

Ospreys in Scotland

2004 was the 50th anniversary of the successful re-colonisation at Loch Garten in the Highlands. Shooting, habitat destruction and Victorian obsessions with collecting specimens and eggs caused the decline, and past demise of Britain's ospreys. They are still at grave risk from illegal egg collecting, but more and more of these beautiful birds grace our countryside and delight those who see them.



In 1954 a migrant pair nested successfully in the Highlands and since then osprey numbers have gradually increased. Now they are back in Galloway.

The partnership is working to improve the protection, knowledge and understanding of these spectacular birds.



Photo: G Langsbury

*This project is a partnership between:-
Local landowners, Dumfries & Galloway Council and the following organisations:-*



Photographs supplied by rspb_images.com



Follow the progress of the birds on the camera link, from April until leaving for Africa in September!

How to find us

Galloway is a great day out from the north of England, Ayrshire and Glasgow. Wigtown is 15 minutes drive south from Newton Stewart. Our facilities are in the County Buildings in the centre of Wigtown.

For more details

Please phone the County Buildings visitor facilities on 01988 402673 or email ospreys@dumgal.gov.uk or visit www.dgcommunity.net/osprey

Tourist informaton on 01671 402431 www.visitdumfriesandgalloway.co.uk

Ospreys are back in Galloway!



**Live
Camera Link!**
See them
FREE
in Wigtown

Photo: P Cairns

A wildlife success story in Galloway



Photo: C Gomersall

Ospreys have successfully returned to Galloway to breed in the last few years. Last year, for the first time, the intimate family life of our ospreys was viewed by visitors to the Wigtown, County Buildings. Visitors were able to watch the hatching

of the first egg, the 2 chicks being fed and learning to fly before leaving for Africa.

To start with the eggs are kept warm and secure for over a month until they hatch; then the male starts bringing in fish to feed the youngsters, which is a never ending job as they grow bigger and practice flying, burning up the calories. This is a fascinating story and the ups and downs of the family can be found on the web pages at www.dgcommunity.net/osprey.

Although our area has been naturally re-colonised, over 50 years of intensive campaigning elsewhere lie behind this local success story. The first ospreys to nest back in Scotland did so in 1954 and perhaps our birds can be traced back to these famous ancestors!

How to see them!

Between May and September, live video pictures can be seen in Wigtown County Buildings every week day from 10am until 5pm, and on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday to 7.30pm Saturday 10am to 5pm and Sunday 2pm to 5pm. The facilities are accessible by wheel-chair.

Ospreys' talons or claws are specially adapted to grab their prey, with short, sharp spines covering the base of the footpad and toes, to help in catching and holding the fish.



Photo: D Tipling

Our local ospreys were ringed as nestlings; the female hatched near Stirling in 1998 and has an orange ring reading HD. The male has a ring reading BS and hatched in 1993 near Dunkeld, we know that his father came from further north still.

The nest is protected by electronic equipment, volunteers and video camera equipment around the clock. All osprey sites are protected by law and we keep the site secret to prevent disturbance.

Information, useful leaflets and web sites

Also in the County Buildings is Wigtown Bay Local Nature Reserve Visitors' Room. Britain's largest LNR can be seen from the picture window and with a second wildlife camera which shows superb views of breeding and wintering water birds all year round.

The "Ospreys are Back in Galloway" web page is www.dgcommunity.net/osprey

General information and walking and cycling leaflets and for Dumfries and Galloway www.visitdumfriesandgalloway.co.uk

"Bird Watching in Dumfries and Galloway" and "Ranger Led Walks and Countryside Events" plus Wigtown Bay LNR information and other biodiversity information can be found on www.dgcommunity.net

Wood of Cree (01671 402 861), Mull of Galloway (01776 840539) and other RSPB reserves for more information www.rspb.org.uk

Wigtown is also Scotland's Booktown (01988 402036) www.Wigtown-booktown.co.uk

Galloway Forest Park information at www.forestry.gov.uk/gallowayforestpark

Information on Balloch Wood can be found at www.creetown-walks.co.uk

