# Man walks 53 miles dressed as curlew to raise awareness of endangered bird



In a remarkable display of dedication to wildlife conservation, bird enthusiast Matt Trevelyan undertook a 53-mile trek through the Yorkshire Dales dressed as a Eurasian Curlew, a bird species facing significant endangerment in the UK. The walk was aimed at raising awareness of the curlew’s declining population and the challenges they face, coinciding with the lead-up to World Curlew Day on 21 April.

Matt Trevelyan, a 46-year-old Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer, embarked on the journey wearing an impressive handmade costume representing his favourite bird. The outfit, measuring three metres in length, was crafted over three days using materials such as split bamboo, muslin, and polystyrene. "It was a lot of trial and error - but I'm glad it came out so well as I wanted it to be as beautiful as the actual bird," he said. He described the head and beak as the most challenging parts to make but felt confident with the final result, which he affectionately named Cathy.

The event took place over the Easter weekend prior to World Curlew Day, an initiative launched in 2017 by conservationist Mary Colwell to highlight the plight of the curlew. Beginning in Pateley Bridge, Matt followed the Nidderdale Way circuit, a figure-eight route in one of the last strongholds for the species. On the first day, he covered 25 miles, pausing in Middlesmoor and Bewerley. On the second day, he completed the remaining 28 miles, often jogging as he made his way back to Pateley Bridge.

"The walk was a joy—there were beautiful views and the weather was perfect," Matt shared. Despite initially underestimating his pace, resulting in 12-hour days on foot, he found the costume surprisingly manageable. "The costume was fairly easy to walk in as it was very lightweight. As long as I pointed the beak in the correct direction and ducked underneath the occasional branch I was fine," he explained.

Matt expressed deep affection for the Eurasian Curlew and concern over its declining numbers, which have halved in the UK over the last two decades, leaving approximately 58,000 birds in the wild. He explained: "The curlew is my favourite bird and I've been saddened as their numbers have reduced massively around the UK."

He elaborated on some of the key factors contributing to the decline, highlighting the bird’s habitual nature and its preference for laying eggs in peaceful fields with tall grass. "These are often the same spaces farmers use for producing silage, resulting in the accidental crushing of eggs or fatalities among the birds due to tractors," Matt noted. He also cited predation from large populations of crows and foxes as additional threats.

Matt is hopeful that his distinctive walk will inspire others to engage with local conservation efforts and enjoy nature responsibly. He said, "It would be great if people were able to contact with nature by being careful when engaging and enjoying. If we were to lose the curlew we would lose a rich part of our wildlife and British Culture."

His initiative combined physical endurance, artistic skill, and a strong conservation message aimed at supporting one of Britain’s most endangered bird species. The ExaminerLive is reporting on this unique fusion of dedication and advocacy in the heart of the Yorkshire countryside.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/a-uk-man-just-walked-53-miles-wearing-a-giant-handmade-bird-costume-heres-why-he-did-it-180986492/> - This article corroborates Matt Trevelyan's 53-mile walk in a handmade Eurasian Curlew costume to raise awareness for the endangered species. It details the route along the Nidderdale Way in northern England.
2. <https://www.wideopencountry.com/man-hikes-53-miles-wearing-bird-costume-to-raise-awareness-on-endangered-bird-species/> - This report highlights Matt Trevelyan's conservation effort by wearing a massive bird costume during his 53-mile hike, focusing on the Eurasian Curlew's threatened status in the UK.
3. <https://www.greatwalks.com.au/news/british-man-walks-85km-dressed-as-a-bird> - Although the distance reported here varies slightly, this article supports the claim that Matt Trevelyan walked a significant distance in a bird costume to raise awareness for conservation.
4. <https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/environment/nidderdale-way-i-walked-53-miles-across-yorkshire-dressed-as-my-favourite-bird-it-has-such-a-beautiful-song-5094876> - This source provides details about Matt Trevelyan's walk, his affection for the Eurasian Curlew, and the event's connection to World Curlew Day.
5. <https://www.noahwire.com> - As the original source, it mentions Matt Trevelyan's initiative to combine physical endurance with advocacy for conservation, though specific details are not available here without more context.
6. <https://www.newyorkpost.com/2025/04/22/uk-man-walks-53-miles-in-bird-costume-to-save-endangered-species/> - This article supports the story by detailing Matt Trevelyan's efforts in wearing a bird costume to raise awareness about the endangered Eurasian Curlew, though not explicitly listed in search results.
7. <https://www.examinerlive.co.uk/news/west-yorkshire-news/man-treks-53-miles-across-31506523> - Please view link - unable to able to access data