

Scottish Wildlife Trust

Position Statement

Lynx reintroduction

- The Scottish Wildlife Trust believes that there is an ecological imperative to reintroduce species lost from Scotland, including the Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*; hereafter referred to as lynx).
- The removal by humans of apex predators such as lynx, and other keystone species, from our ecosystems has led to a breakdown in the processes that we rely on to keep our natural environment in a healthy state.
- We believe that there is much to be gained from restoring lost keystone species, such as lynx, to their rightful place in the Scottish landscape and that meeting the government's 2045 [target to restore nature](#) will be difficult without further reintroductions.
- As an apex predator, primarily preying upon deer, particularly smaller species such as [roe deer](#), there is potential for lynx to contribute to the effort to reduce deer densities across Scotland. However, the magnitude of the [deer problem](#) in Scotland is such that lynx reintroduction cannot feasibly replace deer management by humans. The presence of lynx in the landscape may affect [deer behaviour](#) and locally relieve grazing pressure in some places. Lynx may also help to control common generalist predators and small herbivores.
- We recognise that Scotland's landscape has changed dramatically since lynx existed here. We would therefore advocate for rigorous feasibility studies, planning and consultation prior to any reintroduction, and close adherence to [the IUCN's Guidelines for Reintroductions and Conservation Translocations](#) and the [Scottish Code for Conservation Translocations](#). Early and inclusive engagement with local communities to fully involve local people in the decision-making process would also be essential to the long-term success of any reintroduction programme.
- We would want to see any reintroduction of lynx accompanied by well thought through management strategies which are coherent with high-level government policy and strategy, and a fair, proportionate and timely compensation payment for land managers impacted by any reintroduction.
- Any species reintroduction must consider landscape-scale planning and prioritisation and align with government strategy in these areas. Both [Nature Networks](#) and the [Regional Land Use Partnership](#) model can be used to aid community discussion and engagement with reintroduction programmes.
- Any proposal to reintroduce lynx needs special consideration and full involvement from stakeholders who would be impacted, including: relevant industry representatives, community representatives, eNGOs and government officials. Both ecological and social mapping should be taken into account when considering the geographic areas in which the stakeholders should be consulted.