



# WORLD OSPREY WEEK



## INFORMATION PACK

Join Birds of Poole Harbour in learning about and celebrating Ospreys during World Osprey Week (23rd - 28th March) and beyond! There's a topic each day, ranging from nesting to history. There are activities associated with every topic and they each have badges to give a guide to who the activity is suitable for (see below). The banners for each section are coloured as follows: yellow for topics, purple for activities, blue for activity answers. If you have any questions regarding the topics, activities or indeed anything else Osprey related, you can easily get in touch with us at [bophhq@birdsofpooleharbour.co.uk](mailto:bophhq@birdsofpooleharbour.co.uk). We will respond as quickly as possible!



*Increasingly Advanced*

**Why Ospreys?** It's a very exciting time for Poole Harbour and the South Coast as this year we have the potential to have the first nesting Ospreys in southern Britain for 180 years. Birds of Poole Harbour have led an Osprey Translocation Project in the harbour since 2017, partnered with the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation and Wildlife Windows. We hope that everyone can get on board with the project and match our enthusiasm for these amazing birds. Enjoy learning about their interesting lives and history...



## 4) History in the UK

Welcome to part 4 of our World Osprey Week information pack! This topic focuses on the history of Ospreys and why we have to protect them. We hope you enjoy the topic and activities!

As one of the most widespread birds on the planet, Ospreys were once a more frequent sight across Europe, including in the UK. So why are they more difficult to see today?

### Extinction

Historically, Ospreys, as well as other birds of prey, were hunted in the UK. With large nests that stand out, they were easy targets. Egg-collecting was also a more common hobby, as well as hunting. Having rare birds and eggs on display was thought to be impressive, and the more they were hunted, the rarer they became. 200 years ago, the number of Ospreys in the UK was very low, and the last pair were killed in England in 1840. They were able to nest in Scotland for a while longer, but their rarity made them bigger targets, and the last known pair nested for the final time in 1916, making them extinct in the UK.



### Comeback

Fortunately, Ospreys made a natural comeback in Scotland. It is believed that a some pairs may have nested for a few years undetected, but the first known pair to nest was at Loch Garten near Inverness in 1954. The decision was made to make the nest known to the public, rather than keeping it secret, with the aim of attracting support for protection of the nest. The nest was protected 24 hours a day during the nesting season, in order to stop anyone climbing the tree and stealing the eggs. This was known as “Operation Osprey” and was led by the RSPB. Loch Garten is still a popular site for people to travel to and see Ospreys, even more than 60 years on.



## 4) History in the UK

### *Pesticide Use*

The Scottish population gradually increased, aided by protection support like Operation Osprey. However, the growth was slowed by the use of pesticides, as well as egg-collecting. Pesticides are often sprayed on plants to kill unwanted species in order to protect crops, but some pesticides manage to make their way into the Ospreys food chain. This is because the pesticide can be washed into nearby lakes and rivers, which gets ingested by fish, and, as Ospreys catch fish, they ingest the pesticides. Some pesticides, like DDT, have bad effects on the health of birds and their eggs. In the case of Ospreys, DDT made the egg shells very thin and soft, meaning they wouldn't hatch.



Scottish Wildlife Trust, Loch of the Lowes

DDT was eventually banned in 1984, as well as harsher punishments for egg-collectors. This meant that the Osprey population was able to grow more quickly. By the 1990s, there were more than 60 pairs in Scotland, but still none in England and Wales. This led to the development of the Rutland Osprey Translocation Project in 1996.

### *Translocation*

Translocating means moving part of an existing population to a different location, with the hope of starting a new population. This can be hard to do and means that you have to understand the species you are moving very well, so that you know what they need and how they will respond to being moved.

The Rutland Osprey Project was run by Rutland Water Nature Reserve, Anglia Water and Highland Foundation for Wildlife. It involved moving Scottish Osprey chicks from nests into temporary pens in Rutland, and then releasing them when they were able to fly. The chicks were provided with food and monitored closely, until they eventually left for migration. As we know, Ospreys often go back to where they fledged from when they return to the UK to breed. In 2001, the project was successful and they had their first breeding pair. This project has helped start to restore both the English and Welsh populations of Ospreys. Learn more about Osprey translocation in the next topic.



## 4) History Activities

A) Make some Osprey inspired artwork! Paint, draw, collage or even use nature to make a picture that's all about Ospreys.



B) Create a timeline for the history of Ospreys in the UK. See if you can add on any other historical events over the last 200 years...



C) Match the answers with the questions about the history of Ospreys!





## 4) History Timeline





## 4) Match the pairs!

Link up the questions with the right answers!

In which year did Ospreys go extinct in Scotland?

1984

Where did Ospreys first nest when they returned to Scotland?

More than 300

True or False: There are no Osprey nests in Wales

True

What year was the pesticide DDT banned?

2001

What year did the Rutland Osprey Translocation Project start?

1840

What year was the first breeding in England after their extinction?

1916

How many Osprey nests are there now in the UK?

False

When did Ospreys go extinct in England?

Loch Garten

True or False: Pesticides can affect the quality of bird eggs

1996



## 4) Match the pairs – ANSWERS

In which year did Ospreys go extinct in Scotland?	1984
Where did Ospreys first nest when they returned to Scotland?	More than 300
True or False: There are no Osprey nests in Wales	False
What year was the pesticide DDT banned?	2001
What year did the Rutland Osprey Translocation Project start?	1840
What year was the first breeding in England after their extinction?	1916
How many Osprey nests are there now in the UK?	True
When did Ospreys go extinct in England?	Loch Garten
True or False: Pesticides can affect the quality of bird eggs	1996