



November 2017

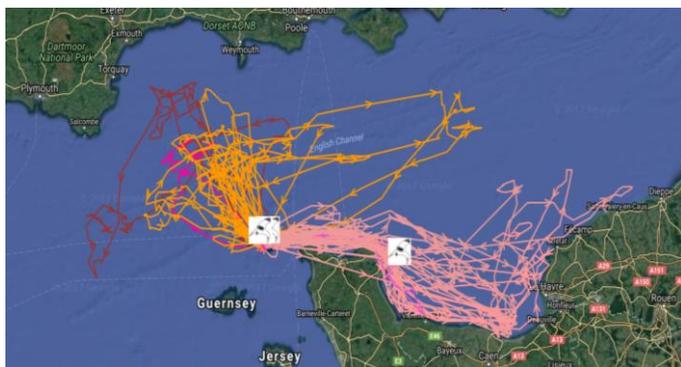
Dear T.A.G. supporters,

2017 was an interesting but challenging year for the T.A.G. project. Although placing the 10 geolocators went very well the live tags had a higher rate of failure than any other year and we only had six of the 14 responding. This was due to a combination of unexplained technology failure and poor weather that prevented the ringers getting back on the colony at a later date to retry tagging.

Luckily, the data we managed to gather is still very useful, showing that the Gannets we followed this year stuck quite close to their home on Ortac. This could imply that Cosmo's amazing journey to Norway last year was an anomaly, and that Cosmo may have been part of a young, inexperienced pair that lost their chick.

We are also advertising with our partner universities for a masters student to analyse the data from the T.A.G. project so far. This will be quite a large undertaking but we hope the data will confidently prove where the Gannets spend most time and therefore whether they will be affected by planned developments in the Channel.

Due to the failure of some of the live tracking technology we will receive some extra as replacements from the BTO next year, so we look forward to a more successful year for T.A.G. in 2018, with more birds tagged and contributing to our data.



Northern Gannets have one of the lowest yolk to white ratios with just 15% yolk. This is because their chicks are totally helpless on hatching, unlike birds with higher yolk content which are more precocial (kiwis are the opposite end of the spectrum with 70% yolk).



This autumn we have already had some fairly severe storms around the British Isles. But how do these storms affect seabirds which may be in their path out at this time of year?

The main threat to birds during storms is exhaustion, which can be fatal or set birds back a few days on their journey – time they cannot afford. However after the recent storm Irene a tagged Whimbrel (similar in size and appearance to a Curlew) flew straight through the hurricane and out the other side. Seabirds also have excellent navigation so will usually find their way back on course quite easily.

In 2018 we will get the results from our geolocators, showing for the first time where Alderney's Gannets go over winter on their migration. The tracks may also show which spots our Gannets found to shelter from the Atlantic storms!

For more information on T.A.G. please contact Claire on peopleandwildlife@alderneywildlife.org or 01481 822 935

