

# Workshop – Captive breeding and reintroduction or just reintroduction?

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## Session 1

### ***When do we need to reintroduce?***

- Need to look at much larger area than reintroduction site – when has it been a success.
- Resource boundary
- Put mink control into EA 6 yr plan
- Projects that have not been thought through and fail.
- Need one organisation to plan long term and assess failure as well as success.
- Need to be able to be cavalier - big organisations can't do it – reckless streak need to be backed.
- When species that have been successfully reintroduced
  - o human persecution or issues have been removed
  - o have good dispersal – pine marten, kites
- Water voles can't so more likely to be fragmented

### ***When should we captive breed rather than translocate?***

- Natural England should take charge but third sector may need to
- Pine martens hard to captive breed.
- Wild cats – no option to captive breed.
- Water vole – easy to breed.
- Need to learn about how to get them to spread.

### ***What barriers are there to reintroduction?***

- Fear of failure
- Public perception of having got it wrong – damage to local relations from different 'reintroductions' e.g otter! Or reintroductions in other areas.
- Small scale reintroductions that haven't worked
- Not all have been successful – corncrake, sand lizards
- Need to look nationally at reintroductions
- 1970s Otter Trust – reintroduction was captive bred plus reintroduction – some landowners positive but others with negative views affected.
- Landowners have to be able to get something out of reintroductions
- Able to link with third parties – working with corporates has potential to make large areas into wetland if prepared to listen to what society want them to do – especially if it links with economics.
- Need to stop worrying of who gets what done – as long as it gets done.
- Public want a pristine environment but that can be a dead landscape.

### ***We have reintroduced – what next?***

- We need to create high quality environments – we need to rid not native (mink, signal crayfish etc). Have struggled to eradicate mink because public have not bought into it.
- In relation to other species – we have not lived with species we want to reintroduce so need to educate people first which buys time.
- We need to communicate more with landowners – need to understand farming in order to talk to famers.

## Session 2

### **Derek Gow's intro-**

- All problems are to do with people.
- Started working with water voles in the 1990s when we knew nothing. After 8 years of mistakes and many deaths we now understand water voles a bit better.
- Our understanding and husbandry of wild animals is not great but it is a tool we need now.

### **Does anyone have any issues or ethical problems with reintroductions?**

- Yes, but only with 'long term' species. It is more difficult with species such as raptors because they need breeding choices and genetic diversity, otherwise they will become inbred – For example the Scottish eagles. Whereas water voles are more simple in this sense.
- Similarly, it is difficult with pine martens as they have a very low reproductive rate and live in the wild with their mum for at least a year.
- Need to tackle sustainability of the projects. For example, the Rutland Osprey project, the funders have now backed off because they view the project as a success. When you don't know where the money is going to come from, you can't keep it sustainable.

*Conclusion - reintroductions are not straight forward as all species are different. We need the right tool for the right species.*

### **What are the barriers to reintroduction?**

- People are the main barrier to reintroductions.
  - Example: Freshwater pearl mussels – someone didn't want failure on their watch, so they didn't persevere. This is not a justifiable reason to stop.
  - Example: Golden eagles getting shot. But the more that are shot the more sympathy from the government? Does it then become sacrificial and martyrdom?
  - People don't want certain things here because they see them as frightening – mainly predators. They will fight against change, changing their Britain.
- Our mind set on reintroductions is too basic. Other places have management plans for ALL animals e.g. lynx and moose.
  - o We need to look more at systems and processes. If you reintroduce prey then you need to reintroduce predators. We need a complete puzzle and all pieces in the right order and then we can focus on individual species and you notice that the smaller things become more important. But again the problem then becomes society as the predator becomes a ranger with a gun.
- Continuation of management. It is impossible to think it can go back to how it was before, we HAVE to continue to manage these species.
- Economics is a factor. The only reason people stopped killing whales in because it wasn't economically viable anymore.
- People find it much easier to not do something because they are scared of failure rate. Bad management stops reintroductions.

