

Hen Harrier Reintroduction to Southern England

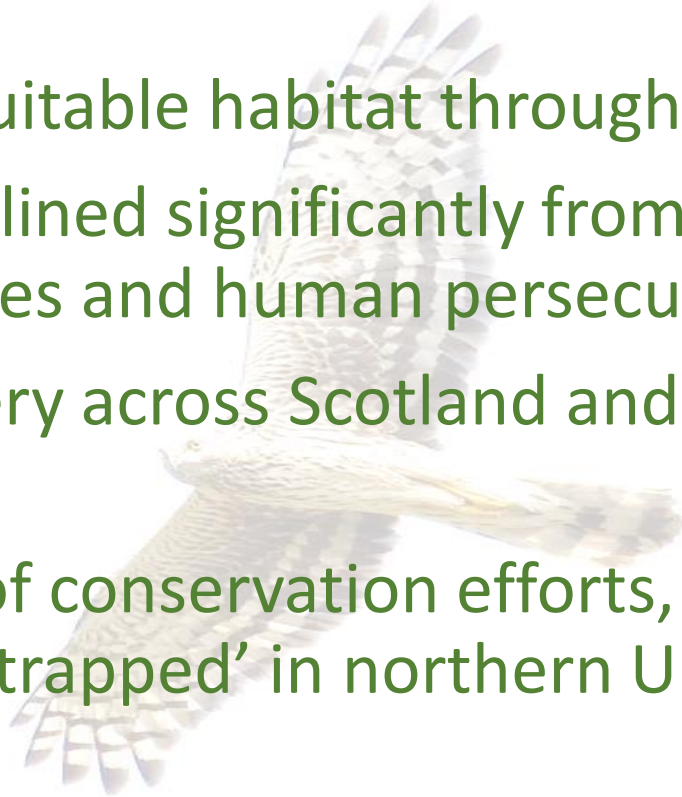


Simon Lee, Natural England



Historic Status

- Once bred in suitable habitat throughout the UK
- Population declined significantly from c.1830 due to land use changes and human persecution
- Gradual recovery across Scotland and Wales in recent decades
- Despite years of conservation efforts, breeding range has remained 'trapped' in northern UK



Current Status

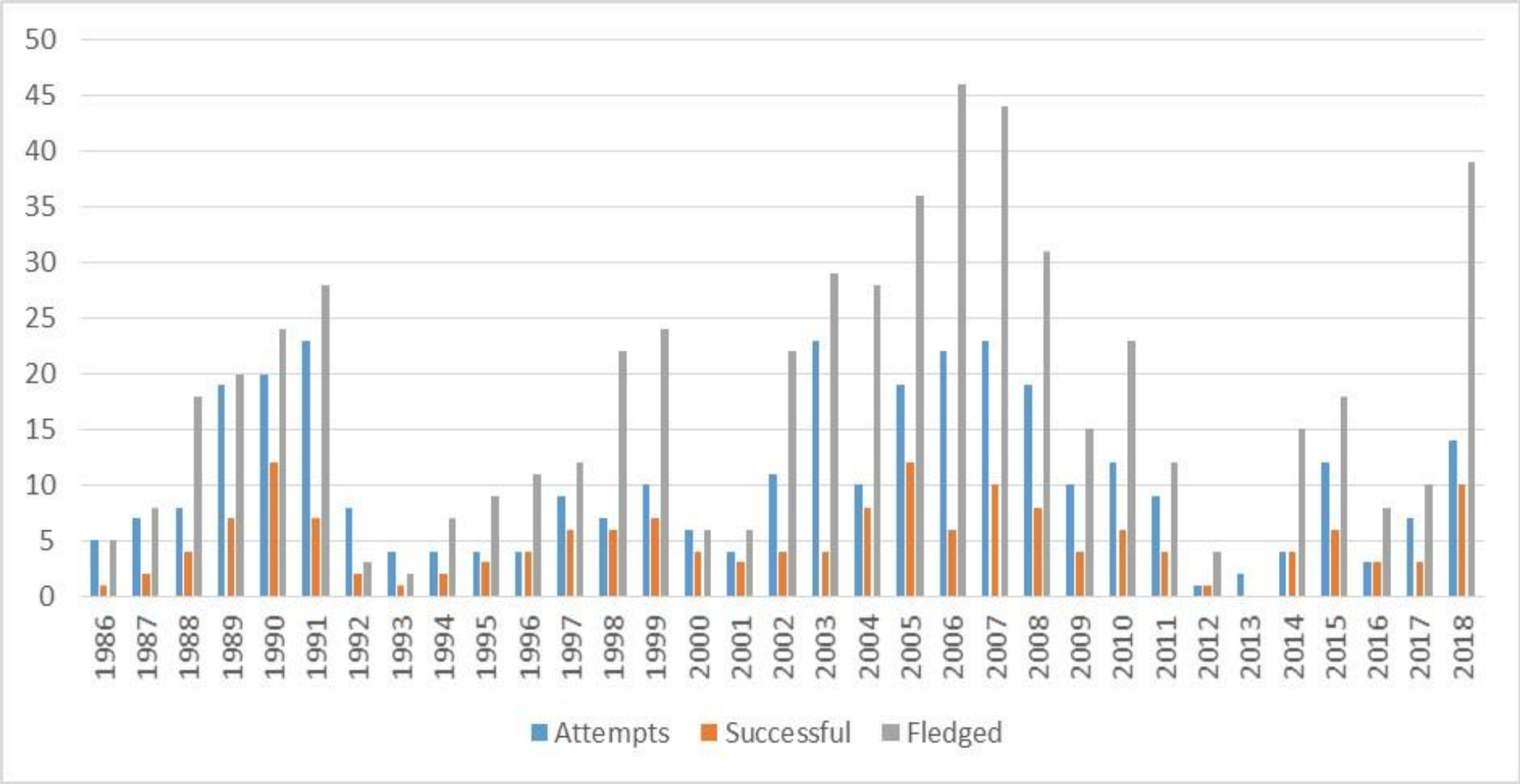
- 2016 survey estimated 545 breeding pairs in the UK
- This is a decline of c.14% since the last census in 2010.
- Of this figure, only 4 pairs bred in northern England (that year).
- Wintering population in England c.300 birds



Breeding status in northern (upland) England

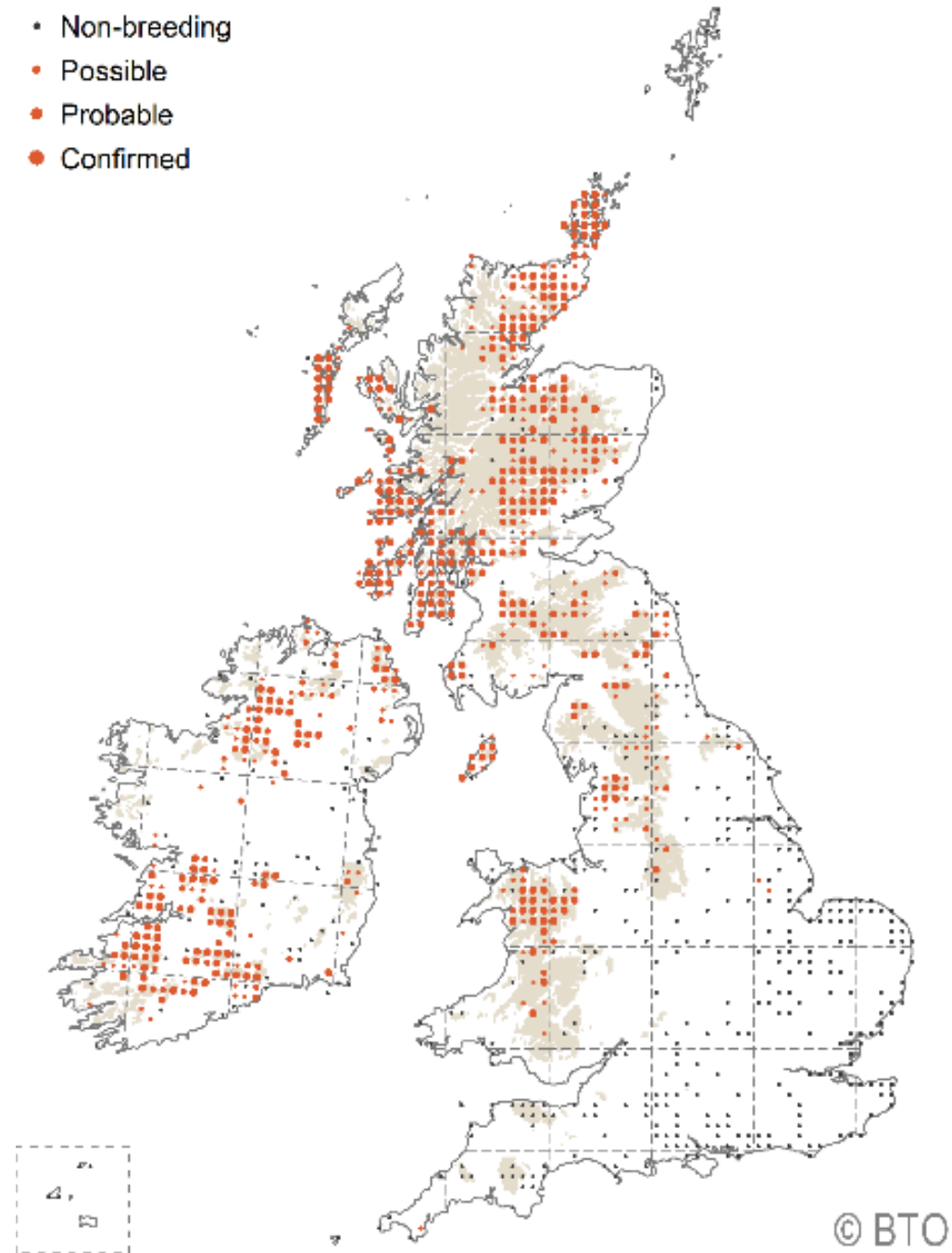


Number of nests and fledged individuals



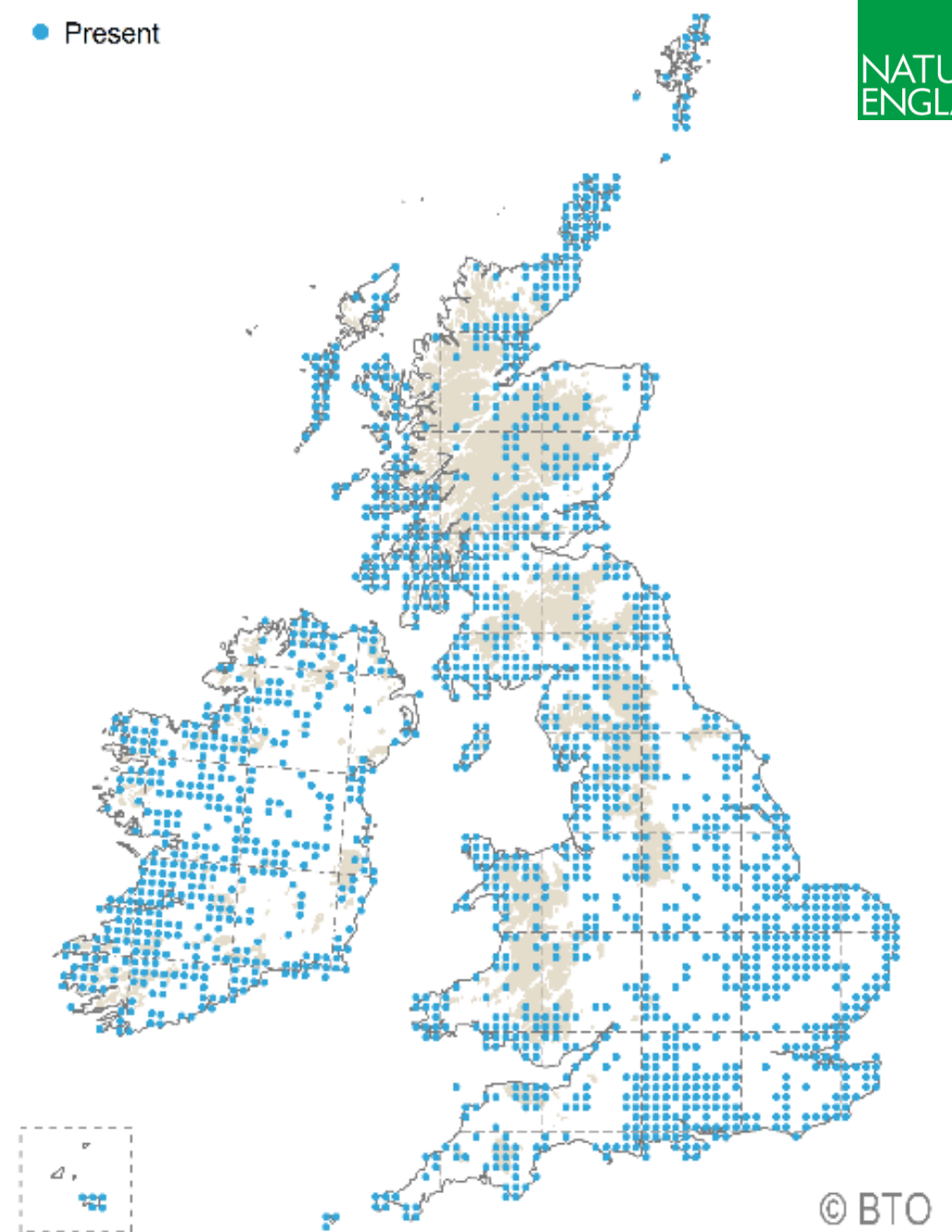
Breeding Distribution 2008–11

- Non-breeding
- Possible
- Probable
- Confirmed



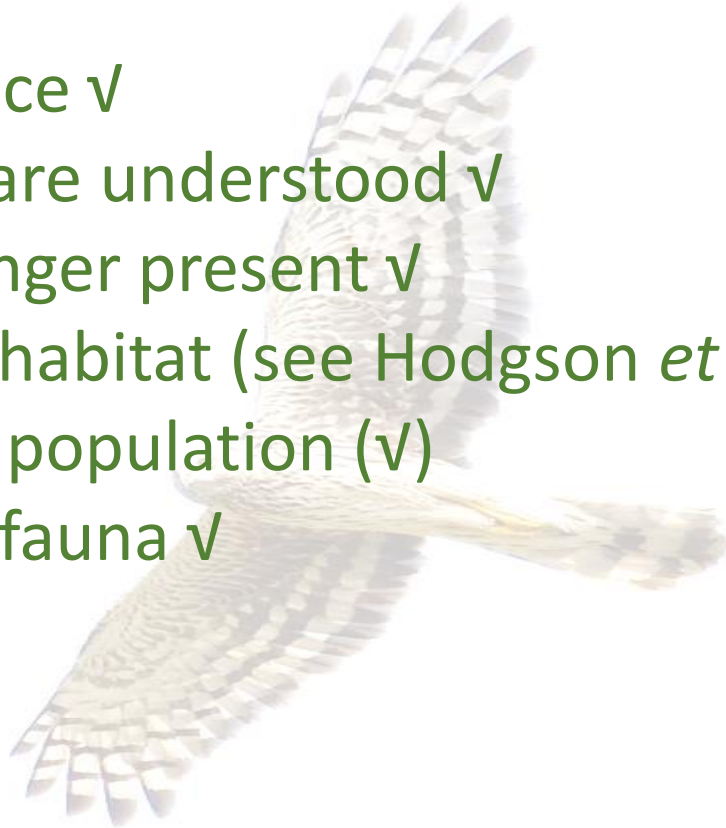
Winter Distribution 2007–11

- Present



Prior Considerations

- History of presence ✓
- Reasons for loss are understood ✓
- Factors are no longer present ✓
- Food supply and habitat (see Hodgson *et al* 2010) ✓
- Impact on donor population (✓)
- Effects on native fauna ✓

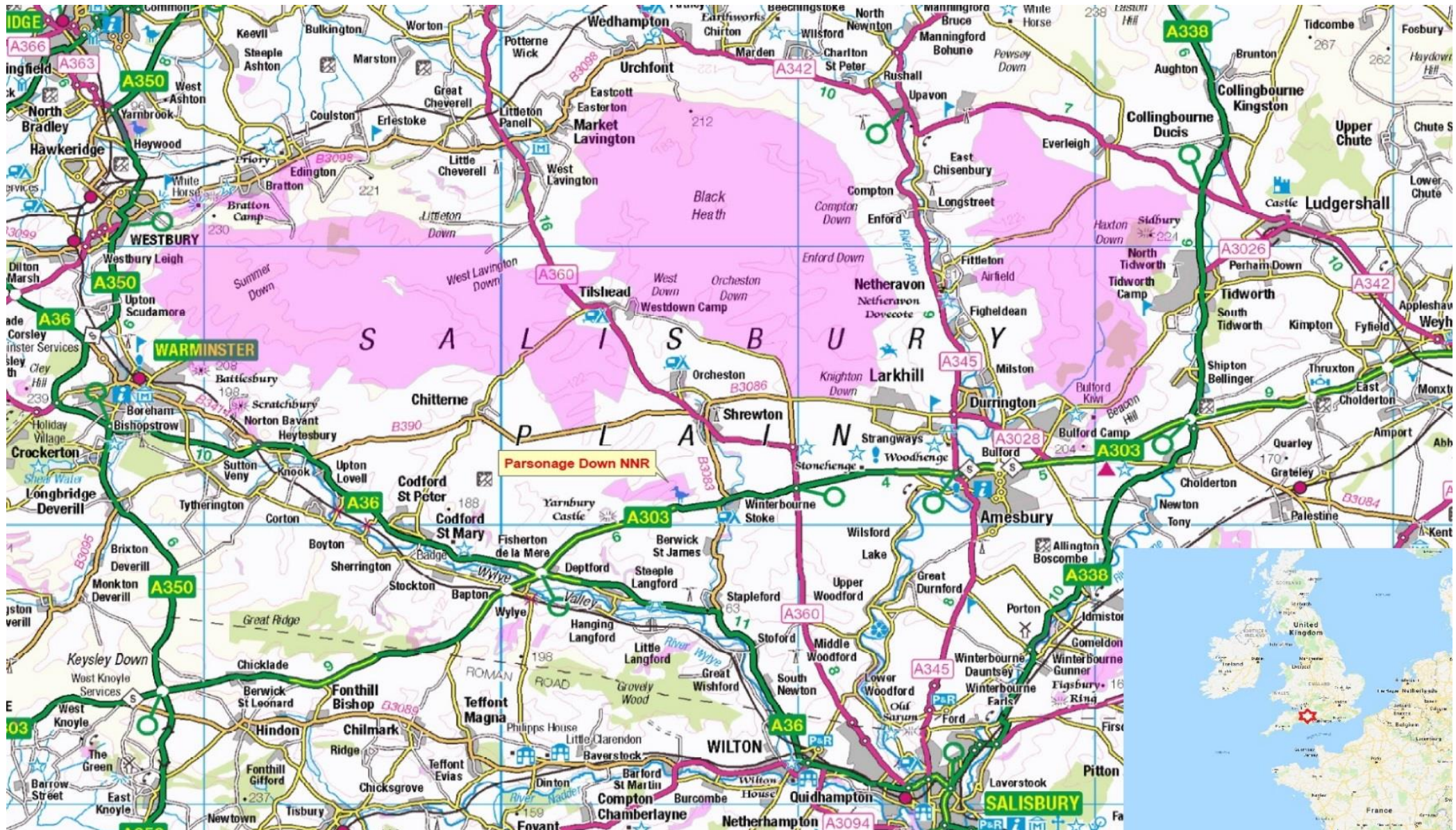


The Plan

- **To establish a crop-nesting population**
- Parsonage Farm (nature reserve) to be the initial release site
- Abundant food within Salisbury Plain (20,000ha of natural grassland)
- 5 year (minimum) program, starting in 2019
- 20-30 chicks per year (10-12 in first year)

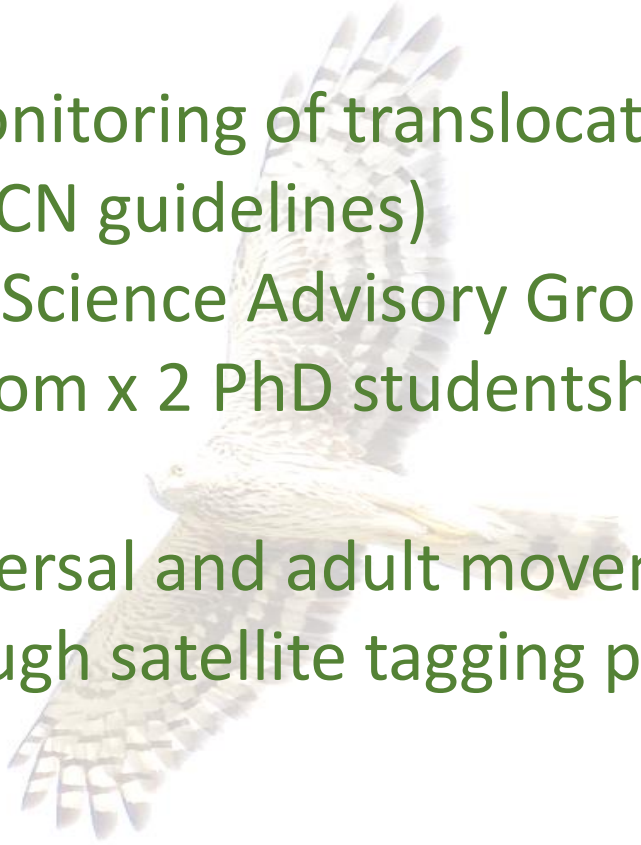


Salisbury Plain and Parsonage Down NNR



Monitoring and Research

- Extensive monitoring of translocation program (following IUCN guidelines)
- Overseen by Science Advisory Group
- Supported from x 2 PhD studentships with Exeter University
- Juvenile dispersal and adult movement ecology studied through satellite tagging program



Aims and Benefits

- Healthy breeding population throughout suitable habitat in England
- Collaborative projects with conservation and research partners in Europe
- An expansion of the European crop-nesting range into lowland England could help mitigate negative effects of climate change and agricultural harvesting operations?



Potential Donors

Would like to source harriers from France and Spain

Why?

- Greater assurance that juvenile and adult winter dispersal will be southerly (to France and Spain)
- Cultural adaptation to farmland landscapes?
- No impact on comparatively large breeding populations

Help please!!



Finis!

Merci beaucoup!

Any (easy) questions?

