

Just for Kids

Meet The Fish Hawk

What's big, brown and white and hovers above bays, lakes and rivers? A bird called an osprey.

These remarkable birds are found almost worldwide and are usually seen plunging into the water while catching fish, their favorite food. Ospreys can capture fish weighing up to 4 pounds. (That's about as much as an osprey weighs!)



A Room with a View

Ospreys like to nest on the tops of standing, dead trees (snags). They have also used the tops of utility poles, chimneys and buildings. People have helped ospreys by putting up nesting platforms, tall, flat-topped wooden stands. Ospreys use sticks, seaweed, driftwood, bones, cornstalks and trash when building a nest.

Osprey Ups and Downs

Sixty years ago, there were more ospreys in Connecticut than there are now. Development along the coast and the use of the deadly pesticide DDT, which made osprey egg shells thin, caused problems for these birds. Ospreys are doing better now that DDT is not used anymore in the United States. However, other countries still use harmful pesticides and ospreys need to be watched.

Take a Wild Guess!

(One or more answers may be correct)

1. How large is the wingspan of an osprey?
a. 2 ft b. 3 ft. c. 4 ft. d. 5 ft.
2. How can an osprey lift a big fish?
a. its toes are spiny
b. with two toes in back and toes in front, an osprey can better hold a fish
c. it lifts the fish headfirst
3. When can you see ospreys in Connecticut?
a. summer b. fall c. winter d. spring

Answers:

1. d; 2. a, b, c; 3. a, b, d

How does littering hurt ospreys?

Littering attracts raccoons that can eat eggs or young osprey. Plastic six-pack holders and fishing line, two common types of litter on the beach, can strangle a young osprey.