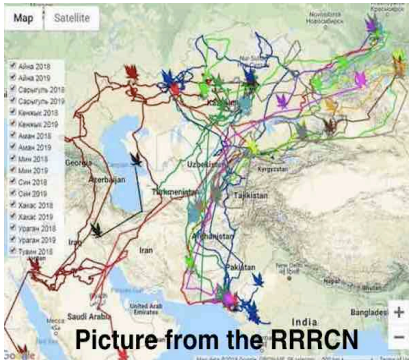


Russian eagle creates huge data roaming phone bill

28th October, 2019



Scientists in Russia got a shock when their phone bill arrived. The bill was a lot bigger than they expected it to be. The reason was because the steppe eagle they were following in their research flew too far from Russia.

The scientists were tracking the eagle as it migrated across the European and Asian continents. The bird had SMS transmitters fitted to its body. This meant that when it flew outside Russia, the transmitters used the Internet services of other countries. The scientists thus had to pay data roaming charges. These are the charges you pay to use your mobile phone in other countries. The research team ran out of money after the eagle flew to Iran and Pakistan.

The team started a page on a crowdfunding site to help raise money to pay the bill. The page was called "Top up the eagle's mobile". Bird lovers from around the world contributed money to the page. The scientists raised \$1,600 to pay the bill. Russia's mobile phone operator Megafon then heard of the scientists' problems and offered to cancel the debt. It also moved the team's phone package to one at a cheaper rate. The problem for the team started when the eagle flew outside of Russia and Kazakhstan. An SMS in Kazakhstan cost 30 US cents, but one from Iran cost 50 cents. A scientist said he wanted the eagle to continue sending SMS data to help his project, which will help protect all steppe eagles.

Sources: bbc.com / newsweek.com / themoscowtimes.com

Writing

Governments should make phone, Internet and data roaming charges free. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

scientists / shock / phone bill / eagle / continents / Internet / data / roaming / Iran / crowdfunding / bird / lovers / operator / problems / debt / 50 cents / project / protect

True / False

- Scientists in Russia were shocked by a phone bill. T / F
- An eagle they were tracking was the cause of the high phone bill. T / F
- The cause of the phone bill was the eagle damaging Internet cables. T / F
- The eagle flew across Russia and China to Japan. T / F
- Bird lovers worldwide helped the scientists to pay the phone bill. T / F
- The bill was over \$16,000. T / F
- Russia's government told the scientists all future bills would be free. T / F
- A scientist now wants the eagle to stop sending SMS data. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. shock | a. attached |
| 2. expected | b. keep on |
| 3. tracking | c. fees |
| 4. fitted | d. surprise |
| 5. charges | e. gave |
| 6. raise | f. thought |
| 7. contributed | g. safeguard |
| 8. cheaper | h. following |
| 9. continue | i. less expensive |
| 10. protect | j. collect |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think of eagles?
- What kinds of eagles are in your country?
- What do you know about data roaming?
- What do you think of mobile phone charges?
- How important are SMS and text messages to you?
- Why are the scientists doing this research?
- How could we better protect eagles?
- How can we make data roaming better?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. Scientists in Russia got a shock when | a. continue sending SMS data |
| 2. flew too | b. out of money |
| 3. it migrated across the European | c. their phone bill arrived |
| 4. charges you pay to use | d. all steppe eagles |
| 5. The research team ran | e. and Asian continents |
| 6. help raise money | f. \$1,600 |
| 7. The scientists raised | g. your mobile phone |
| 8. one at a cheaper | h. to pay the bill |
| 9. he wanted the eagle to | i. far |
| 10. help protect | j. rate |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What experiences have you had of data roaming?
- Should phone charges be the same worldwide?
- Why do companies charge for data roaming?
- What do you think of the crowdfunding page?
- How much of a bird lover are you?
- What will data roaming be like in the future?
- What questions would you like to ask the scientists?

Spelling

- when their phone bill rvadrie
- bigger than they teeepxdc it to be
- the European and Asian stteocnnni
- SMS serttatsminr fitted to its body
- used the Internet eevisrcs of other countries
- These are the gehcars you pay
- the world ocubtettrind money
- Russia's mobile phone oaoterrp
- offered to anlcec the debt
- moved the team's phone eacagkp
- help his orctjep
- ortetpc all steppe eagles

Answers – Synonym Match

1. d	2. f	3. h	4. a	5. c
6. j	7. e	8. i	9. b	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Eagles

You think eagles are the best birds. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their birds. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): emus, parrots or penguins.

Role B – Emus

You think emus are the best birds. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their birds. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): eagles, parrots or penguins.

Role C – Parrots

You think parrots are the best birds. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their birds. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): emus, eagles or penguins.

Role D – Penguins

You think penguins are the best birds. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their birds. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): emus, parrots or eagles.

Speaking – Birds

Rank these with your partner. Put the best birds at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|----------------|------------|
| • kingfishers | • eagles |
| • parrots | • sparrows |
| • hummingbirds | • emus |
| • penguins | • peacocks |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	F	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.