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Russian Eagle Racks Up Hefty Phone Bills With Iran Flights

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Step Eagle **t.me/expkart**

A steppe eagle from Russia's republic of Khakasia has been sending hundreds of expensive SMS messages to scientists after she flew into Iran, effectively bankrupting their research.

Siberian scientists had equipped Min the eagle with a tracking device that sends SMS messages to document her flight movements. Min, who spent the summer in Kazakhstan with no cell signal, sent an entire summer's worth of messages as soon as she flew into Iran, where the cost of these messages significantly increased.

The cost of one message from Min rose from 2 rubles ($0.03) changed to ($0.8), costing ornithologists thousands of rubles, wrote Elena Shnayder, the head of the Novosibirsk Wild Animal Rehabilitation Center. Elena added that Min spent the entire budget meant for all the eagles the project tracks.

"Our eagles fly with an ordinary SIM card from an ordinary Russian mobile operator and when they go abroad their phones go into roaming. But knowing their favorite places of

wintering and countries through which eagles fly, it's possible to count how much money we need to deposit on eagles' mobiles to last the whole season. This year something went wrong," wrote Shnayder.

Ornithologists launched a crowdfunding campaign, "Top up an eagle's mobile," asking for donations to the eagles' shared mobile number so the scientists can keep researching their movements. So far, the campaign has raised more than 100,000 rubles ($1,600).

"We can't afford for the eagles to stop sending data, that's very important research with interesting results," Shnayder wrote.

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