



THE OSPREY OBSERVER

Bywyd Gwylt Glaslyn Wildlife

WE OPEN AT 10:30 ON SATURDAY 25 MARCH

Eyes to the skies!

We will soon be welcoming our ospreys back to the Glaslyn Valley and have been busy over the winter months making improvements to the Pont Croesor site to enhance the visitor experience this season.

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Work is also underway to improve the resilience and speed of our broadband connection thanks to those who supported our fund-raising appeal last year. We are installing a high-speed fibre broadband link underground between Prenteg and Pont Croesor.

We have invested in new marketing material for the 2023 season and hope we can continue to increase the number of visitors to Glaslyn Ospreys.

Visitors will see new information signs around the site and the car park surface has been improved. There has also been investment in new bird boxes, trail cameras and improved bird feeding stations for watching the garden birds near the Visitor Centre and John Parry Hide.

Volunteers, who have regularly been working on site improvements during the winter months, have also been growing wildlife seeds for planting out in the Spring. Native trees will also be planted.

We look forward to the safe return of our ospreys and another successful year ahead.

Golden chick makes it to Senegal

When we chose a picture of our 'Golden Chick' Blue 497 last autumn to illustrate our new 2023 marketing material (pictured above on the new entrance sign) little did we think that, within three months, we would hear news about 'her' from Senegal!

Much to our delight, 497 (pictured right by Joanna Dailey) was sighted in January at the Kalissaye Reserve. On the same trip, and only six miles away, Blue KC4 (2020) was re-sighted again. Full story on page three.



Message from our new Chair Gill Pritchard

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Bywyd Gwyllt Glaslyn Wildlife Trustees and Members for electing me as Chair for the coming year. It will be a hard act following three superb Chairs, David Archer, Gwenan Williams and Gwyn Harrison but I will do my very best.

I have been part of this Glaslyn family for almost ten years and it has been a wonderful experience. The support and kindness I have received from trustees and volunteers following the death of my husband Stephen in 2020, has demonstrated that Glaslyn is not just a place where we volunteer to talk about ospreys, but also a place where true friendships are forged.



GILL PRITCHARD

The project would not exist without the generous donations from our wonderful supporters and the thousands of people who visit every year. Heartfelt thanks to you all for your continued support.

As we look ahead to a new season, we are planning to build on the successes of 2022 when the new hide proved to be a great addition to the site. Look out for some further new-look improvements to the site to enhance the visitor experience. We are also working to improve the resilience of our broadband connection and live streaming thanks to your generous support to our appeal last year.

We look forward to welcoming you when we open in March.

Finally, we wish Mrs G and Aran and the FotO Pont Croesor nest pair Z2/Aeron and Blue 014 a safe journey home and look forward to the sight and sounds of these magnificent birds in the Glaslyn Valley in the Spring.



New Bird Boxes

Our volunteers have been working hard to prepare the Visitor Centre and Protection sites ready for the return of our Ospreys.

As part of our development plan, we have purchased bird boxes for both sites and we hope that they will soon have new residents. Thank you, Jimmi at Raptor Aid, for helping us obtain these boxes.

Christmas gifts from Senegal

It is especially exciting when Glaslyn birds and their extended family are re-sighted, so we were full of eager anticipation when Joanna Dailey, Vic Paine and Pip Rowe made the long trip to West Africa for Christmas 2022.

The team had first re-sighted Blue KC4 (2020) at Kalissaye Reserve, Senegal in November 2021 and she had been re-sighted in the same area several times last winter. Joanna and Jean-Marie Dupart saw her again at Kalissaye during November, so we were full of hope that she would still be around her regular area over Christmas. Joanna, Vic and Pip were visiting several locations in Senegal and Gambia during their trip and one of the locations was at Somone, where Blue 8C (2014) has been seen previously.

Despite making several attempts they failed to find 8C on this trip, possibly due to an increase in the number of boats in the part of the lagoon 8C has been seen in the past and shellfish being gathered over a larger area. However, they did find two ospreys in Senegal with Glaslyn connections, both 2022 offspring of Black 80 (2006) who breeds at Threave Castle, in Scotland. Blue 042 was resighted on 20/12/22 at Nianing

Lagoon and her brother Blue 041 was spotted on 31/12/22 near Boune, Casamance. In Gambia, they also managed to see our old friend 5F, who now breeds at Llyn Clywedog.



497 © JOANNA DAILEY



KC4 © JOANNA DAILEY

The last day of their holiday (02/01/23) was to be spent on a boat trip on the Kalissaye reserve and we had everything crossed that KC4 would show up for the team. During the morning of the trip Joanna sent a message containing a photograph of a blue ringed osprey taken from the back of a camera and to our amazement the ring number clearly read 497. It was beyond our wildest dreams that they had discovered our 50th chick, the eldest of the 2022 brood. They continued on with their boat trip to the creek that KC4 favours and we were all thrilled that she did put in an appearance. Two Glaslyn birds on one trip and just six miles between them.

Once the travellers returned to their hotel, they sent over the images of our two birds to us so we could share the news. As soon as we looked at the original photographs something in the appearance of 497 stood out to us. The chest looked particularly white and there was a distinct lack of brown markings on the underwings, also the legs looked rather slim, all indications of a male osprey. We asked Joanna for her opinion and she concurred with our initial thoughts and said that she would be surprised if 497 was a female.

When the 2022 Glaslyn chicks were ringed all three chicks were fairly close in weight, with only 240g between the lightest and heaviest. 1500g is the rough cut off point between males and females. 497 weighed 1560g, just slightly above the cut off. These things are not cast in stone however, and there can be large variations in the weights of broods. They had eaten a meal just before the ringing took place, which can affect the weights slightly.

When 497 fledged it was at 52 days old, lower than the average of 53 days for this nest. The average for Glaslyn female chicks to fledge is 54 days. Once the chicks were fully developed there seemed very little to separate them in size, as can be seen in the photo of them lying side by side in the nest. If 497 is a male, and it strongly looks as though it is likely, it would not be the first time we have had a single sex brood of three. All three of the 2017 chicks were male, confirmed by DNA analysis. One thing is for certain 497 is definitely our “Golden Child”.

Our heartfelt thanks to Joanna, Pip and Vic for providing us with so much information about the lives of our ospreys and sharing their fabulous photographs with us.



497 ON THE GLASLYN NEST ON RINGING DAY

£10K for our 10th year

It's a milestone year for BGGW and we are aiming to raise £10,000 from our 2023 funding appeal, which we launch on 1 March, St David's Day.

In our charity's tenth anniversary year, we also look forward to celebrating 20 years of ospreys breeding in the Glaslyn Valley.

We rely on your generous support to protect the birds, operate the live stream throughout the year, improve the site for the thousands of visitors to Pont Croesor, help fund our day to day costs and much, much more.

As you will be aware, we are the only independent osprey charity in Wales and could not do it without you!

We hope you can help us reach our target in this special year for Glaslyn Ospreys.

To donate, please visit our website

<https://www.glaslynwildlife.co.uk/help-us-grow-donate-today>

Getting Pont Croesor ready for the new season



WORK UNDER WAY ON THE CAR PARK



GAIL EDGLEY

The first ten years

Trustee David Archer, our first Chairman, reflects on a decade of Glaslyn Ospreys.

“When the RSPB announced in 2012 that it was pulling out of the Glaslyn Osprey Project it was a real shock to all who knew and loved the Glaslyn. The first breeding ospreys in Wales for hundreds of years had attracted thousands of visitors and captured the interest and enthusiasm of the local community. The closure of the project would be a huge loss to the locals; they were determined to step up and do something about it.

“The first move was to buy time and persuade the RSPB to run the project for one more year to enable a community not-for-profit company to be set up.

Bywyd Gwyllt Glaslyn Wildlife (BGGW) was established in December 2012, and fund raising started in earnest. Our target was to raise over £100,000 to build a new visitor centre, install new cameras and upgrade the viewing site at Pont Croesor which, by now, was looking very tired.....

To read the full blog go to: www.glaslynwildlife.co.uk/bggw-the-first-ten-years



IOLO WILLIAMS AND DAVID ARCHER OPEN THE VISITOR CENTRE IN 2015

Meet the Team

Long-serving volunteer Margaret Humphreys is featured in this edition's Meet the Team in which we introduce some of the dedicated people who play such a vital role in the work of Glaslyn Ospreys.

Margaret is well-known to visitors and volunteers alike having been involved in the project for some years. Born and bred in Porthmadog she ran a local business in the town. Once the Glaslyn nest was discovered in the Valley, she became an avid follower and supporter.



How did you get involved?

I saw my first osprey on a visit to Loch Garten some years ago and then saw an osprey fishing locally at Borth y Gest in 2000. The Glaslyn nest was discovered in 2004 and we used to view it from Pont Croesor. I made cakes for local fund-raising events and then in 2015 I started volunteering at the Visitor Centre. I later became a Trustee although I have since retired from that role.

What is so special about the project?

I am lucky to have seen the project grow from its inception and become such a success. Getting involved was one of the best things I have ever done. Not only to learn about the wonders of nature and the fascinating lives of the ospreys, but I have also made some lifelong friends.

What do you enjoy most about volunteering?

We meet so many lovely people from all over the UK - and sometimes from further afield. Some visitors have made a special journey to see Mrs G, Aran and their chicks, others have just stumbled across the Centre - and then become regular visitors because they love it so much!

Would you recommend volunteering at Glaslyn Ospreys?

Definitely! It's a great place to be for as many hours as you can spare. The setting and the views are fantastic and it's so rewarding telling people about Mrs G and Aran and following the development of the chicks during the season.

Favourite osprey? Favourite chick?

It has to be Mrs G! And Blue WO, one of Aran's first offspring with Mrs G in 2015, is a firm favourite! WO was the egg that Aran accidentally kicked out of the nest cup during incubation. After some hours, thankfully he rolled it back to where it should be. The chick hatched successfully and moreover was re-sighted as an adult at Kielder in 2017 and Threave in 2019.

If you would like to volunteer at the project find out more on our web site: www.glaslynwildlife.co.uk/volunteering or contact Visitor Centre Manager Heather Corfield on info@glaslynwildlife.co.uk



My best bird of the year on Afon Glaslyn, **writes Elfyn Lewis**, was this Red-necked Phalarope that was found near Porthmadog Cob on 7 September 2022 and was a new addition to the list of bird species seen on the Glaslyn. The species breeds far to the north of us. Some of the population winters in the Arabian Sea whilst others winter in the Pacific Ocean with some birds migrating over 16,000 miles to their wintering quarters! Makes Mrs G look like a lightweight!

Fungi Forage

Our annual Fungi Forage was held on Saturday 15th October. Local fungi expert, Cynan Jones, guided us on an informative and entertaining walk through the ancient Hafod Garegog woodland.

Special thanks to Cynan and the National Trust for another wonderful woodland walk that was appreciated by everyone who participated.



Save the date

It isn't too late to get your 2023 Glaslyn Ospreys calendar! There are still a few remaining in our online shop...

<https://www.glaslynwildlife.co.uk/shop/>



We'd like to hear from you!

We hope you enjoy reading the Osprey Observer and we welcome your comments and any suggestions for future articles. Please contact Volunteer and Trustee Barbara Milne at barbara@glaslynwildlife.co.uk