



# *Voice of the Osprey*

## *Newsletter*

*winter 2005/2006*

## **AGM venue popular with members**

The Annual General Meeting of the Osprey Society was held in the Community Centre of the Sans Souci and Copperhead Association on Frying Pan Island. A goodly turnout of members and friends came to hear our speaker, Ross James, renowned ornithologist.

James has been consulting on the effect of wind turbines on the birds. His final conclusion is simply that there is no impact on birds whatsoever. Studies have been done on many of the wind farms as well as on single and double turbines and the number of birds lying dead at the base of these turbines is one or two at the most. Compared to the dead birds found at the base of highrise buildings in the city it is really insignificant. Also, the birds that fly into our own cottage and country-house windows and the number taken by household cats is in the millions.

The bottom line is we don't have to worry about our Osprey being affected by wind turbines if and when the government allows them to be built on the Eastern shore of Georgian Bay.

This year is the first time we have held our Annual General Meeting at Sans Souci and it proved to be very successful. It is difficult to find a place and time to appeal to all our members. It would appear that having the meeting at the Bay is more popular among our members than having it in the city every other year. Consequently we are planning to hold the AGM in 2006 at a cottage on the Bay and we have had a generous offer from one member cottager in north Go Home Bay. You will all be kept up-to-date on our plans.

At the beginning of our meeting George Fells gave tribute to an old and dear friend of the GBOS, Peter Craig, who died in July. (See notice on p 4). He was truly a strong supporter as well as a dedicated worker on behalf of the Osprey.

Our membership is up a little this past year by four



Photo, John Hodge

***Ross James, our speaker at the AGM, spoke about the possible impact of wind turbines on birds***

members. I'm glad we are getting the word out that the Osprey need our help

David Winlo gave the monitoring report which you will see on p 3. The construction and maintenance report from Jane-Anne Campbell was strong on maintenance and weak on construction. Our role this year is on maintenance, although there will be one new pole in Sans Souci and a pole will be relocated on Huron Island. If any of you know of a nest site that needs improving please let us know.

Ian Ferguson reported on his progress of recording all the nest sights with a GPS for easy locating and his updated data chart with all our conclusions of bird monitoring over the past 20 years.

Next year we will start issuing membership cards to our members so look for them to arrive with your receipt of membership.

Over all it has been a good year for the Osprey and for the Georgian Bay Osprey Society. Thank you all for your support.

***Sue Russell***

# President's report

Aside from the pleasure of seeing many members at the AGM the summer was relatively quiet as far as Osprey go. I seldom saw one at all. The three nests I was monitoring were all empty — except for late April when one or two birds were trying the platforms out for suitability, size, wind, fish, whatever. Then they decided to go elsewhere.

Dave's monitoring report indicates a promising upward trend in the Osprey population this summer. The long hot summer was great for us humans too. I wonder if the excessive heat was stressful for our birds. The female sits all day on the nest sheltering her chicks from predators, rain, sun and wind while the male brings home the fish. Imagine how long she would have to stand with her wings stretched out sheltering her babes from the fierce hot sun this summer.

Because the young birds are the same size as their parents they often appear larger. But you can tell the chicks by their eyes. The first year they are orange and when older, pale yellow. The young also have flecks on their back. A pair of good binoculars will help you identify them but please don't get too close as the Osprey are highly stressed birds. You cannot stare at them for if you do they start to cry. A one-way mirror is required for monitoring them in captivity.

Most of our Bay birds are now enjoying the balmy climes of South America. The young one and two-year-olds will stay down there until they are approaching three years of age when they will return to their original nesting site. If it is occupied they will search for another in the same area. As this pattern of increasing population continues the Georgian Bay Osprey Society will be adding more nesting sites. Currently we are engaged in repairing platforms that have been up for nearly twenty years. We are putting up one new pole at Sans Souci in a sheltered bay where the owners of the island have often seen the Osprey fishing.

Have a pleasant winter and dream about those soaring birds wheeling and crying overhead in search of their favourite food.

*Sue Russell*

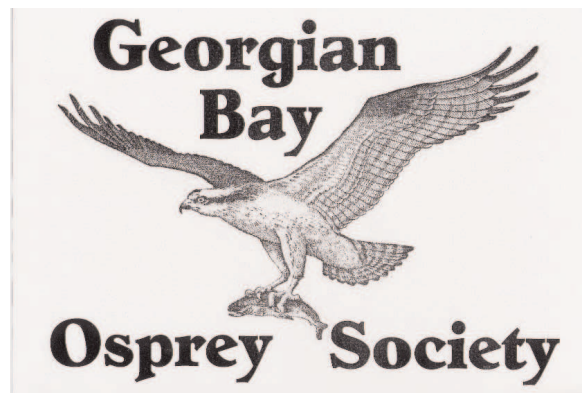


Photo, Jim Bacque

*Sue and Peter Russell with Ross James in Ian Ferguson's boat, on their way to Sans Souci Community Centre for the Annual General Meeting.*

## Branding

**In order to increase the visibility of the Georgian Bay Osprey Society we are sending you each a transfer of our logo to put on your preferred T-shirt. A white or pale colour shirt will look best. Follow the instructions provided and you should have a perfect imprint of your favourite bird.**



# Monitoring Report

The 2005 nest activity results show what a good year it has been for the Osprey. Because there are fewer monitors than in the past due to illness, moving, age and our inability to attract others, we have had fewer nesting sites monitored. However those that we have received reports from indicate that more chicks fledged per nest than in the past three years. Our sincere thanks to all of you who did observe and report on your findings, especially those whose nests are non-productive year after year.

Out of 103 sites we monitored a total of 64, down from 72 in 2004, yet the chick and fledgling figures are very encouraging. If we had been able to include several traditionally productive nests these figures certainly would have been better.



*This nest was photographed at Marblehead, Mass. where perhaps the winds aren't as strong as in Georgian Bay.*

**David Winlo**

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005
Sites Monitored	77	79	72	64
Occupied Nests	42	43	36	34
Chicks Seen	50	53	48	42
Chicks Fledged	45	41	36	35

## Nest Monitors Needed

We have recently experienced a significant drop in our nest monitors and as a result we have several nest sites that need monitoring From south to north they are::

- Three sites in Matchedash Bay (Waubashene)
- A Frame pole, south of Turning rock, (Honey Harbour)
- South-east of Roberts island, Coast Guard pole, (Honey Harbour)
- Steer s Channel, Wah-wah-tay-see / Indian Harbour
- Bass Rocks - mouth of Twelve Mile Bay
- Val Harbour, Orillia
- North side of Bayshore Village, Orillia
- South side of Bayshore Village, Orillia

**Should you or anyone you know be willing to watch these nests please contact any of the executive or Dave Winlo at 416 493 1950 or [jdwinlo@sympatico.ca](mailto:jdwinlo@sympatico.ca)**

## PETER CRAIG

We were deeply saddened by the death of one of our most dedicated members, Peter Craig. He died this June after several years of coping with cancer.

Peter and his devoted wife Jean attended their first GBOS meeting in the autumn of 1989 when our speaker was the well-known biologist Alan F. Poole who had just published what is still a definitive work on the Osprey entitled OSPREYS A Natural and Unnatural History.

Peter, with the help of the Ferguson family, became a linchpin of GBOS activities in the area from Cognashene southwards beyond Honey Harbour. He managed to spread the word as far as Collingwood and brought in many members. Not only did he put up a pole on his property and waited patiently for an Osprey family (it took eight years), he helped organize other poles and people in the area. He led the way in observing, reporting monitoring and inspiring. He had a video camera installed at his nest site.

He was a director of our Society for many years and his no-nonsense, stick to the issue attitude, laced with a roguish sense of humour always added to what were invariably lively meetings. He attended meetings of The International Osprey Foundation in Florida representing GBOS.

We have lost a great friend to us all and to the Osprey as well as a major contributor to our Society. We will miss him. May his good works live on and continue to inspire us.

*George Fells*

## Help

The Georgian Bay Osprey Society needs a treasurer. Our current treasurer, John Hardy, has done a magnificent job over the past 15 years. He will tell you it is not an onerous job at all, just a few hours a month. Anyone with the ability to keep the household accounts on the computer could easily handle this responsibility.

Please consider volunteering for this position. You will be a member of the Board of Directors which meets four times a year. Our meetings are great fun as we review all our Bay stories while discussing the best programs for improving the Osprey habitats, spreading the word about the preservation and appreciation of Osprey and what programs to commence to continue our study of their life cycle.

This is an educational opportunity for the first person to apply. Call me today.

*Sue Russell*

## GBOS Board of Directors

<b>President:</b> Sue Russell.....	416 923 4919	705 756 1670
<b>Past President:</b> John Hodge.....	416 284 9984	705 756 1730
<b>Treasurer:</b> John Hardy..	416 960 5349	705 375 5174
<b>Monitoring chair:</b> David Winlo..	416 493 1950	705 756 1338
<b>Newsletter editor:</b> Sue Russell.....	416 923 4919	705 756 1670
<b>Secretary:</b> Meta Ferguson.....	905 889 9482	705 756 8981
<b>Data Manager:</b> Ian Ferguson.....	905 889 9482	705 756 8981
<b>Construction:</b> Jane-Anne Campbell....	416 922 8405	705 746 6327
<b>Webmaster:</b> Matt Murphy.....	416 482 1717	705 756 3955

## Our objectives

- To protect and enhance the habitat of the Georgian Bay Osprey
- To study and survey their life cycle, habits, nesting and habitat
- To promote awareness, appreciation and communication