

THE OSPREY OBSERVER

Bywyd Gwyllt Glaslyn Wildlife

Ready and waiting

It's been an exceptionally busy winter for our volunteers and trustees who have been working on a range of improvements for the new season ahead.

At the Protection site, key technical equipment has been overhauled and upgraded including replacing solar panels, better facilities for volunteers monitoring the birds and a new camera to improve the live streaming of top quality pictures from the nest.



BLUE 497 IN SENEGAL

At Pont Croesor new toilets have been installed on the Station platform to improve facilities for our thousands of visitors. Turn to page two to read more.

Special sighting

Blue 497, eldest of Mrs G's last brood in 2022, was sighted in Senegal in January by Kielder's Joanna Dailey. Will he be seen in the UK this summer? Here he is pictured in Africa and also on the entrance sign at Pont Croesor.

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Glaslyn Ospreys is open at 10:30 on Monday 25 March

Getting ready for the new season

From page one....

Thanks to a generous contribution from Osprey Charging, we have replaced one of our two nest cameras - the original one - which has served us well since 2014. The new camera has the latest 4K technology to ensure we see top quality live images of the birds. Both nest cameras are now of the highest 4K specification and enable us to show the nest from two different angles.



NEW NEST CAMERA

NEW SOLAR PANELS



New solar panels and batteries have been installed at the Protection site. The panels will work alongside the electricity supply to power nest monitoring equipment and cameras. The old solar panels and batteries, which were showing their age and needed upgrading, are being donated to North Wales Wildlife Trust

The caravan at the Protection site had also served us well but needed replacing. Our dedicated volunteers spend many hours, day and night on site, watching over the ospreys and their young. A new purpose-built cabin is now in place to provide better facilities for our volunteers.

To improve visitor facilities at Pont Croesor we have replaced the toilets on the Station platform. The new modern units will also be easier to clean and maintain.

We are now putting the finishing touches to get everything ready to welcome you - and of course our wonderful ospreys - back to Pont Croesor and the Glaslyn Valley in March.



ABOVE: VOLUNTEERS PREPARE THE GROUND AT PROTECTION

LEFT: UP AND AWAY! THE OLD TOILETS ARE REMOVED



Special thanks to Breedon Ltd at Minffordd Quarry for their generous donation of stone which we have used in our improvement work at Pont Croesor and the Protection site.



2024 Fund Raising Appeal

We are launching our St David's Day Appeal on 1 March and have this year set a target of £15,000.

The money will go towards the annual running costs of our live stream cameras, which enable visitors to

observe what the birds are up to on large screens at Pont Croesor, and on YouTube for our followers further afield. We rely on your generous support in our work to protect the birds and share their story.

We are the only independent osprey charity in Wales and could not do what we do without you.

We hope you can help us reach our target. To donate please visit www.glaslynwildlife.co.uk/help-us-grow-donate-today

Volunteer with us

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer we will be holding a coffee morning and volunteer event on Saturday 9 March. The coffee morning will be from 11:00 until 12:00 and prospective new volunteers can come along for an informal chat, take a look around and find out what is involved. They will also be welcome to join in at the volunteer event that follows on during the afternoon. For more information contact Heather Corfield on heather@glaslynwildlife.co.uk.

Join us at Pont Croesor

Following the success of our two-day Gŵyl y Gweilch festival last year we are staging the event again during the second weekend in August. So, join us on 10 and 11 August for another weekend of presentations by wildlife experts. We are finalising this year's exciting line up and will announce the full programme soon.

Don't forget our Chatters' Extra Time event at Pont Croesor. It's an opportunity to meet up face to face with fellow Live Stream chatters at Pont Croesor on the evening of Monday 8 July.

Look out for details and how you can book your place at these events.



Glaslyn Connections

In the first of a new series, featuring other osprey projects with Glaslyn connections, we hear from Joanna Dailey, Forestry England Osprey Co-ordinator at Kielder Forest.

Many thanks to BGGW for inviting me to write a few words about the strong links between Glaslyn and Kielder Forest, where I monitor around nine nest sites for Forestry England.

The first pair of ospreys to breed in Kielder Forest were both unringed, and probably Scottish. That was in 2009. A second nest was established in 2011 by none other than Yellow 37, 2005 Glaslyn, and an unringed female.

In 2012 the Nest 1 male didn't return from migration, and was succeeded by White YA, 2007 Glaslyn. How amazing to have two brothers nesting a few miles apart in Northumberland, so far from their natal area!



YA DELIVERS LARGE FISH

Their impact on our project can't be overstated. Yellow 37 raised 25 youngsters to migration from 2011-2022, with four different females. Unfortunately, he didn't return for the 2023 season. Very sadly, White YA disappeared towards the end of the 2022 season. He fathered 26 of the 106 juveniles from seven nests who migrated 2009-2022. So almost 50% of Kielder fledged ospreys have 50% Welsh genes!

One of Yellow 37's offspring, 2016 female Blue Y6, raised two chicks with an unringed male in Perthshire in 2020, but she died in N Spain when returning for the 2021 season.

Two of YA's offspring, 2014 Blue UV and 2016 Blue Y1 settled in Kielder Forest in 2021. Blue Y1 had three chicks with an unringed female. Disappointingly, they nested in a dead tree that was inaccessible, so the fate of those chicks will never be known. Blue UV and an unringed female raised one young male, Blue 437, in 2021 and in 2023 he returned to Northern England. For varying reasons neither Blue UV nor Blue Y1 have had success since 2021, but we hope this will be a bumper year for them.



In the 'off' season I usually travel to West Africa, where I've seen several Kielder Ospreys, and also some from Glaslyn. One is Blue KC4, 2020 Glaslyn, who overwinters in the mangroves of Kalissaye Reserve, Senegal. She intruded at our Nests 2 and 4 in April 2023 and it was a highlight for me to see her again. In the same large reserve I was fortunate enough to find Blue 497 in January 2023, the first record since migration. And there he was again on a trip last month! Hopefully he will be recorded in the UK this season.

But the 'lottery win' overseas sighting has to be when Blue UV's sole chick, Blue 437, flew past me when I was at a Lodge in Southern Senegal in February 2022. He had left the nest area very early, so we were concerned he had enough experience to migrate successfully. That sighting gave the answer. And with his return to the UK last season, our hope is he will establish in Kielder Forest.

Although Yellow 37 and White YA are no longer with us, there is still a deep bond between Kielder and Glaslyn and that will remain.



UV DELIVERS A FISH TO 437 AND FEMALE



Chris Wood

The osprey community was rocked with the devastating news that our dear friend Chris Wood, sadly passed away in December. After coming through the worst of his treatment for cancer he had been looking forward to visiting Gambia in February to hopefully see his beloved 5F and other ospreys in their wintering grounds.

Chris was one of the most kind hearted and genuine people around, always willing to help and share his photographs and vast knowledge of ospreys with others. A true gentleman who will be greatly missed by all of us at Glaslyn Ospreys and the whole osprey community. You can read the tribute given at his funeral by Dr Tim Mackrill on the following link.

[A Tribute to Chris Wood - Osprey Leadership Foundation \(osprey.org.uk\)](https://osprey.org.uk/tribute-to-chris-wood)

Chris is pictured with the late BGGW volunteer and treasurer Steve Pritchard

Sad news

We received some very sad news from Jean-marie Dupart in Senegal in November about Blue 8C.

A fisherman discovered 8C injured on a beach close to Jean-marie's home, she had a head injury. Sadly, when Jean-marie arrived there, 8C had already died.



Blue 8C hatched on the Glaslyn nest in 2014, the youngest of the brood and the very last chick produced by our old male 11(98).

In October 2017 she was resighted for the first time in Senegal and then in March 2019 she was photographed in Hampshire. Blue 8C was not camera shy and was subsequently photographed on other occasions in both the UK and Senegal and also made appearances on live streams at Poole Harbour and Loch of the Lowes. She intruded at Lowes in 2023.

We would like to thank both Jean-marie and the fisherman for trying to help 8C and letting us know about her sad end.

Winter scenes



A covering of snow
at Pont Croesor

Tawny time in one
of the owl boxes at
Pont Croesor



Woodcock



The January Whooper Swan count was 68 individuals, but we also counted 12 Mute Swans, which was the largest number we have had on the Glaslyn Marshes for some time. The Great White Egret is also still being regularly seen at Pont Croesor and has also been spotted right in front of the John Parry Hide.

Meet the Team

In this edition we meet Jo Grimes who has, for many years, literally gone the extra mile to volunteer at Glaslyn Ospreys. She has recently moved from Hertfordshire to North Wales, bringing her closer to Porthmadog where in the season ahead, she is looking forward to helping protect the ospreys and welcoming visitors to Pont Croesor. Jo, a retired local government officer, explains how she became a member of the Glaslyn team.



What sparked your interest in ospreys?

It began over 15 years ago when I heard Roy Dennis being interviewed about his osprey conservation work on a BBC Radio 4 programme called World on the Move. I was living in Hertfordshire and the nearest project to me was Rutland where I visited and enjoyed talks and tours by Dr. Tim Mackrill. My mother was originally from Ruthin in North Wales and there were regular family holidays in the area. It was during those visits that I went on to discover the project at Glaslyn. I started volunteering in 2010.

What was your involvement then?

At first, I mainly covered shifts at the Protection site which is a blissful, peaceful place to watch over the birds close-up. I clearly remember the first time I saw one of the Glaslyn birds on the nest - it was Mrs G - and I'm not ashamed to say I shed a few tears! I now volunteer at the Visitor Centre as well which is equally enjoyable.

What makes the project so special?

Glaslyn is my favourite place to be! Seeing each osprey family develop and grow every season and meeting the visitors and working with other volunteers is special. Volunteering duties can be flexible and it has been a great source of companionship for me as well as developing my interest in wildlife. I hope I am doing what I can to help the natural world and protect these much-adored birds of prey.

North Wales is now your new home?

Yes, I was delighted to move to Denbighshire last year - so I am now much closer to Glaslyn and plan to do as much volunteering at the project as I can.

Favourite osprey? Favourite chick?

Rutland born Blue 24 was a very special bird and I had the privilege of being on Protection duties on one occasion when she spent some time on the Glaslyn nest - before being chased away by Mrs G of course! I was so pleased when she finally went on to have her own nest and family at Llyn Brenig.

The 2020 Glaslyn chicks KC2, KC3 and KC4 were particular favourites as I, like many others, watched them on-line that year while we were all confined at home because of the pandemic. Watching the Glaslyn family grow and thrive from all those miles away in Hertfordshire kept me going throughout lockdown.

From Glaslyn to The Gambia

Last year we announced we were celebrating the legacy of our iconic osprey Mrs G with a £2500 donation to Dr Tim Mackrill's Osprey Leadership Foundation which works to promote wildlife conservation with children and young people in The Gambia, one of the UK ospreys' wintering grounds.



Tim reports that the Foundation has now formed an official partnership with the Gunjur Project in Gambia and will be training five young people from their nature club to deliver osprey education to groups of 15 or 20 students over a set period of three Saturdays.

There is an initial classroom-based session, introducing the group to ospreys, using the Be an Osprey Expert book, followed by two sessions at the nearby Gunjur beach and quarry, which are fantastic locations for seeing and observing ospreys.

We wish the initiative every success and look forward to hearing more reports from Western Africa.



We'd like to hear from you!

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

A slice of summer

Glaslyn volunteer Gail Edgley captured some stunning images of ospreys fishing in the Dwyrdd Estuary last summer. Here are some of them. You can read more about Gail's osprey encounters in her Tales of a Wildlife Wanderer blog <https://gailedgley.wixsite.com/wildlife-tales/post/a-slice-of-summer>

