

OSPREY

pandionhaliaetus

An Osprey nest – added to each year – can grow to an alarming size.



FactFile

Length: 55cm – 58cm

Wingspan: 145cm – 170cm

Weight: 1.10kg – 2.00kg

Habitat: Coasts and near any lake, reservoir or river which is free from disturbance and where fishing is possible. Trees are the preferred nesting sites but Ospreys adapt well to artificial nest platforms.

2 or 3 eggs are laid in April & May and hatch after about 37 days. The young can take 2 months to fledge and a further 2 months to achieve independence.



The Osprey was persecuted to extinction in this country by 1917 and the recovery didn't start until a pair bred in Scotland in 1959. In 2006 the BTO (British Trust for Ornithology) recorded a summer UK population of 127 pairs returning from over-wintering in Africa

Unlike the fish eagles which snatch their prey from just under the surface, Ospreys plunge into the water from about 10 metres, often becoming completely submerged. They use their comparatively huge wings to raise themselves and their prey – both soaking wet – from the water's surface, hanging in mid-air after a few wing-beats to shake water from their bodies before flying off to feed.