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“Voice of the Osprey”

Newsletter

spring/summer 2006

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President's Report

On the third day of April one Osprey was sighted on Picnic Island in Honey Harbour. This is two days later than last year!! With the weather continuing to get warmer I'm sure we will see lots more arriving during the month.

We were just able to get to our cottage this weekend, April 29, and discovered a pair of Osprey building their nest on 'my' pole, which had never been successfully nested since it was put up over 12 years ago. We are very excited and looking forward to watching this pair produce eggs, chicks and ultimately, if all goes well, fledglings.

With the water level down another 6 inches the food supply for the Osprey may be compromised once again. Fewer acres of shallow waters for spawning must surely have an effect on the source of food for the Osprey.

I receive newsletters from several other Osprey societies and nature organizations

and am learning that the Osprey are really making a recovery. Here in Southern Ontario we know they were almost eliminated during the period of widespread use of DDT and other harmful pesticides. The diligent work of the Georgian Bay Osprey Society of the past 20 years is certainly evident. Summer after summer, we watch the fledglings fly away. We record on our data base the increasing numbers of nests, chicks and fledglings. Of course there are lots of fledglings that are not recorded along our shores due to the lack of monitors keeping track of the 75 nesting sites we have on our data base. It would be wonderful to know that every one of our nesting sites is being watched by diligent and excited monitors.

Our executive committee has been busy all winter long planning for the arrival of our birds. A couple of poles will be repaired by now and another planned to be erected in Sans Souci. We are still in the process of having a video made to be broadcast on T.V. We'll keep you posted.

The Annual General Meeting will be held in North Go Home Bay, July 29th. Look out for the notice. Have a great summer watching your birds

Sue Russell

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

The Ospreys Return

White eagle heads, masked in brown, droop wearily
She with her dark necklace, he with none
Their dusky wings folded, hushed at last
Safe once more in the northern land
Refuge from pulsating noise, stinking engines and
atmosphere of poison
Sheltered by those who cherish their existence

Now in quiet contemplation, she views
Her intimate domain
A world of wind-stressed pines and ragged rocks
Landmarks among the countless bays and inlets
A haven from the wild and threatening waters
That flow into the unknowns of unfolding space

Here in her familiar platform nest
A nest to which she and her mate return each year
She feels secure among the twigs, bleached fishbones and
soft grey moss

Watching for unheeding fish he plunges with splash and
skill
Grasping their flesh between his spiny toes
He delivers it in triumph yet again

Still she sits in quiet contemplation
Guarding her exquisite treasure
Eggs with shells of cream and chestnut patches
Knowing that when the time is right
The shells will crack, the chicks emerge
To risk the hazards in the stream of life.

*Bridget Duncanson
Go Home Bay*



Bill Chapman of MTM (Matchedash Bay, Tiny Marsh, Marl Lake) Conservation Association took this excellent photo in Florida. He was hoping it was one of the pair which nests in Tiny Marsh each summer. However from the banding that GBOS did in the past we learned that the birds from our area winter in South America.

Did you know

that you can tell an Osprey chick by its eyes? The first year they are orange and when older pale yellow. The young also have flecks on their back and look larger than their parents.

Poor Planning Osprey nesting on navigational beacon

Some friends of the Osprey up near Parry Sound noticed a pair of Osprey building their nest on the top of a navigational beacon. It seems rather hazardous for the birds and it could be a great deal more hazardous for boaters if we left the birds to their own devices.

Our Construction manager, Jane-Anne, called the Coast Guard to alert them of this situation. In the past the Coast Guard has acted promptly and erected a pole near the marker. The birds realized very soon that the pole was a better site for all concerned. The Osprey had no trouble moving house to the new pole.

We expect the same to happen again, that the Coast Guard will erect a suitable pole in the same area and that the unfortunate pair will move house when the new platform is ready.

Thank you Jane-Anne and thank you to the Coast Guard for helping the Osprey.

If anyone ever notices an Osprey attempting to build its nest in a dangerous place please alert us right away. We are known as the “Voice of the Osprey” and we do speak up for them.

Membership Renewal time

Now is the time to renew your membership to GBOS for another year. Your generosity enables us to maintain 75 nesting sites along the eastern shore of Georgian Bay, to develop an educational program about the Osprey and to continue our monitoring program to build up our data base.

Visit our web site
www.gbosprey.ca

Our AGM
will be held on
Saturday July 29,
Mitchell's cottage in
Monument Channel,
Go Home Bay
Our speaker is Burke
Korol

*You will receive the official announcement
of the Annual General Meeting
in June*