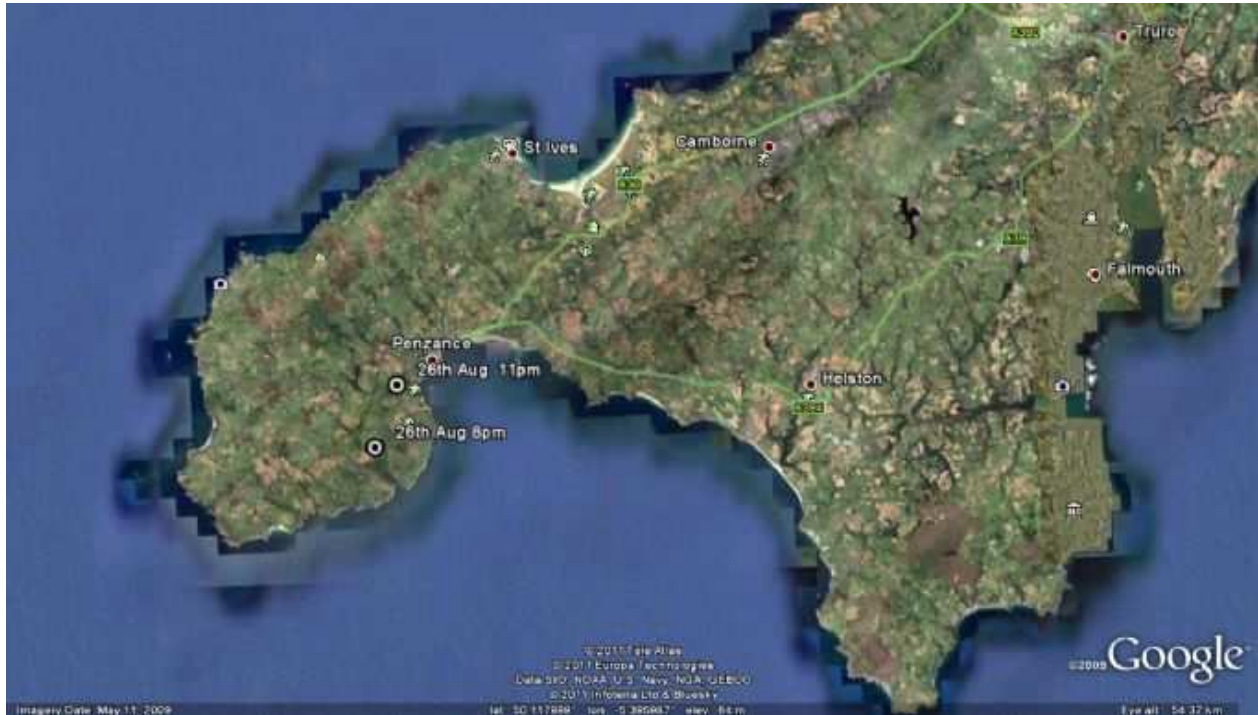


Joe's roost on L'Île-d'Yeu

27 August 2011: Reached Land's End safely last evening

Non GPS signals from last evening show that he was on the Lands End peninsula at 8pm last evening some 6 kms SSW of Penzance, and moved north to roost the night in open woods to the west of Newlyn. He safely corrected the westerly flight via Ireland -

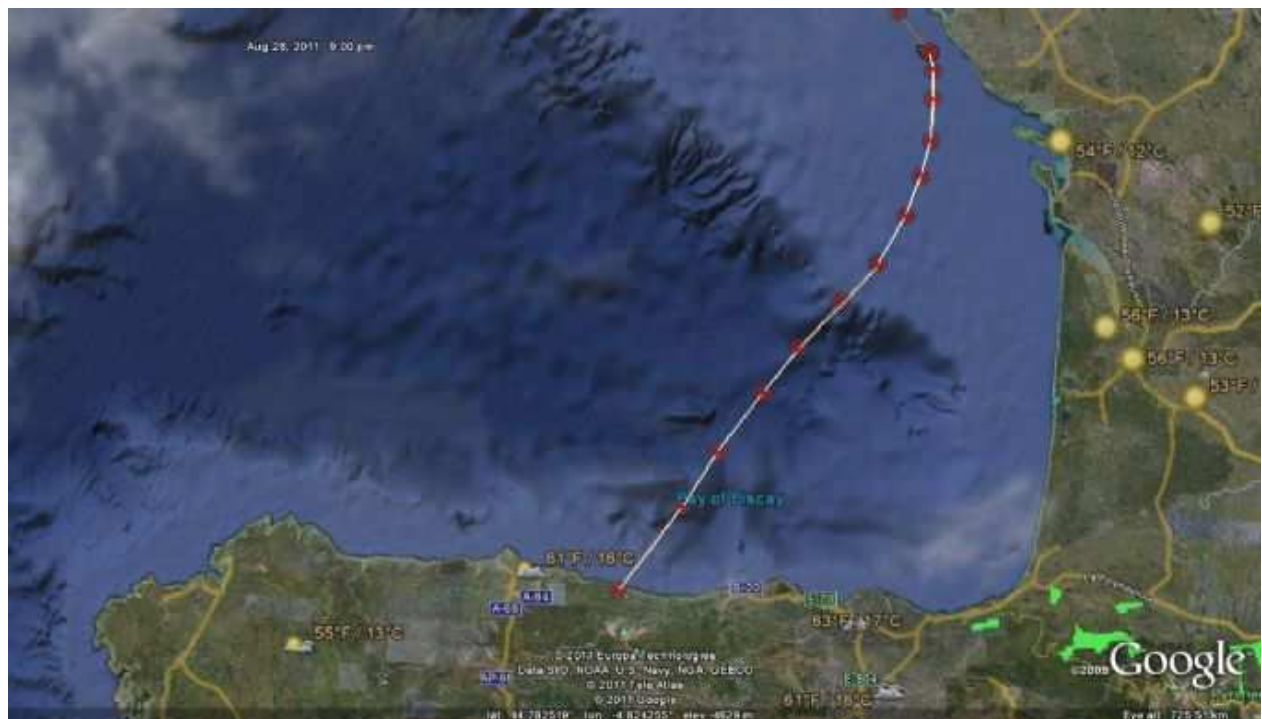
now to head SE to Brittany, although he might move east along the English coast - hope he doesn't head out SSW.



Joe's location last evening

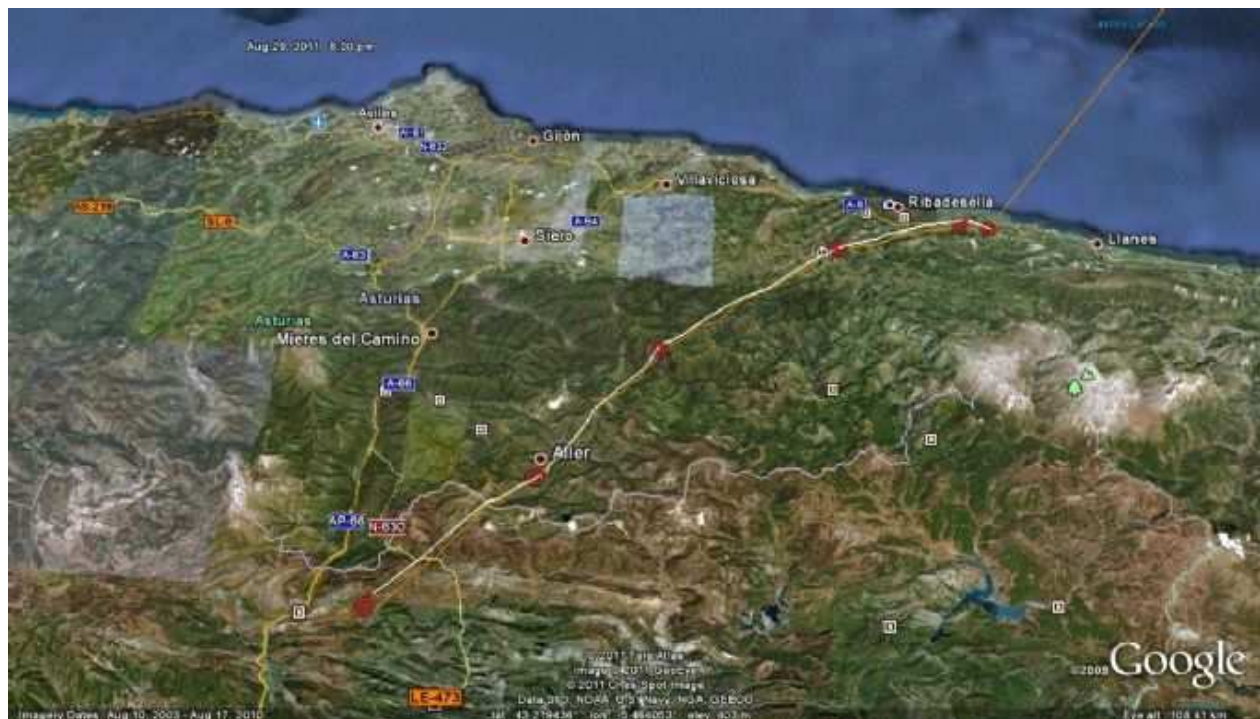
28 August 2011: Crossing Bay of Biscay

Joe set off again on SSW direction and this evening's non GPS data showed a location 1800hrs 6 kms north of the Spanish coast near Ribadesella. That's a 412 kms distance from his last night's roost - it will be good to get the hourly GPS positions to check his route. Hopefully he will get ashore without too much hassle from yellow-legged gulls and find a place to fish along the coast - to the west is the excellent estuary for ospreys at Villaviciosa. The weather is good with light NE winds. Later GPS data shows a slightly curved migration of 432 kms at a height of 200 to 400 metres above the Bay of Biscay. By 2100hrs he was roosting a few kms inland south of Cardosa in a wooded valley - some 12 kms east of Ribadella. He made landfall - now he needs to fish tomorrow morning.



29 August 2011: Edging through the Cantabrian Mountains

Joe was migrating west at 0900hrs, and then at 1000 and 1100 was perched beside the River Sella downstream from Arriondas - hopefully catching a fish. At 1300hrs he had flown over mountains and was flying SSW over Tanes Reservoir. At 1500hrs he was flying SW at 44km/hr at 2032 metres over Casares de Arbas Reservoir in the mountains. 92 kms by the last signal of the batch so far.



30 August 2011: Round trip of the mountains

Joe roosted last night at the top end of Embalse (reservoir) de Luna in the Cantabrian Mountains. At 1100hrs he was heading SSW at 53km/hr at 1925 metres altitude over the mountains. By 1300hrs he was just west of Astoga in Leon, and then an hour later was over Embalse Barcena just north of Pontferrado. He then turned NW and later NE, visiting Embalse de Matalavilla before arriving back at Embalse de Luna after a round trip of 162kms. At least he knows where the reservoirs are in the mountains as he travelled over countryside which still has wolves and brown bears.



01 September 2011: Stopping over

Joe spent all day yesterday at the top end of Embalse de Luna and on the River Luna, and was still there up to 1400hrs today. Looks as though he is having a stop-over.



06 September 2011: Still at Luna Reservoir

Joe has been around Luna Reservoir throughout the period although he has also been making brief trips to other reservoirs in the mountains.



14 September 2011: No change

Joe is living around the same area of the Casares de Arbas reservoir - obviously a good stop-over place.

17 September 2011: No change

Joe is living around the reservoir and obviously getting plenty of fish.



18 September 2011: Big migration south today

Joe had left the reservoir and had started his migration at 0600GMT, flying S at 62 km/hr. He flew strongly south and was west of Salamanca at 11:00 hours, and then at 14:00 hours crossed the Portuguese-Spanish border. At 16:00 hours he was in Portugal flying strongly SSW just west of Badajoz. At 18:00 hours he was still flying strongly at 52 km/hr and shortly afterwards came to roost in cork oaks among olive groves on the north side of the river Guadiana in Portugal, west of Moura after a day's migration of 565 kms.



19 September 2011: Big flight to Morocco

Joe was flying down the river at 8am and an hour later was perched in riverside trees, probably eating a fish. At 10:00 hours he was flying south at 64 km/hr east of Beja. At 13:00 hours he was flying at 1589m and changed direction to South West. At 14:00 hours he was just north of Portimao on the south coast of Portugal flying to the west. He flew out to the Atlantic Ocean over the South West point of Portugal at Sagres. At 16:00 hours he was well out over the Ocean flying SSW at 81km/hr 175 metres above the sea. He flew home strongly over the Atlantic in the loop which first of all took him to the south and then SSE to the Moroccan coast, where he came ashore before midnight at El Jedida after flying to 649 kms. Two great days of migration which see him safely in Africa.

21 September 2011: On through Morocco

Joe flew 243 kms down through Morocco on 20th and roosted for the night SE of Essaouira. Next day he had started migrating by 1000hrs and after midday he flew out over the Atlantic Ocean from Tamri National Park. He was 28 kms out to sea from Agadir. After his loop over the ocean he came ashore on the Moroccan coast before 1500hrs and continued flying south through the coastal district. At the last signal 1700hrs he was south of Sidi Ifni.



September 20th



September 21st

22 September 2011: On into Mauritania

Joe making good progress south - 321 kms today and ended the day close to the NW corner of Mauritania.



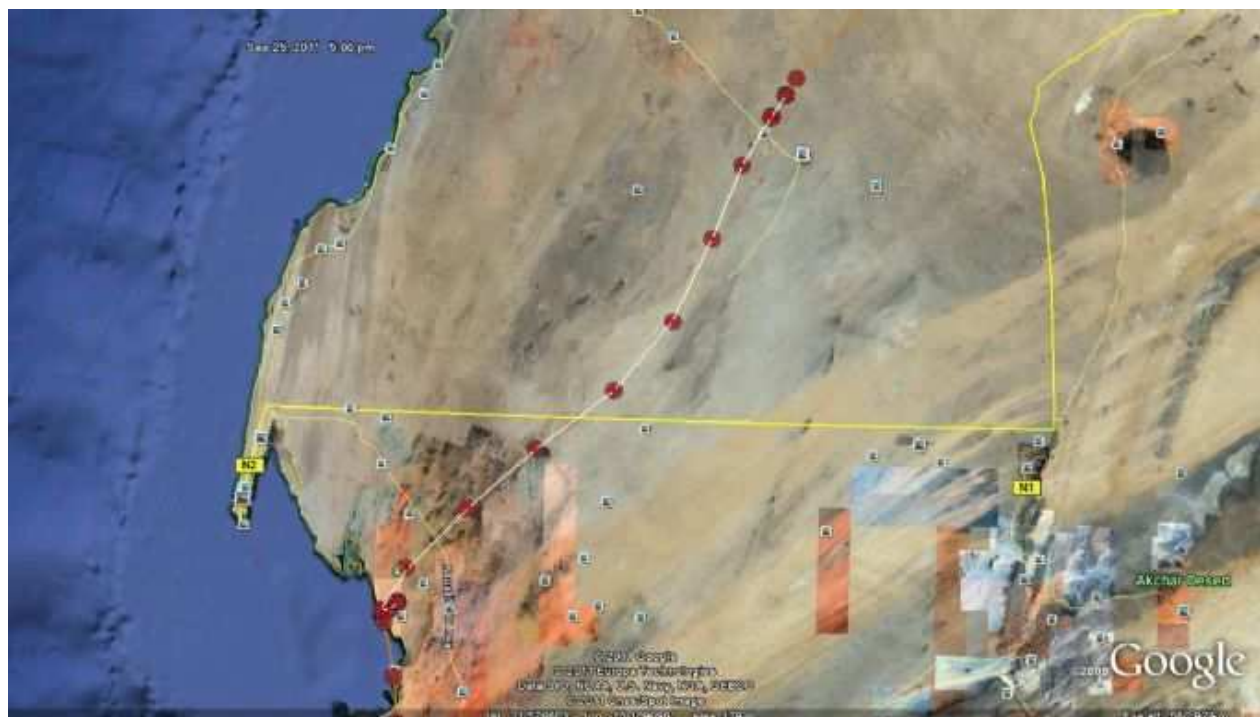
24 September 2011: Very good day's migration

Joe set off after 0900hrs and at 1000hrs was flying SSW at 73km/hr and by 1500hrs had climbed to 1660 metres and flying at 78km/hr; an hour later he was travelling at 88km/hr, so no wonder his day's flight was 435 kms. He stopped for the night in the desert north of the Aoussard road.



24 September 2011: Reaches Mauritania coast

Joe crossed the Mauritania border after 1300 hrs, and at 1400hrs was flying at 63 km/hr SW at 1185 metres towards the coast. He reached the Banc d'Arguin National Park coast of the Atlantic Ocean at 1700hrs. He flew 10 kms inland to roost overnight in the desert. 354 kms today.



25 September 2011: Down the coast and then inland

Joe slowly flew down the coast but at 1500hrs he set off east flying inland and was still flying east at 1500hrs (the last signal of the batch). Weather clear skies with light N wind.



26 September 2011: Migrating through Mauritania

After roosting in the desert, Joe set off south well inland from the Atlantic coast. At 1000hrs he was flying SSE at 50km/hhr at altitude 102 metres. At 1500hrs he was to the east of the capital Nouakchott flying SSE and later on roosted in the desert in south Mauritania after a day's flight of 252 kms



27 September 2011: Joe reaches Senegal

Joe reached northern Senegal today. He had set off in the morning by 0900hrs and at 1100hrs was flying low over the south end of Lake Rkiz and then an hour later was to the east of this location before setting off SW to the Senegal River, which he reached at 1300hrs. An hour later he was flying at 617 metres above the river downstream at Dagana. At 1500hrs he was perched by a backwater to the north of Richard Toll on the Mauritanian side. He then flew over large areas of irrigated farmlands in Senegal before roosting in scattered bushes to the south. He has safely crossed the Sahara Desert and reached areas of West Africa where fish are readily available. Now we'll learn where he decides to set up his first wintering home.



28 September 2011: On through Senegal

Joe started off after 0800GMT and 2 hours later crossed the south end of Lac de Guiers. At midday he was flying SSW at 64km/hr to the north of Louga. An hour later he turned west and reached the Atlantic coast at 1500hrs. He then flew slowly south inland of the coast and at 1800hrs he stopped to roost in scattered trees in pastoral area south of Mbora.



29 September 2011: To Dakar

Joe flew 50kms down the Senegal coast and by evening was roosting on a big farm east of Dakar.



30 September 2011

Remained in the Dakar area.

03 October 2011: On to Gambia

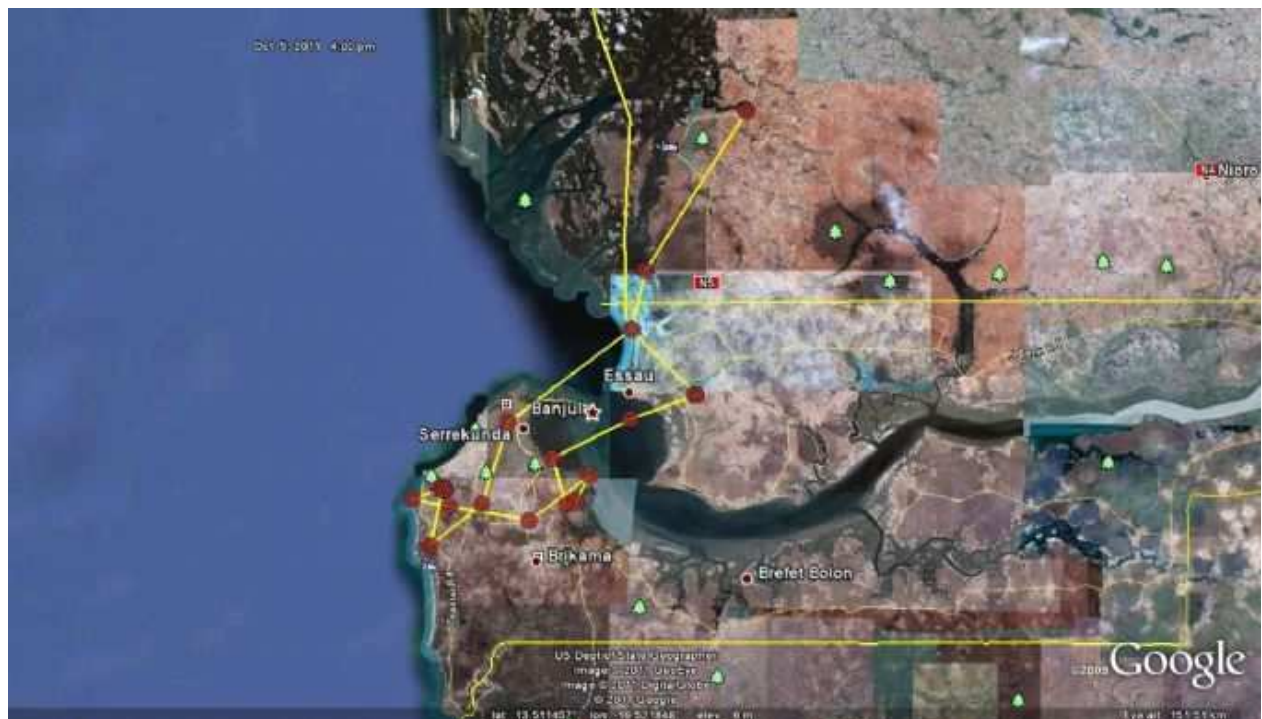
Joe left the Dakar area on 1st October and roosted that night inland and south of Mbour. Next day he carried on south and roosted in the Saloum Delt and on 3rd he continued south and by midday crossed into The Gambia and settled in the Numi National Park.



05 October 2011: Staying in Gambia/Senegal

Joe moved to the south side of the Gambia River at 1000hrs on 4th October and roosted that evening in Tanji Bird Reserve, next day he moved north and re-crossed the river at 1200hrs and flew back north into Senegal and by evening was roosting in the eastern fringe of Sin Saloum National Park. Maybe he is looking to winter in this area - this would be good as we might find him when we visit the area in November for the BBC Autumnwatch programme.

BBC Autumnwatch is covering the migrations of the satellite tagged ospreys from the Montgomery Wildlife Trust's Dyfi reserve and the first program is at 8.30pm tomorrow (7th) on BBC2 TV.



07 October 2011: Staying in one area

Joe stayed in the wetland beside the Sokone to Karang road, near Sanghor - looks a good place for him to settle - it's in the very inner part of the Sine Saloum delta.



11 October 2011: Back north towards St. Louis

Joe flew north of Kaolack on 8th and then to the south end of Lac de Guirs next day, where he stayed until 11th, when he flew west and had reached Rao, SE of St Louis by 1500hrs. He is looking for a place to settle down.



20 October 2011: Problems of some sort

On 11th, Joe was in the eastern outskirts of Rao at 1400, 1500 and 1700 hrs, with non GPS class 1 signals west of the town by a lake at 1447GMT and 1735GMT. On 13th there were three poor quality signals - two to the east of St Louis during the night and one out to sea. On 15th October there was one class 3 (accurate) signal just west of the Rao lake at 0324GMT, which is a sandy area with scattered bushes, as well as a lot of traffic tracks. There have been no further signals. Battery voltage was low at times which is strange and there was no movement on the activity counter on two fixes on 13th and 15th. It may be a transmitter fault or Joe may have come to grief in a populated area around the village, or been predated. Difficult to say more unless new signals come through. It's sad if he is dead after such a strong migration from our most northerly Scottish nest.



28 October 2011: No news

Tim Mackrill (Rutland Water Osprey Project) emailed a friend in Senegal; and Frederic Bacuez went and checked out Joe's last locations. He had a wander about the area and sent me a note and some photos:

The lake of Rao-peuhl is empty this year. Just one place with water, which was busy with cattle and goats, and some birds: queleas, weavers, doves, speckled pigeons, and a group of cattle egrets. Close to it we found 3 dead cattle egrets. This water is just south of Joe's last two signals. Beside the water is a track for wagons carrying groundnuts between the fields (north) and the villages (south of the lake). On your maps, Joe flew a lot over the little water area and perched on the trees behind the swamp (north-west). The swamp is green (warthogs visit there) but it is without water. There is water east near the main road, but covered with vegetation (whistling ducks and ruffs) and everywhere is very difficult for an osprey to fish here. An osprey flew over the drained lake west of Rao at 1715GMT on 26th October and circled to the west. The few areas of water were only 15 - 20 cms deep and had catfish - so maybe Joe got into difficulties diving in shallow water or has been injured.

Joe's transmitter may have failed or been damaged, or he died through natural causes or a human accident. In dry conditions like this year, wetlands suitable for fishing are much reduced and young ospreys probably are pushed out to poor quality habitats by adults and thus get into trouble. Many thanks to Frederic for going and checking the area.

27 November 2011: Transmitter sending signals

Joe's transmitter sent out non GPS signals on 20th and 24th November from the area west of the dried out lake - presumably either his remains with radio have been moved or the transmitter is receiving sunlight. It would be good if it could be recovered.

13 December 2011: Remains found

Since 4th December I started to receive GPS locations from Joe's transmitter and was able to send GPS locations and magnified GoogleEarth map to Frederic Bacuez. It looks as though the transmitter was between two big bushes and in sunshine. Frederic offered to go again to Rao and have a search. This evening I received the following email and then two photos from Frederic.

"Dear friends, Sadly we can tell you that Joe has died: today, we found near the last position given by Roy the feathers of Joe with all the transmitter two meters far; also one claw and around a few bones of the neck. A report tomorrow with pictures. I got back all the materials covered by dried mud, the two rings (blue one 90 or 06, broken by the sun and BTO 1410565) and some remains... Rozenn Le Roux, Cheikh Adara and me are so sorry for you and all the british ospreys friends. Frederic Bacuez, Ornithondar"

It's sad that Joe died on his first migration and the evidence suggests he was taken by a mammal predator, killed and eaten, maybe when diving into small pools of very shallow water after catfish. The first winter in Africa is difficult for young ospreys which cannot compete with the adults for the best habitat. It's almost certainly more dangerous in a drier than normal autumn/winter when the interior wetlands are drying up.

We are very grateful to Frederic and his friends, Rozenn Le Roux, Cheikh Adara, for checking the Rao area again and retrieving the transmitter, which I can use again next summer on another osprey. Maybe we call him Frederic.



One of Joe's claws, showing he was eaten by a predator



Rings and satellite transmitter

