

# Movements of Spey in 2010

## August Migration

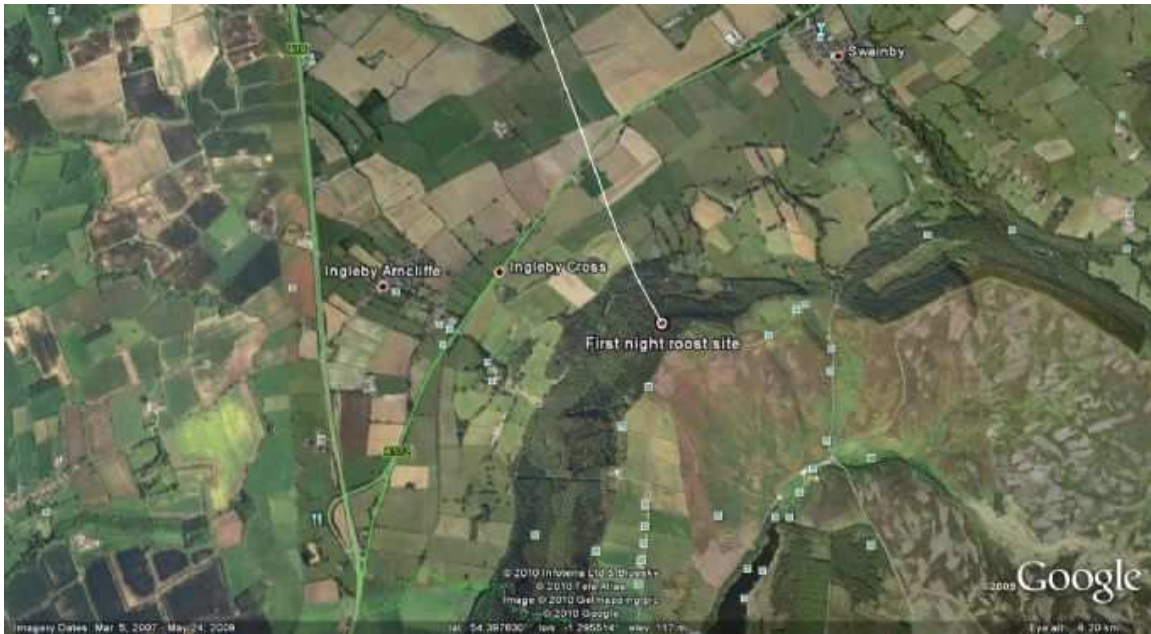
### 12 September 2010: Off on first migration

Spey roosted last night in trees just down the valley from the nest and this morning visited the nest but mainly remained in the general vicinity, probably after getting a fish from the male osprey. With improving weather, rising high pressure and WNW winds he decided it was time to set off on his first migration. He was still at the nest at 10am but an hour later was just south of Dufftown, flying SSE at 81 kms/hr at 200 metres altitude. He flew on over The Buck and Glenkindie, then west of Aboyne and over the hills south east of Glentinar at midday when he was flying south at 40kms/hr. He flew on over the grouse moors at Mount Battock and by Glenesk and Brechin, he reached Friockheim in Angus at 1pm, when he was flying SSE at 68 kms/hr at 832 metres.

He flew out over the Tay estuary near Arbroath and at 2pm was just off Fife Ness, flying SSE at 46 kms/hr 206 metres above the sea. Visibility was good, wind was WNW 11mph. He passed the Isle of May and came ashore from the North Sea just east Skaterow, east of Dunbar just after 3pm (new data received). Heading on south he was over Etal at 4pm and then flew on over Wooler and Rothbury. He was well over a thousand feet above the land and passed over Newcastle and at 6pm was over Chester-le-Street flying SE at 70km/hr; an hour later he was still strongly SSE at Crawthorne but soon came down to perch in a wood by a small lake. By 9pm had settled a little further in a wooded hillside at Scarth Moor, North Yorkshire.

His migration flight today was 236 miles on an excellent heading down the east side of Scotland, missing the Cairngorms. He had flown for nine hours at a steady pace, average speed of 26mph. A very good start.



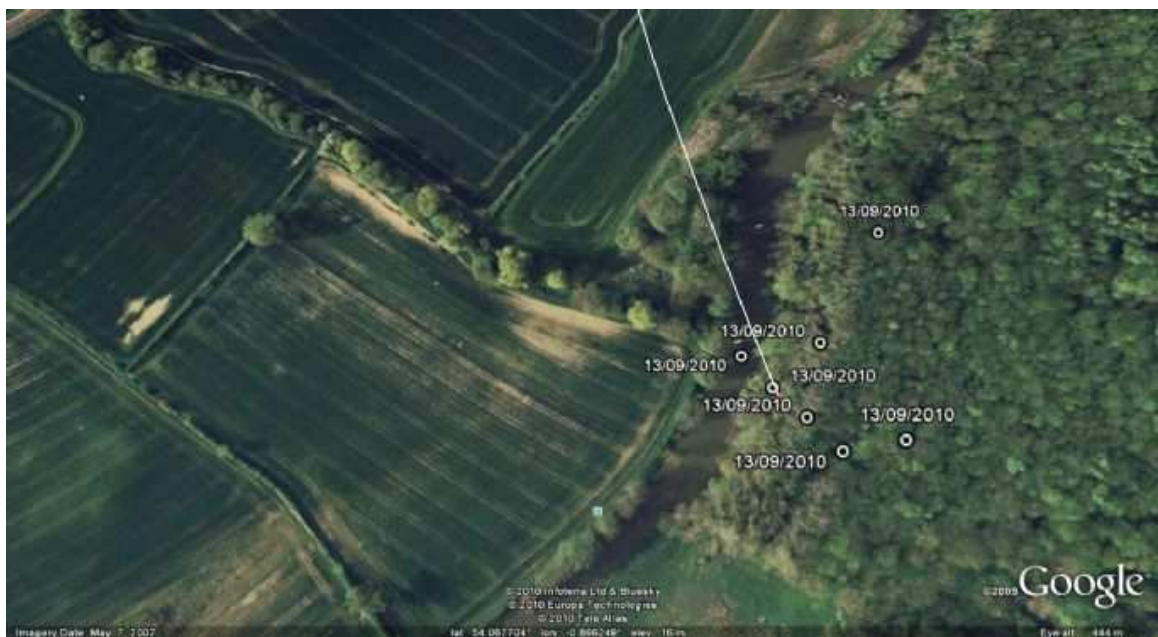
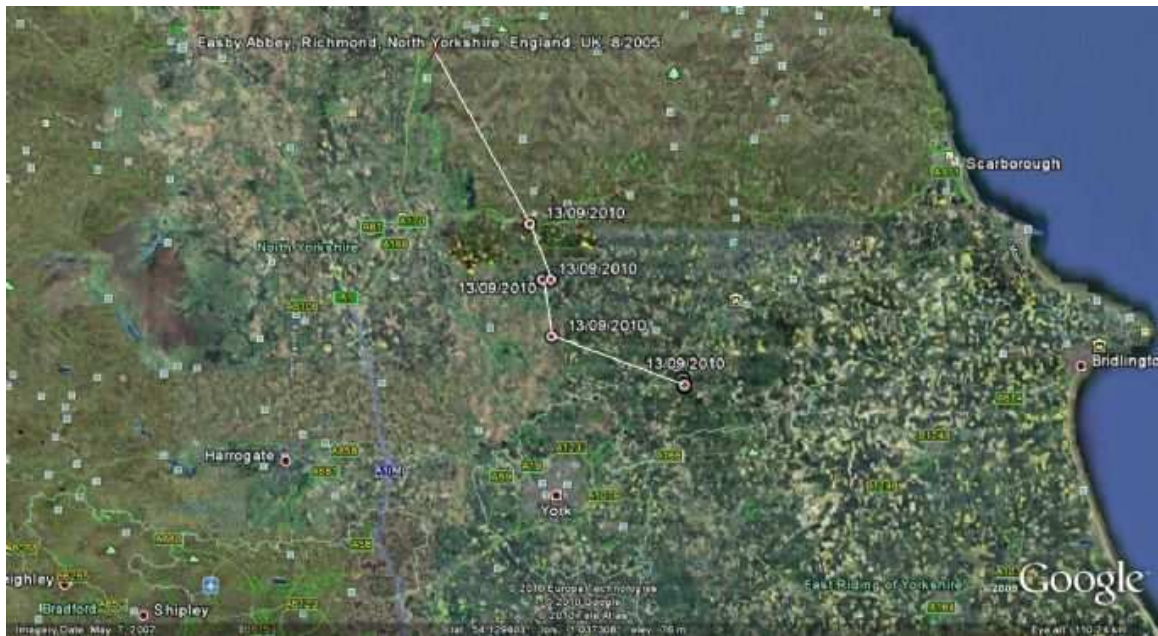


Roost site

### 13 September 2010: Bad weather hampers progress

Spey departed from his roost after 6am, so got off to an early start, but at 7am he was perched in Wass Forest north of Ampleworth. At 8am he was flying west at 31km/hr low over Yearsley forest. An hour later he was perched further to the west in the woodlands and at 10am was flying south east near Marton Abbey. At 11am he was flying east near Crambe in the Derwent Valley, north east of York, and very soon had landed in the woods beside the river Derwent, where he spent the rest of the day at various roosts and probably fished in the river. He covered 32 miles during the day but the weather was poor. It was cloudy and windy day with the rain, the wind southwest 25 mph.



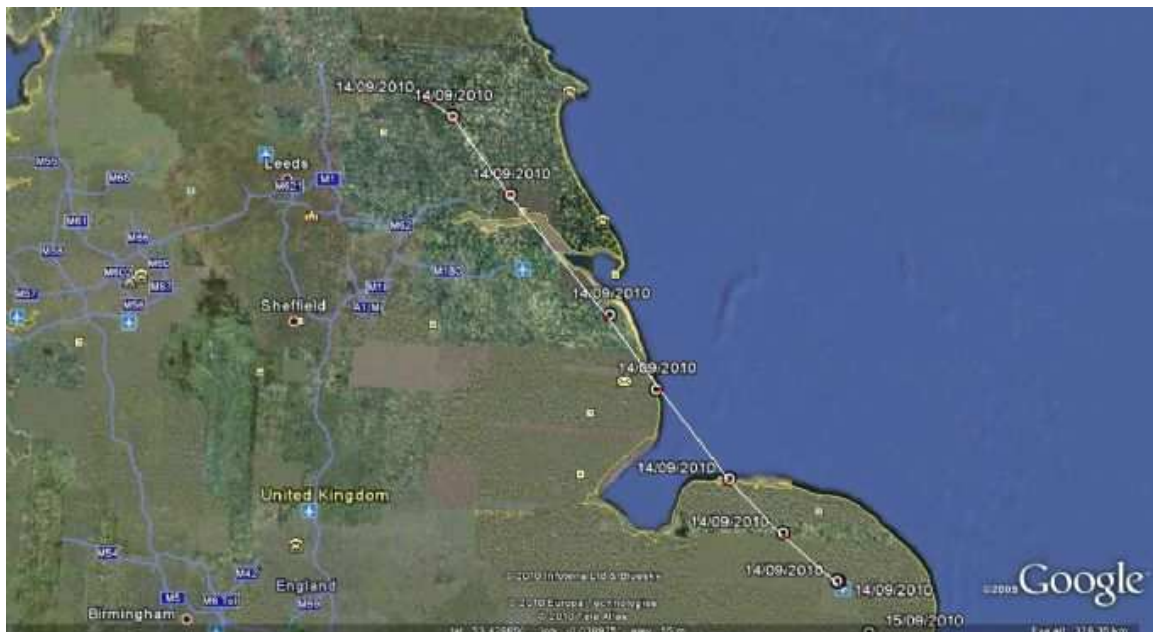


Loafing and roosting site beside River Derwent

## 14 September 2010

Spey roosted overnight by the River Derwent and was still there at 8am. By 10am he was in the Vale of York, flying south east 76km/hr to the east of Kirkby Underdale. At 11am he was flying SSE over at Cottingham golf club just on the north side of Hull. He crossed the Humber, flew on over Grimsby and at 1pm he

was flying south over North Somercoates in Lincolnshire. At 2pm he was flying SSE at 50km/hr out over the Wash from Chapel St Leonards. At 3pm he was flying just off Scolt Head on the north Norfolk coast, and then headed inland. At 4pm he was flying south over Swanton Novers and by an hour later had settled in a wood just east of Horsford, and north of Norwich, where he roosted for the night. He flew 129 miles during the day.





## 15 September 2010: Off to the continent!

Spey left his roost at dawn and at 7am he was flying SE at 33km/hr at 65 metres altitude near Thurton; he flew on over over Beccles and at 8am was perched in the field trees near Sotterley. He continued his SSE heading and flew out over the coast just North East of Reydon. At 9am he was flying low over the sea SSE at 33 km/hr - on this heading he would reach the landfall in Belgium. He might of course turn back and reach Essex, but the weather is clear, with some clouds, and a westerly 20mph wind, so he even may fetch up in the Netherlands. Now we wait for the next set of GPS locations - will he cross or will you turn back? He kept going!

10am well out over the sea flying east at 75km/hr just 38 m above the sea; an hour later he was flying SSE and had risen to 399 metres, and at 1100GMT he was turning towards the Dutch coast flying Southeast at 62km/hr. He arrived in the Netherlands over Weltevreden and at 1300GMT was flying SE at 57km/hr 1059 metres above the docks at Antwerp in Belgium. A non-GPS position at 16.37 gave his position 14kms SE of Liege beside the River Meuse.





## 16 September 2010: Slow flight through Belgium

Spey just moved 68 kilometres south through Belgium and roosted the night in woods in the Ardennes. At 1200GMT he was perched on the edge of the wood west of Marcourt. He was flying Southwest 677 metres at 13:00 hours at Hodister and one hour later was flying SSE at 51km/hr over Bois Ste-Gertrude. At 18:00 hours he was perched in woods close to a series of lakes just north of Libramont, and then spent the rest of the day and night in the forest by the biggest lake.





## 17 September 2010: Back on track

Spey recovered and changed direction to the south and covered 310 kilometres during the day. He was over the Forêt d'Argonne at 1300GMT flying SSW at 56km/hr at 1016 metres; he flew on over Saint Dizier and at 1700hours was flying SSW at 65km/hr near Semur-en-Auxois, and then roosted in the evening in woods near Saulieu.



## 18 September 2010

At 0800GMT he had flown 21 km south of the roost site, and was flying south west at 60km/hr. The last signal of the batch was at 9.28GMT by which time Spey had flown another 54 kms. NEW Signals (in this morning 19th) show he flew 460 kms south through France to be near Carcassonne by the time to roost in the evening. More details later as GPS data comes in.

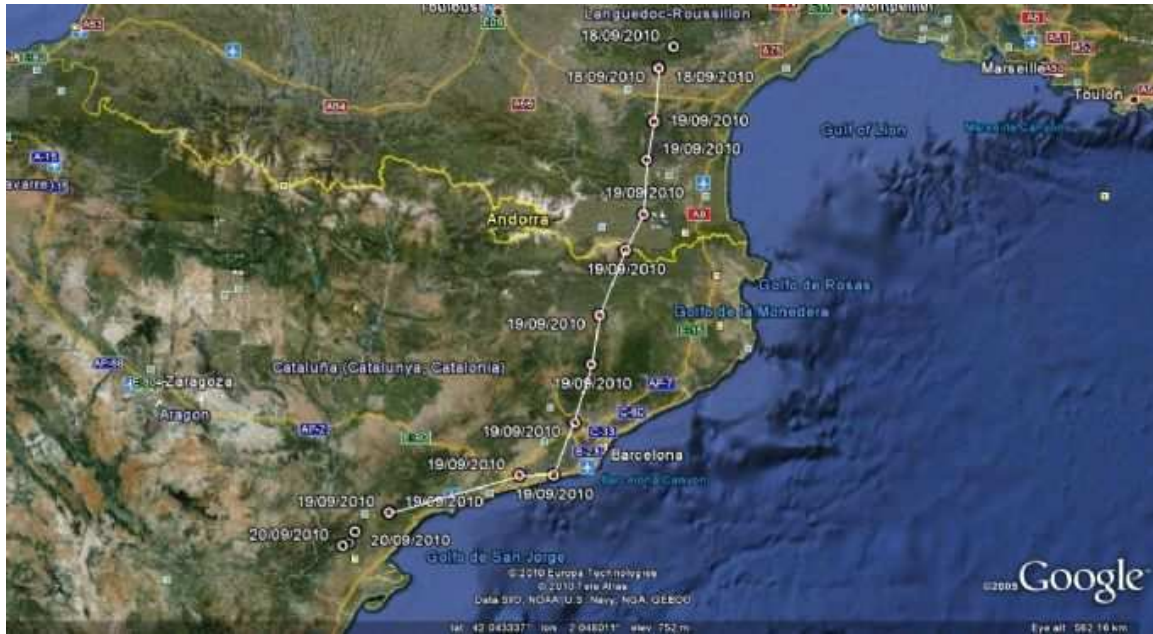




## 19 September 2010

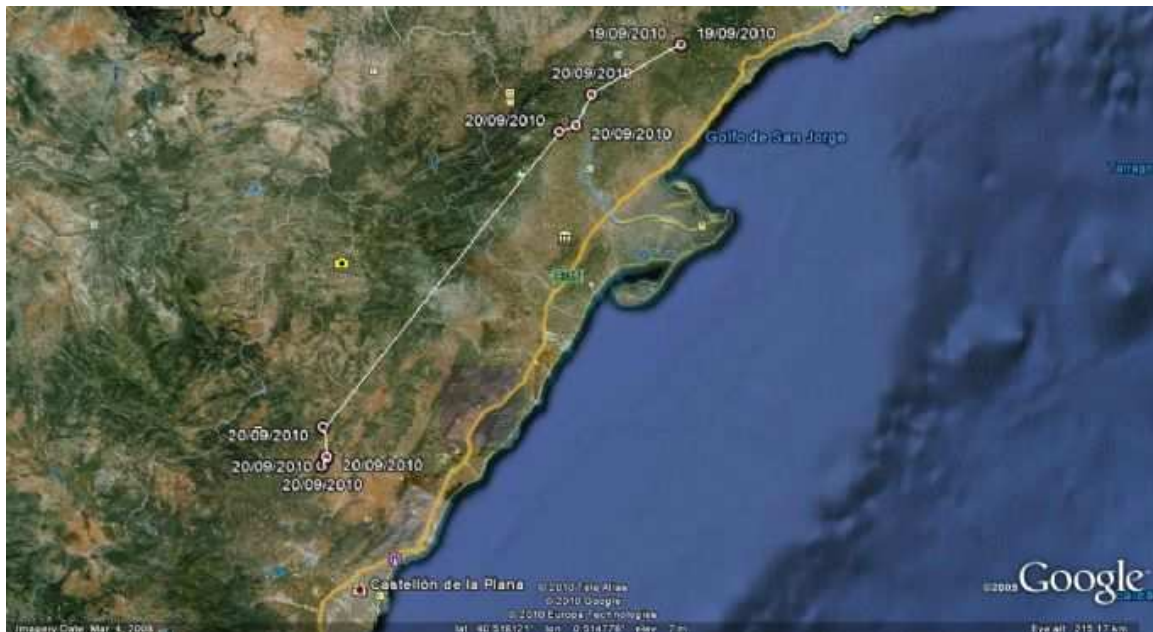
First signals for today show that he has crossed the eastern Pyrennes and is heading south through Catalonia. Already flown 144 kms by 1000GMT. More data will come in during today. Later: 0600hrs Spey was already well underway flying south 47kms/hr; an hour later he was flying over the Gorges de Galamus and then at 0800GMT he was just south-east of Prades in the Pyrenees-Orientale. He climbed up through the valleys and crossed into Spain just east of CostaBona (altitude 2464 metres) and at 0900 hours he was just in Spain flying SSW at 47km/hr at an altitude of 2225 metres. This eastern route is very rarely used by our ospreys and he successfully negotiated the high mountains. He then set off SSW through Catalonia and and a non-GPS signal, the last of the day, was somewhere SW of Villanova, which is 40 kms south-west of Barcelona. By this time he had flown 250 kms.

Later data showed when he reached the coast he turned WSW and flew inland north of Tarragona and roosted in wooded hills north of Tivissa after a 334 kilometres.



## 20 September 2010

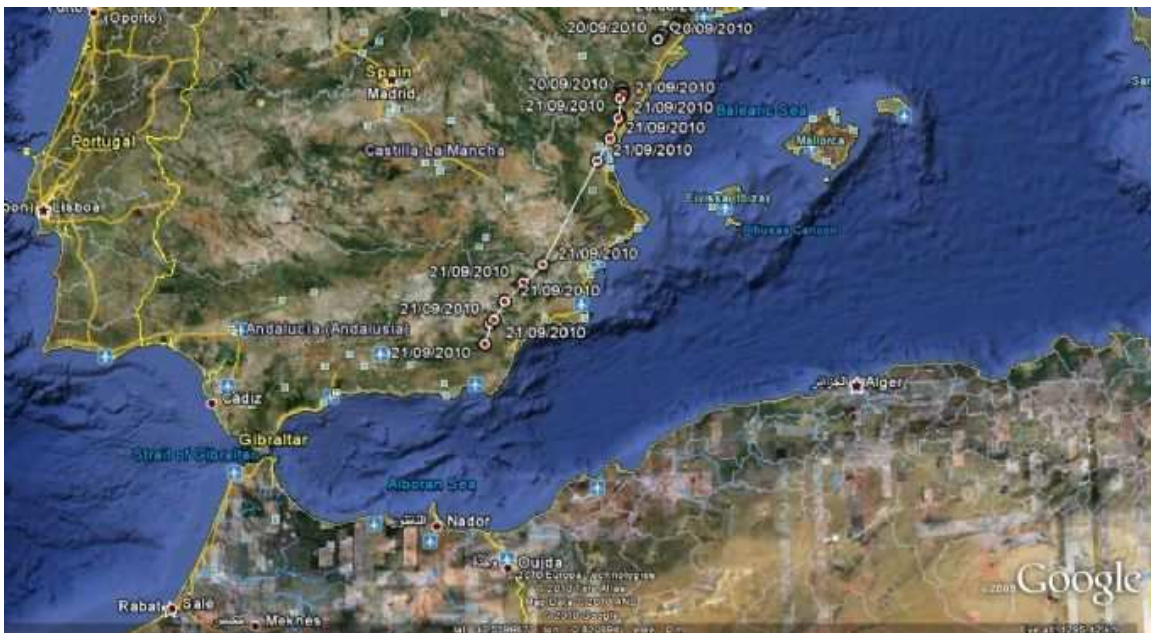
Last evening's report was incorrect. Now that most of the GPS data has come through I can see that he travelled down the coast rather than out at sea. He left the roost rather late, lot of cloudy weather, and at 1000GMT he was perched beside the mighty River Ebro at Xerta. Flying on SW through coastal Spain he arrived and roosted for the night 28 kms of north of Castellás de la Plana, after 123 kilometres flying.





## 21 September 2010: Strong day's migration

Spey had left his roost before 100GMT, and was then perched beside the River Mijares, probably after fishing, at 0700 - 0800GMT. By 0900GMT he was flying at 40 km/hr SSE and an hour later was flying south at 56km/hr near Sagunto. At 1100GMT he was flying SSW at 55 km/hr at 1073 metres over the western suburbs of Valencia. He kept flying strongly SSE and was to the west of Murcia at 1600hrs and west of Lorca 2 hours later. He perched in the mountains at 1900GMT but an hour later he was flying SW at 50 km/hr near Macael, headed for Almeria and the coast. Will he stop for the night or continue out over the sea to Africa? By this time he had already flown 376 km. The weather is partly cloudy, good visibility with a fresh east wind.

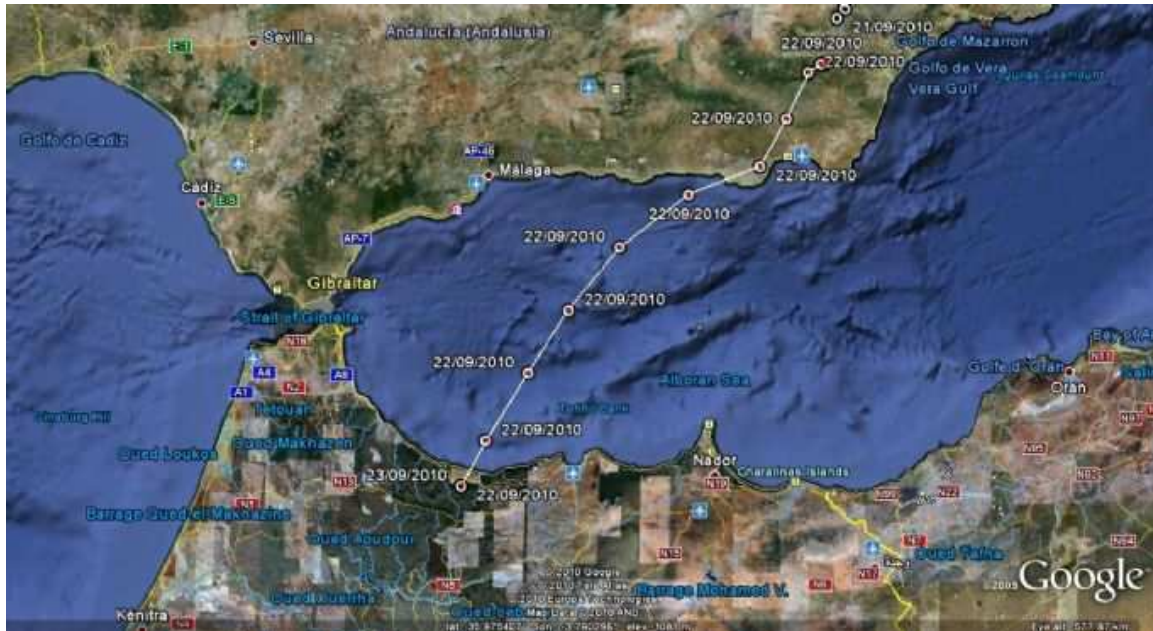


## 22 September 2010: First time in Africa

After roosting last night in the mountains near Macael, he moved a few kilometres and perched in olive groves for a couple hours. By 0900GMT he was migrating west and then turned SSW near Tabernas, and at 1100hrs was flying SW at 56 km/h 757 metres above the coastal town of La Mojonera. He flew out over the coast at Punta de los Banos and at 12:00 hours was flying west at 61 km/h at 111 m above sea, turning more to the SSW he set off across the Mediterranean Sea at about 100 metres above the water at speeds between 51 and 41 km/h. About 16:30 GMT he made the Moroccan coast in North Africa at Oued s'Fetch and travelled a short distance inland where he settled on a wooded hillside above the river. That is where he roosted for the night, after a day's flight



of 334 km. His first visit to Africa after a successful migration down through Europe.



### 23 September 2010

Spey set off SW in Morocco and by 1400GMT was located near the large reservoir, Barage de Al Wahda. An ideal location to feed up before heading south through North Africa. Carried on and by evening was roosting in lightly wooded hills at 1900 metres. 180 km in the day.







180km in the day

## 24 September 2010

He carried out a rather short migration through the mountains north of the high Atlas. From 1200 to 1400GMT he was beside a small lake, and then flew further south to roost in the mountain site after a day's flight of 87 kms.





## 25 September 2010

By 09:00 hours, as they had flown 4 km to the west and then started to wind his way through the mountain passes. At 1200GMT he was flying south-west at 46km/h at 1408 m and then turned south, to the east of the big reservoir Bin El-Ouida. At 16:00 hours he was flying at 58 km/h SSE at 3798 metres (the highest he will probably ever fly!) as he climbed over the mountains just east of M'Goun mountain, the second-highest of the Atlas mountains at 4071 metres. This is in the Sous-Massa-Draa region. He continued south across the main road just east of Skoua and settled for the night at 19:00 hours in woods, probably palm trees, beside the Draa River upstream of Agdz. A good day's migration through difficult country - a distance of 315 kms.



Through the High Atlas



Roost 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> September

## 26 September 2010: On South to the deserts

Spey moved several times after dawn, probably fishing in the river, and by 0900GMT was flying south and an hour later was flying due south at 47km/h at 1911 metres. At 11:00 hours he was flying even faster at 68km/h - the wind being



NW, and soon after passed Lake Iriki. At 14:00 hours he flew south into the Algerian desert and an hour later had changed direction and was flying SE. He continued this course and at 1600 and 1700GMT he was flying SE at speeds of 80km/h or more. After 1800hrs, he came to rest in the very open Algerian desert after a 367 kms flight. This is where he roosted the night.

At the moment he is heading in the wrong direction; he should really have turned SW to reach Senegal (and wetlands), not SE into open desert.

## **27 September 2010: A long desert crossing ahead**

Spey set off from the roost after 0800GMT and during the morning made a steady migration across the Algerian desert in a south-east direction. In the afternoon Spey had climbed to 1542 metres over the Adrar desert, and was flying steadily SSE at 82 kms/hr. This was the last signal of this batch and we need to wait until tomorrow's transmissions to find out if he corrected his heading or is continuing on towards the central deserts.

If he does he has a very long way to go; a SE heading would involve a 1500 kms crossing of the desert to reach Niamey and changing his heading to south would still involve 1000 kms of flying to reach Timbuktu and the River Niger. Hopefully he will change direction to SW, but this is where his strength and fat supplies will become important as he may not eat for several days or more.



Off into the Algerian desert



## 28 September 2010: First tentative signs of new course

Spey had set off by 1000GMT and was flying SSW, then an hour later he was flying south at 1035 metres and continued due south. At 1400GMT he was flying just west of south at 56 km/h nearly 1000 metres above the desert. Soon after he passed into Mali and the next GPS signal at 1800hrs showed that he had changed course to SSW, and his crossing looks more hopeful. By 1900hrs he had stopped in the desert and then moved some kms further on to roost overnight in absolutely featureless desert after a journey of 400 kms.



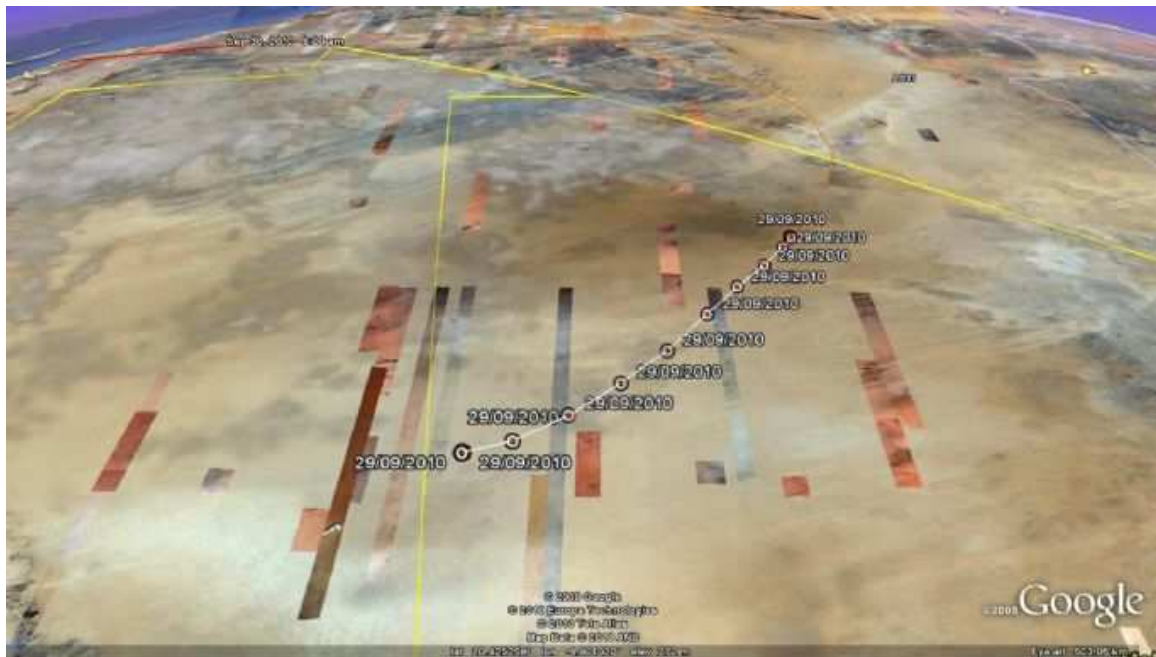
Now heading on a better course



Roost site in northern Mali desert

### **29 September 2010: Encouraging day**

Spey flew 410 kms SSW - SW across the Northern Mali today and nearly reached the border with Mauritania. He started migrating just before 0900GMT and continued until near 1800GMT; from midday he was flying 1200 metres or more above the desert surface which would allow him to miss blowing sand and dust. The whole journey was over featureless desert.



Spey's track over Mali desert

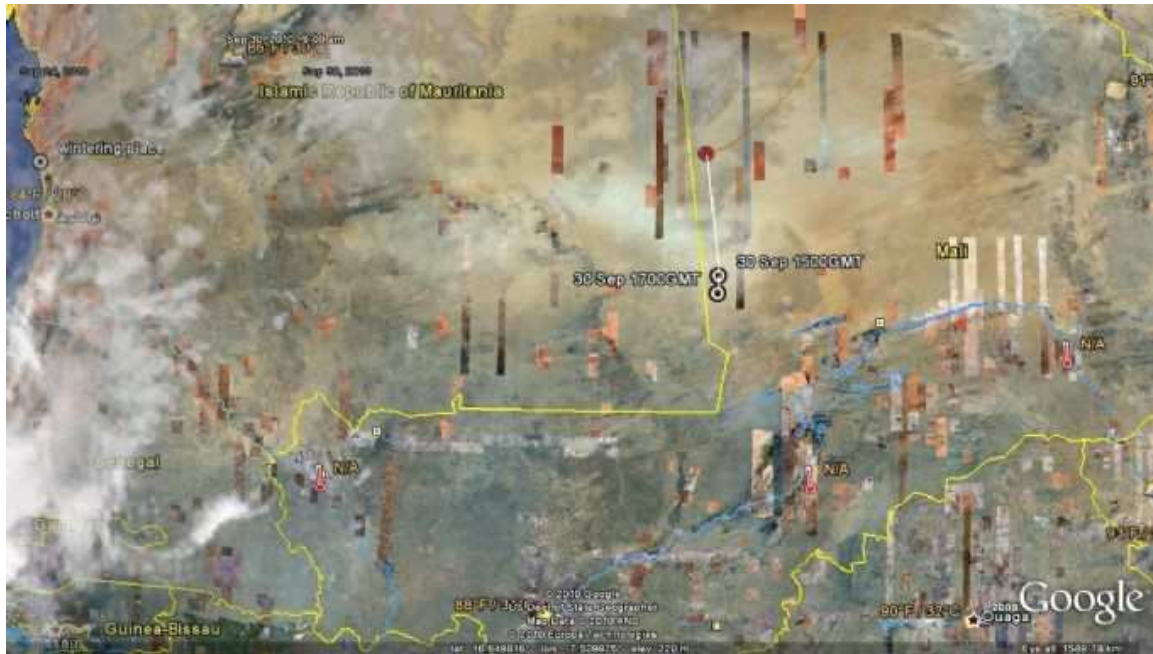


The route through Northern Africa to date



### 30 September 2010: Turned South

Spey turned south and by 1700GMT was 220 kms closer to the wetlands. GPS data not all in yet. Flew 229 kms today. The distance to the nearest rivers or lakes is 200 km SE and nearly 400 km due south. In eastern Mali the wind is N 35mph with low drifting sand (and Spey's high altitude flights get him above the dust) and in southern Mali there are thunder storms and light NW winds. He should reach a feeding place by evening of 1st October.



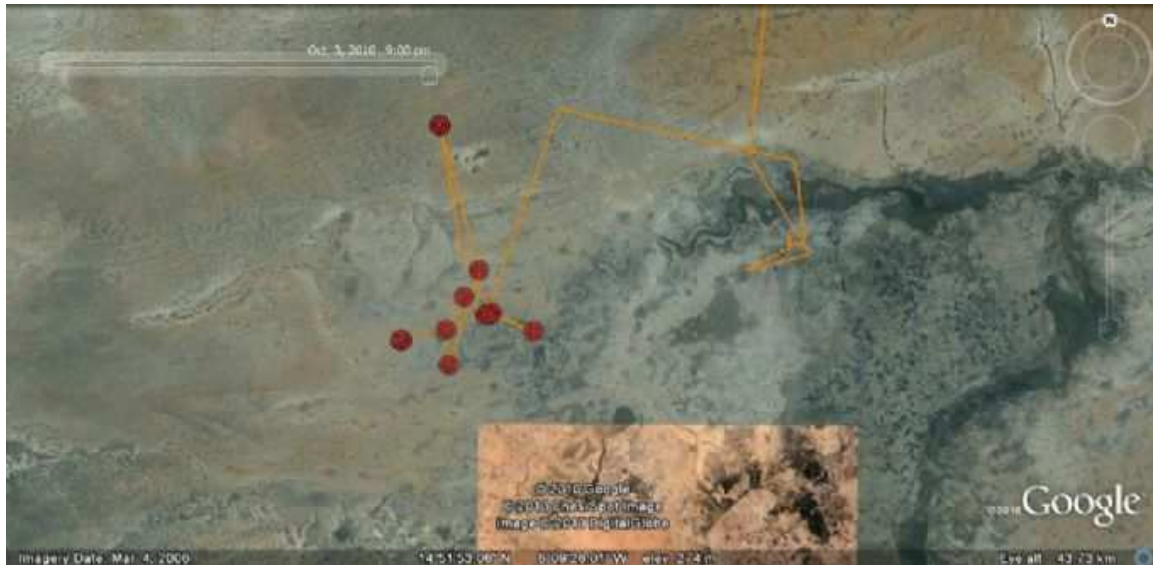
### 01 October 2010: Reaches River Niger tributary

Spey made it across the Sahara Desert - by afternoon he was near the upper reaches of a tributary of the River Niger in Male. More data to come in.









Spey's locations 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct (orange lines old positions)

## 10 October 2010: Remaining in the wetland

Spey has spent the first ten days of October on the tributary of the River Niger, which he found after crossing the Sahara. He has moved a little south and must be finding plenty of fish, as he has not pushed onto the main river. I wonder if he will stay inland or move on to the coastal areas of West Africa.



1<sup>st</sup> 10 days of October



#### 4 October 2010: Remains 100s kms north of River Niger

Spey remains 100 kms north of the River Niger, on the same tributary near a village called Sokolo. There must be a lot of flooded land and pool systems as he is living close to farms/houses south of Sokolo, and then flying 300 metres to one kilometre west to roost in the semi-desert.



Range 8<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> October



Spey's location relative to River Niger

## **17 October 2010**

Still in the same location and though at 1400GMT today he was 7 km to the north west and then an hour later flying back.

## **28 October 2010: Settled down**

Spey has settled into a daily routine in the Sokolo area of the River Niger backwater.



## **09 November 2010: Continues North**

Continued up the Guinea coast and in the afternoon was spending time around a reservoir in from the coast - 48 kms today.

Spey has settled down in this tributary of the main river, but in the last ten days has been ranging more widely in a range of 400 square kilometres. He is still 80 kms north of the River Niger. I thought he might head west to the coastal marshes once he had fed up after his desert migration, but for now he seems settled.





## 16 November 2010

Sue Coxon wrote to me about Spey's wintering site, "it is part of a vast irrigation scheme which takes water from the Niger, sometimes called the Office du Niger after the organisation which constructed it in the mid C20 under French colonial rule, and still runs it today. The main crop grown is rice, and this is the growing season after the rains, Spey may find it gets drier as time goes on. Around Sokolo, it looked as if he was fishing in the water channels supplying the rice fields."

Wetlands International Site  
<http://followthebird.wetlands.org/Keywetlands/InnerNigerDeltaMali/tabid/1540/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

This organisation, based in the Netherlands, has a number of projects in Mali and has tracked purple herons to the same area.

## 21 November 2010

In the last week has been more in the northern section of winter range, mainly at day by a big lake, and then flying west to roost at night in scrubby desert.



16<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup> November



Daytime locality in last week

## 28 November 2010

Spey has concentrated on a lagoon near Dyadyn, north of Sokolo, and for last 8 days has been in a range of 1.3 sq kms.



20<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> November

## 29 November 2010: Off South

Spey spent yesterday in his usual haunt near Sokolo, and was still there at 0900GMT today, but by 1900GMT was 336kms SW just SW of Bamako. He roosted overnight in scrubby trees in the semi-desert; 17 ksm from the River Niger. Interesting that he has set off on a new flight south. Is he headed for the coast? We'll see.





Renewed flight



First night's roost site

### 30 November 2010

By 1100GMT he was 74kms flying SW over the River Niger at 51km/hr, he was upstream from Kangaba; at midday he was leisurely flying S and had risen to 1501 metres altitude. At 1300 he had flown into Guinea flying SE at 13km/h at

1264 metres. At 1700 he was already at a night roost site on a meandering river near Sabadon Baranama. Day's flight of 278 kms.



## 01 December 2010

At 1000GMT he was four kms upstream and then flying at 18kms/hr SW an hour later. He headed SE and at midday was flying SE at 44km/hr at 1225 metres; an hour later he was flying SE at 70km/hr and was still high up at 1894 metres. At 1400 he had changed his heading to SSW and was flying at 64km/hr at 1914 kms. It appeared that he had skirted around the east side of the mountains of the Guinea Highlands, which rise to over 1000 metres. At 1500 he was flying S and an hour later was presumably circling at 1881 metres. He flew on over a 1000 metre mountain and by 1700 was roosting on lower ground of broken forest, where he remained the night. His day's flight was 280 kms - he has covered nearly 900 kms in three days.



Flying round the Guinea Highlands

## 02 December 2010: To Liberia

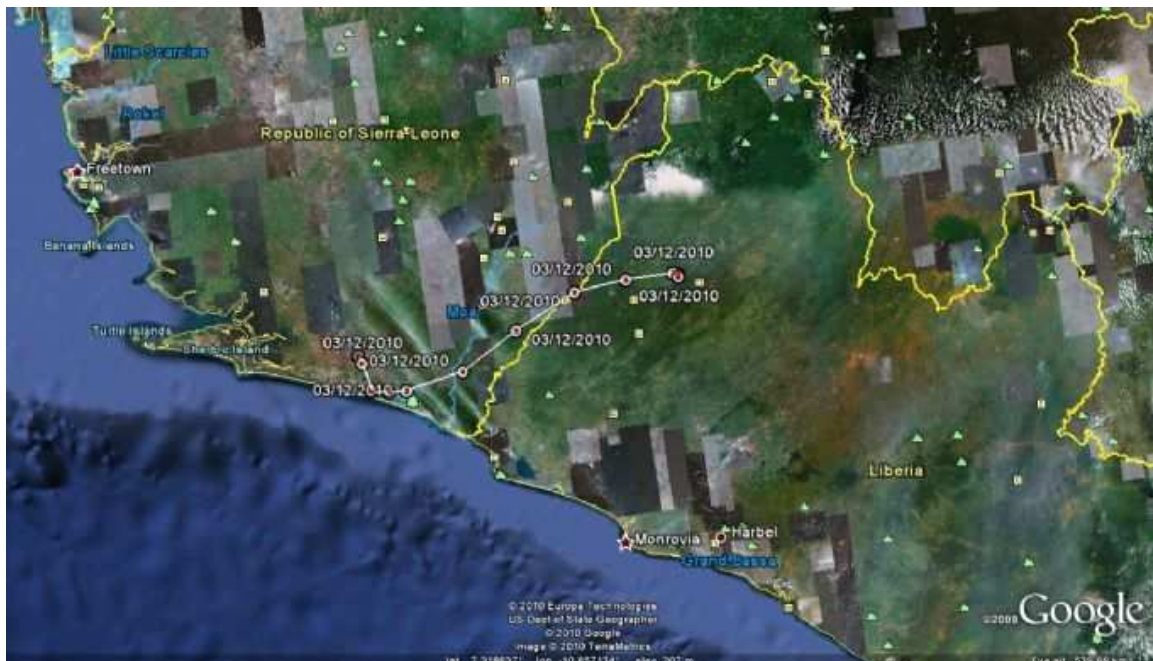
At roost til after 0900, then perched 1.5km away; at 1100 he was heading NW and 16 kms further on. At 1200 he was flying west at 67km/h and at an altitude of 1317 metres. Then flew into Liberia and turned SW. At 1500 was flying SW at 64km/hr at 1680 metres. At 1600 was over a river heading south and an hour later perched by river, then roosted in forest away from river.





### 03 December 2010: To Sierra Leone

He was back at the river at 0800GMT, then moved up river, and then headed SW. At 11000 was flying SW at 49km/h at 760 metres; an hour later was flying into Sierra Leone over the Gola North Forest Reserve; then south and at 1500 was over lagoons in the coastal Lake Mape National Park. Flew west along coastal fringe and flew north low over land to roost in forest north of Shenge.

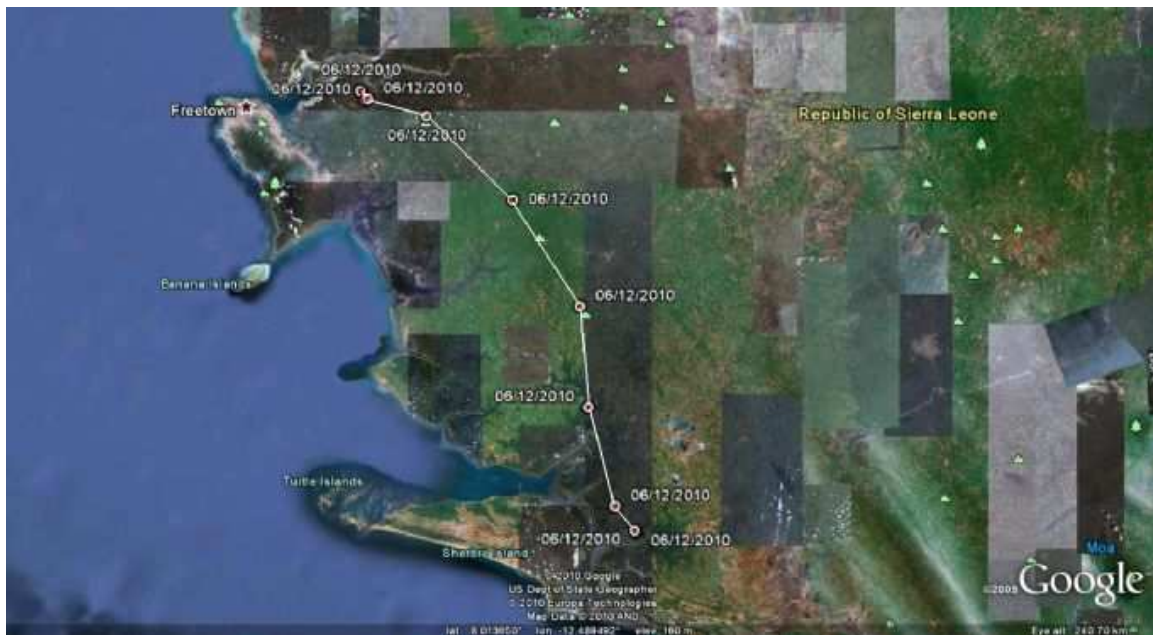


#### 04 December 2010

In morning flew west to Sherbro Island and then turned north over Turtle islands. Roosted on mainland north of big estuary to south of Freetown.

#### 06 December 2010

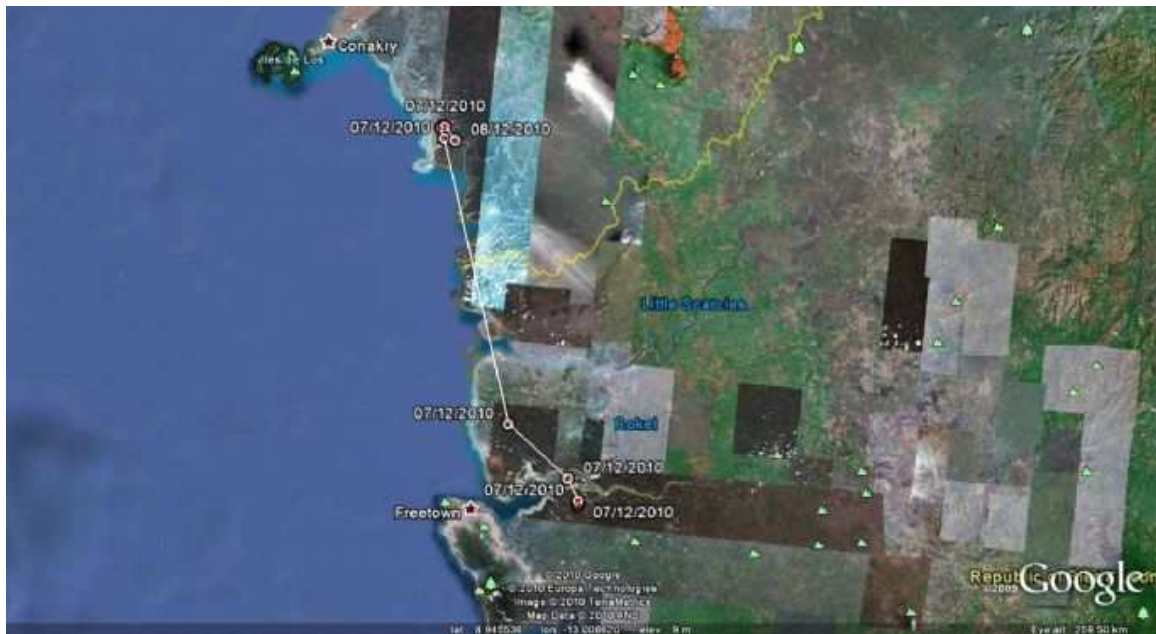
On 5th and 6th he lived in this same area around Sherbro Island. Looks as though he may stay in the coastal wetlands of Sierra Leone. Our furthest south satellite tracked osprey. In the afternoon he flew north and by 3pm was in the big estuary inland from Freetown, after 138 kms.



#### 07 December 2010: Continues northwards

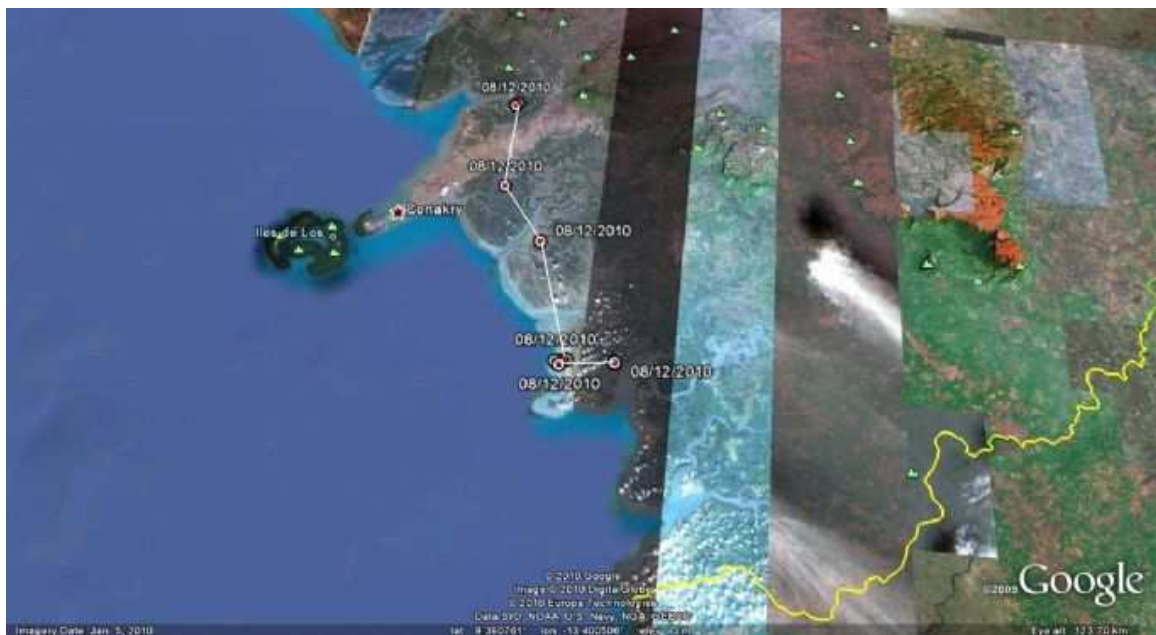
By 1000GMT was flying NW over the Rokel estuary and then heading up the coast. By 1500hrs was in the big coastal mangroves swamps to the south of Conakry in Guinea.





## 08 December 2010

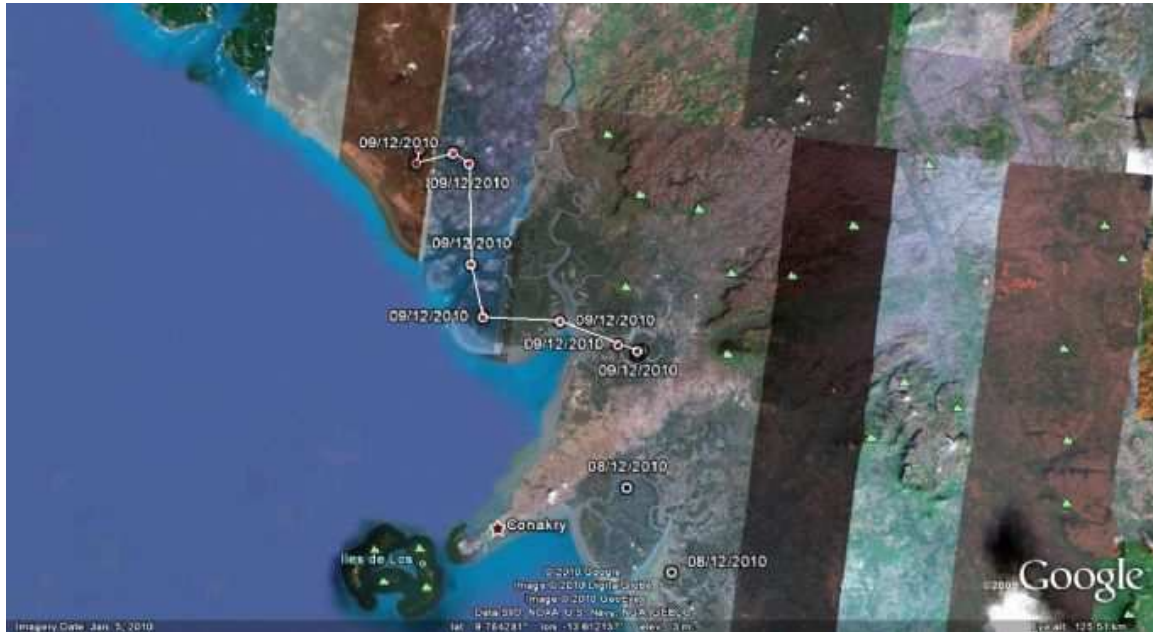
Left the inland roost and flew to the coast, and fishing in the Atlantic, perched on coast and then flying north over coastal villages. Crossed the built up areas east of Conakry in the afternoon and roosted on the south side of a big river. 59 kms today.





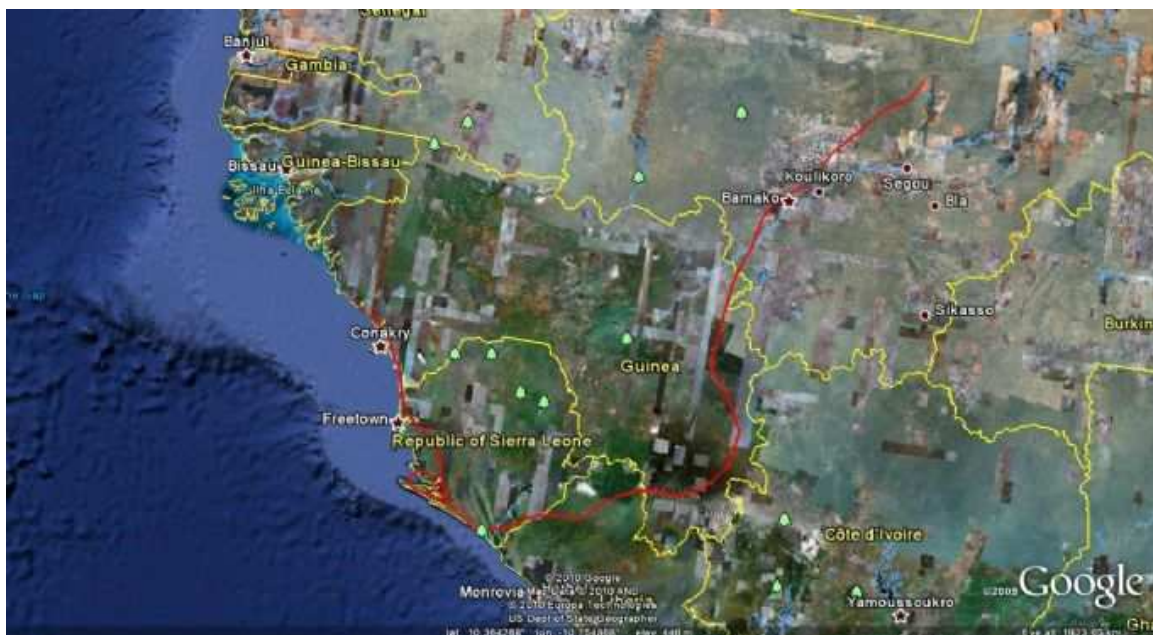
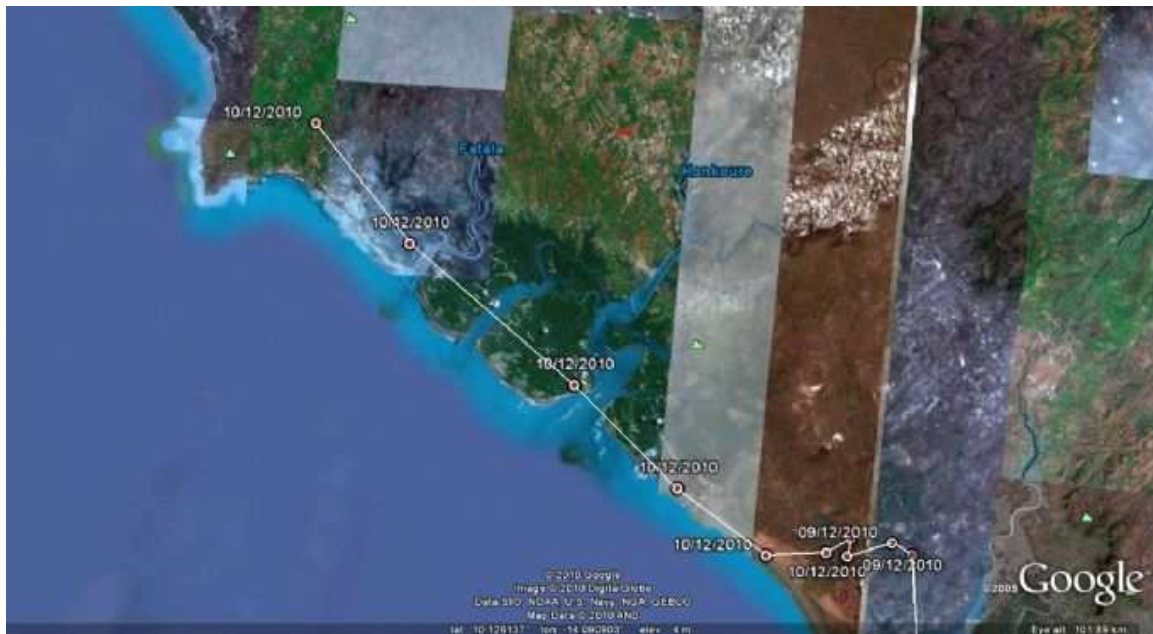
### 09 December 2010: Continues North

Spey continues moving north along the Guinea coast and in the afternoon reached a reservoir inland from the coast, where he spent the night.



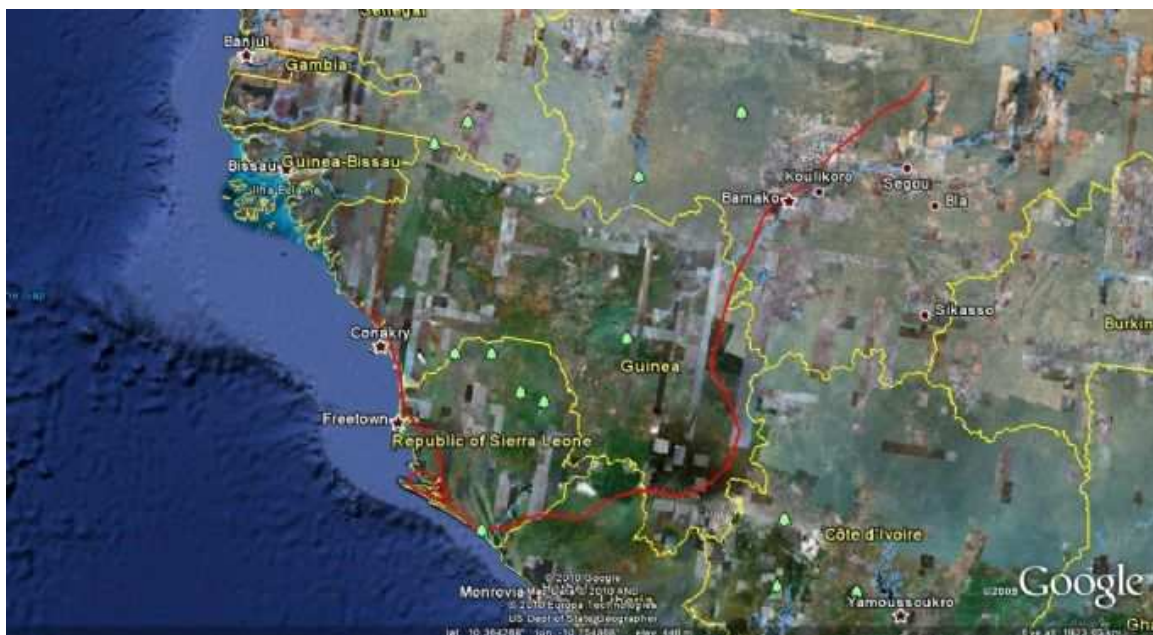
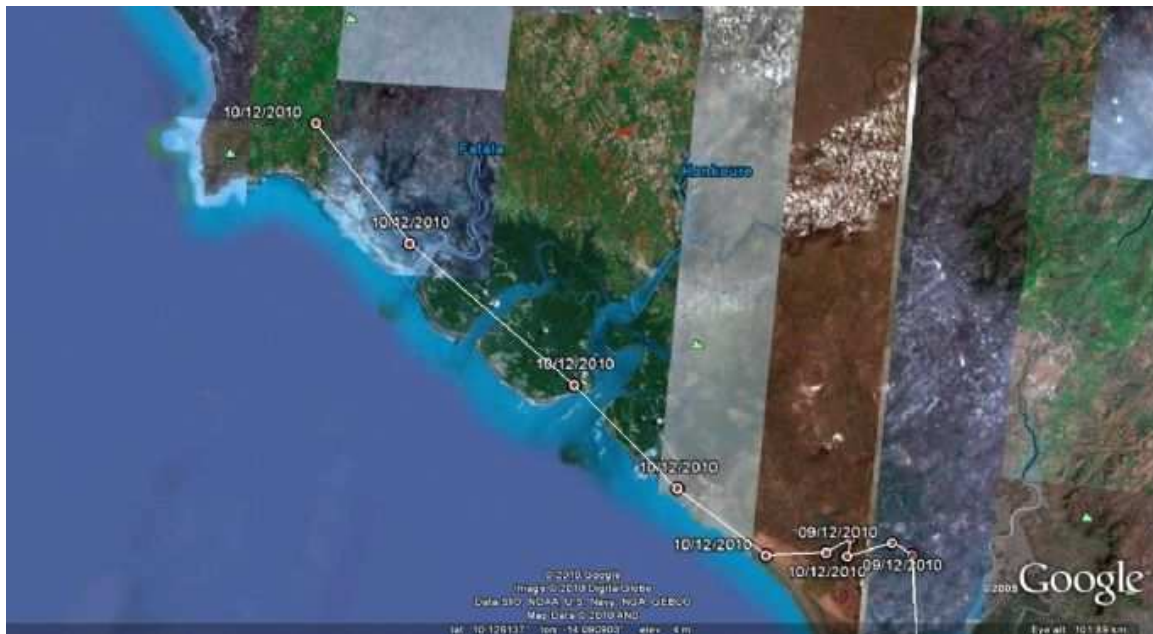
### 10 December 2010: Flying North through Guinea

Spey was perched on the river at 1000GMT and then flew steadily NW up the coast, and at the last location for today's transmission at 1400 hrs, was flying NW at 48km/hr at 357 metres inland from Bel Air promontary - after already flying 121 kms. He is now just 110 kms south of Nimrod's wintering site in Guinea Bissau.



## 10 December 2010: Flying North through Guinea

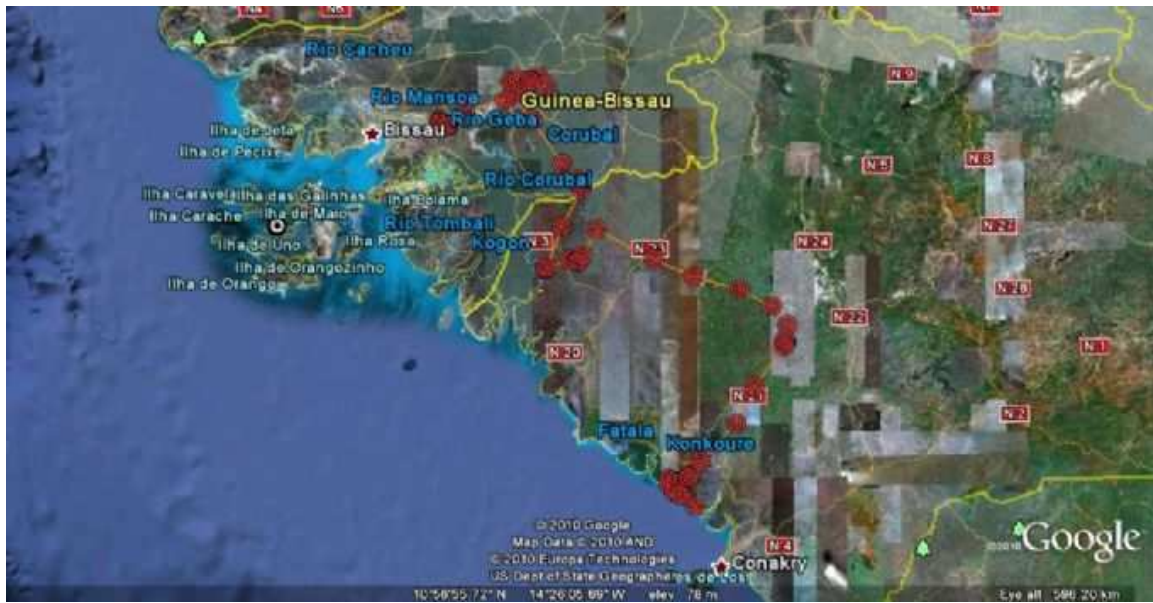
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### 31 December 2010: Now in Guinea Bissau

Spey flew north through Guinea and crossed into Guinea-Bissau on the afternoon of 26 December; he reached the river Gebo and then turned west towards the coast, and is now on the North Shore of the estuary of the River Gebo, near Coliando. He is now north of Nimrod's wintering location.





Movements 17<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> December