

OSPREY OBSERVER



MARCH 2025

NEWS FROM GLASLYN OSPREYS

New-look nest

Aran and Elen will have a completely refurbished home on their return!

Darren Moore and his team from Friends of the Ospreys constructed the new nest atop the 80-foot Silver Fir tree.

Built in 2014 the nest had been well used by all three of our Osprey pairings – 11(98) and Mrs G, Mrs G and Aran and Elen and Aran. In that time 26 chicks successfully fledged the nest but parts of it had started to deteriorate. It served the Glaslyn osprey families well!

A new oak perch has also been installed. The old one will be put on display at Pont Croesor so that visitors can get a close-up view.



This is the fourth version of the nest. The first was built by 11(98) and Mrs G in 2004, only to be blown down in a storm that summer. A replacement man-made nest was built for them in 2005 which the pair successfully used until the Friends of the Ospreys built the 2014 version.

Thank you to Darren and his team and also to Gail Edgley who photographed the nest building, another milestone in the story of Glaslyn Ospreys.

Turn to page two to read more.

Blue KS1 in Africa

We recently received some very exciting news from our friend Jean-Marie Dupart in Senegal about Blue KS1, who hatched on the Glaslyn nest in 2018.

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Inside:

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**GLASLYN OSPREYS OPENS FOR VISITORS AT
10:30 ON MONDAY 24 MARCH**

Re-building the Glaslyn nest... continued from the front page



Suitable larch branches were needed to rebuild the body of the nest. Local National Trust Warden, Dave Smith, came to our assistance as Storm Darragh had claimed a larch tree at nearby Parc Craflwyn, Nant Gwynant and we were given permission to help ourselves to as much wood as we required. Darren kindly collected sufficient wood from Craflwyn and our brilliant volunteers quickly responded to an urgent call for help and carried the larch branches from the Protection site ready for the nest re-build.



It was decided it would make things easier for Darren to build and install the new nest, if the air-fibre dish, nest cameras and microphones were temporarily removed, along with the associated cabling.

Tree surgeon Steve Laddiman from Roundwood Tree Technology and his assistant Hywel climbed the 80-foot Silver Fir tree to bring everything down. This gave us a good opportunity to test the equipment and fit new cabling. Steve returned to reinstall the equipment under the guidance of our technical contractor Andy Richards once the new nest was in place.



Special thanks to our Treasurer Gwenan Williams who coordinated the nest building work at Protection and liaised with our contractors to ensure the technical work was completed on time.

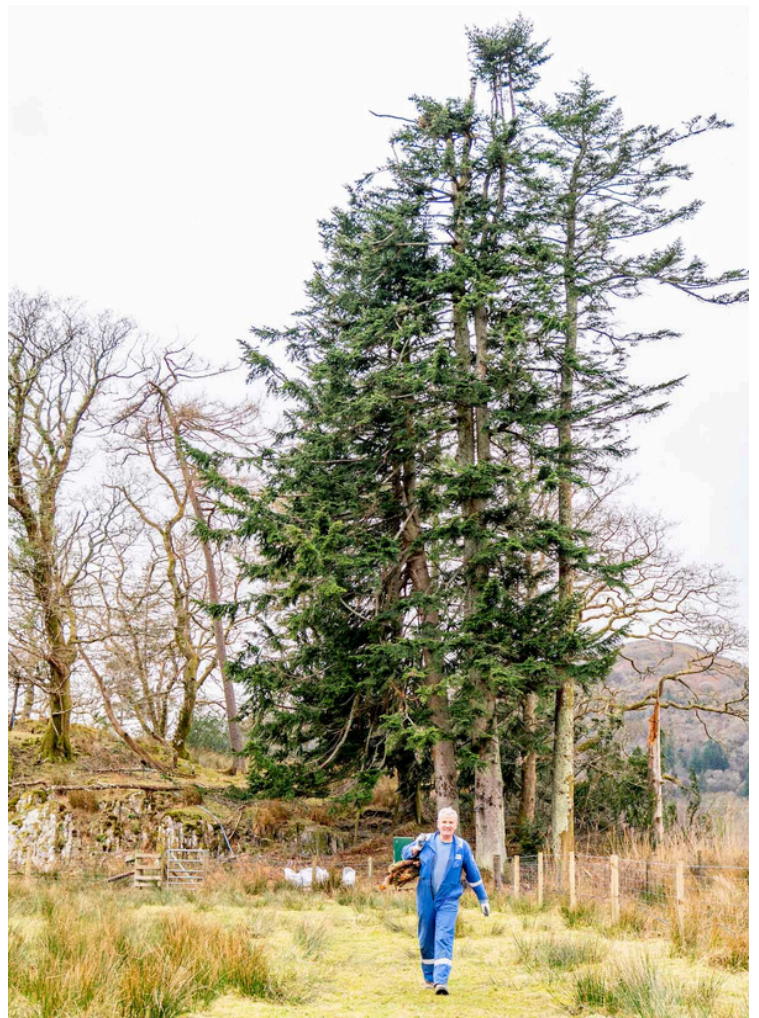


THE OLD PERCH



THE NEW PERCH





Re-connecting



After we bid farewell to the ospreys last September we had a busy few weeks troubleshooting some technical issues at the nest site and Pont Croesor.

We completed work to the fibre optic cabling at Pont Croesor, improving the camera performance and winter live streaming. Wet ground conditions had hampered this work for some months but with the assistance of the landowner Dafydd Davies we were able to complete it in October. We now have much improved broadband speeds and followers have been enjoying views of the winter wildlife, including Tawny Owls, Kingfishers, Otters, Whooper and Mute Swans.

Followers will also be aware that the power cable to the nest cameras at the Protection site was accidentally severed during agricultural work in August. We could see that this cabling, installed several years ago, would have needed replacing in due course anyway. We therefore took the opportunity to thoroughly assess both the power and fibre optic cabling and contractors replaced and upgraded it, burying it deeper underground.



BLACK SWAN ON THE AFON GLASLYN IN JANUARY

The work was an unexpected expense, but together with other improvements we had already made to our cameras and communication infrastructure, it will help further future proof our technology so that we can continue to bring you stunning live pictures of the birds from the Glaslyn nest.

Your donations to help us with our osprey protection work are of course always welcome on www.glaslynwildlife.co.uk/cy/help-us-grow-donate-today.

During the February Wetland Bird Survey we counted 42 Whooper Swans, along with 14 Mute Swans. We also recorded five Pink-footed Geese amongst the Canada and Greylag Geese on the Glaslyn Marshes.

Continued from front page

KS1 was first recorded back in the UK in June 2020, when she spent some time in north-west England. By August she was in Scotland, where she intruded at the Borders Ospreys nest, near Jedburgh. In 2021 she was recorded intruding at one of the Kielder Ospreys nests in Northumberland. Then during 2022 we received the fantastic news that she had successfully raised two chicks with an unringed male at a new nest on the Bolton Estate in Yorkshire, the first breeding in the county since modern records began. To date she has raised seven chicks with her mate.

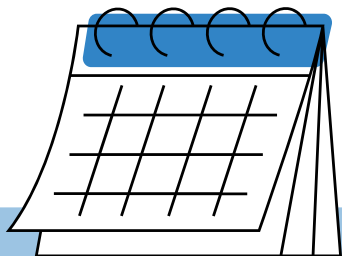


KS1 IN 2018

Although we assumed that she spent her winters in west Africa, along with most other British Ospreys, there had never been a recorded sighting of her there. Jean-Marie was doing his regular Osprey survey along the coast in northern Senegal on January 25 when he photographed KS1 3km north of Lompoul. Thank you to Jean-Marie for allowing us to share his photos of her.

Thank you Gail!

Volunteer Gail Edgley was invited to give a talk about Ospreys in the Glaslyn Valley for Tyddyn Mawr Tearooms as part of their Winter Talks programme at Canolfan Prenteg. Kath Keir kindly donated half the proceeds of the evening to BGGW, and one of the attendees gave a further £20, bringing the total amount to £150. Gail has received enquiries for future talks in the area as a result of her presentation.



Save the Date!

Our **Chatters' Extra Time** event for Live Stream followers will be on the afternoon of Monday 7 July at Pont Croesor. Check our Facebook page nearer the time for details on how to book your place.

Meet the Team

With preparations for the new season in full swing the Osprey Observer caught up with our Visitor Centre Manager Heather Corfield who for two decades has been involved in the Glaslyn Ospreys success story.

Heather's encyclopedic knowledge of ospreys is indeed legendary amongst the volunteers, visitors and followers on line. Remarkably her involvement at Glaslyn, first as a volunteer and then as a member of staff, has spanned the hatching of 57 chicks to the three osprey pairings since 2004.

Born and bred in Wolverhampton, Heather's family had a seasonal caravan in Morfa Bychan and were regular visitors to the area, which was ultimately to become their home. It was in 2004 when a friend alerted Heather that an Osprey had been seen in the Glaslyn Valley.



"I had always watched birds but had never seen an Osprey" recalled Heather "My Mom and I visited the watchpoint in the Valley and I was so excited when I had my first sighting - it was Mrs G"

It was a moment when her interest in wildlife took on a new dimension. "After that, it became impossible for my Mom and I to stay away!" she said.

Sadly, the Glaslyn nest had collapsed in a storm and two chicks died but for the rest of the summer Heather was able to observe the attempts by Mrs G and her partner 11 (98) to rebuild the nest. It was during this time that Heather and her mum Janice made lifelong friends with other pioneering volunteers such as Jim Beattie, Glyn Roberts and John Parry. "Over the winter I started reading up about Ospreys and got hold of as many books as I could to learn all about them," said Heather.

The RSPB, who then managed the project, rebuilt the nest over the winter and much to everyone's delight the birds returned the following Spring when the Glaslyn dynasty well and truly started to take shape.

Indeed, Heather has been involved in the project during the hatching of all the chicks, the first being the legendary Yellow 37 which went on to breed so successfully in the Kielder Forest.

Heather and Janice became regular weekend volunteers including some time at Dyfi from 2009 when Emyr Evans moved from Glaslyn to the Montgomeryshire project.

After the RSPB left Glaslyn, Heather became one of the founder members of Bywyd Gwylt Glaslyn Wildlife and was appointed as a Director of the then Community Interest Company in 2014.

In the meantime, back home in Wolverhampton Heather worked full time in purchasing for Tata Steel. But weekends were spent in Wales and the family bought a property in 2010 and moved permanently to Morfa Bychan in 2017.



**WITH IOLO WILLIAMS AT
THE OFFICIAL OPENING
OF THE JP HIDE IN 2022**

A dog lover, Heather's first pet was a Rough Collie bought for her as a sixth birthday present. Later, in her 20s, she started showing the breed and went on to become a qualified judge, travelling to shows across the UK and on one occasion to Finland.

"It was showing dogs or protecting the Ospreys" said Heather, "And the Ospreys won!"

Heather, who became the Manager in 2018, has welcomed thousands of visitors and worked with scores of volunteers during that time. Thanks to her expertise operating the nest cameras, visitors and followers of the Live Stream far and wide get spectacular views of the Ospreys on the nest, fledging, or eating a fish in a secluded tree together with views of other interesting wildlife on the river and surrounding fields.

Over the years, here are some of Heather's more memorable moments:

"2015 was a roller coaster year with so many ups and downs. The heartbreak of 11(98) not returning and watching Mrs G alone on the nest. Then the delight of the arrival of her son from 2012, Blue 80, who was soon displaced by CU2 Jimmy (2012), who did not appear ready to settle down and himself left after a few days on the Glaslyn nest. Thankfully Aran appeared in the nick of time and we had a successful breeding season, although he caused rather a drama by accidentally knocking an egg onto the edge of the nest overnight, before pulling it back into the nest cup the following morning. In May we learned that CU2 Jimmy had been tragically electrocuted near Pentrefoelas and had died, such a sad end to a beautiful young bird.

"2022 had two of my worst memories. During July we heard the terrible news that White YA (2007) had gone missing from his nest at Kielder after raising four chicks. Of all the chicks hatched at Glaslyn over the years YA had been a particular favourite of mine and I was devastated. Just a week later I received the phone call that the body of a blue ringed Osprey had been found on a local beach. It was one of the most harrowing moments in all my time in Ospreys. As soon as I was given the characters on the ring, KA3. I knew it was Hesgyn, a young male hatched at Dyfi in 2019 that we had watched intruding at the Glaslyn nest the previous year. He had been so full of life, but it made me appreciate just how fragile the lives of Ospreys are.

"But also in 2022 one of my most special memories was watching Mrs G fly over the Visitor Centre on her return to her nest. We were busy preparing the Visitor Centre for opening and it was the first time that most of us had witnessed her arrival. There were many tears of joy. After the disaster of Aran being injured in 2021 to then see him also safely return and the pair go on to successfully raise three chicks made 2022 an incredibly precious year."

Heartfelt thanks to Heather for her dedication and for contributing so much to the project's ongoing success.

Glaslyn Connections

Brenig Ospreys

Sarah Callon North Wales Wildlife Trust Brenig Osprey Project Officer looks back on their 2024 season

In March, the osprey season at Llyn Brenig started off fairly routine. Our male Blue LJ2 returned to his nest and promptly began work getting the nest ready for his female. Little did we know the drama that would unfold in those first few weeks. The female osprey Blue LM6, who had occupied the nest for the previous three years sadly did not arrive back from migration and another female took an interest in the Llyn Brenig nest.

During 2023, a two-year-old female osprey visited the Llyn Brenig nest several times but was chased off by the resident female; the visitor was ringed Blue 372. 372 had an interesting history already; born in Scotland in 2021, she was part of the Poole Harbour translocation project. She migrated from Poole Harbour in the autumn of 2021, survived her migration and returned to the UK in 2023, and was spotted intruding at our nest on Llyn Brenig on the 18 June 2023. That was just the beginning, 372 visited the Brenig nest a number of times that year.

Fast forward to 2024 and on the 1 April, 372 made her first visit to our nest. The problem was LJ2 was waiting for his female, LM6, to return from migration and promptly chased off 372. 372 had obviously taken a liking to the Brenig nest and was persistent. She visited the Brenig nest each day and as LJ2 began to accept the fact that LM6 may not return, he then turned his attentions to 372. However, the drama continued; another male osprey ringed 416 from a private nest nearby, whom 372 had paired with the previous year, had other ideas. Several times 416 chased 372 back to his nest, even taking the drastic action of knocking her off the Brenig nest. But she wasn't intimidated or interested in 416 and each time returned to the Brenig nest. It was like a good TV drama!



372 was also familiar to Glaslyn Ospreys followers as she had already visited there at the end of March when Aran was waiting for Elen to return from her travels!

Finally, LJ2 and 372 settled into the rhythm of the breeding season. This was 372's first breeding season, and being a three-year-old there were so many unknowns. We were all watching in anticipation. We were very happy to see three eggs in the nest by the end of April. But the drama was not over!

PHOTO CREDIT: TRISH STYLES

On 9 May, while 372 was incubating her eggs, a new intruder osprey paid a visit to the nest. A three-year-old female, ringed 432 from Kielder Forest was a feisty female landing several times on the nest and once on the back of 372! 432 wanted this nest to be hers and the consequences if she succeeded in taking the nest would be devastating to the already laid eggs of 372. An epic battle ensued for the Llyn Brenig nest between the two very large and feisty females. 372 protected her nest and her eggs with a force to match the ferociousness of 432. All we could do was watch.

We were all very worried that one or all of the eggs would be damaged or ejected from the nest. After two hours of 432 intruding on the nest, 372 cleverly chased 432 away from the nest therefore taking the danger away from the eggs but the two females battled for a further two hours. We had no idea who would return to the nest victorious. At 10:30pm 372 landed back on her nest the victor; we were all very relieved and 372 had undoubtedly claimed the Llyn Brenig nest as hers.

Again, peace descended on the Llyn Brenig nest. 372 however liked to do things a little differently. The osprey books state that once a female osprey had laid eggs she would stay on the nest to incubate the eggs and the male would provide fish for the female. Well, 372 had not read the manuals and often would call to LJ2. He would come to the nest and take over incubation of the eggs and 372 would go fishing. She would return with a fish, eat half on a tree stump, leave the remaining half on the stump, fly back to the nest, take over incubation of the eggs after having a good feed and LJ2 would go the stump and finish off the remaining half of the fish. 372 and LJ2 sharing the fishing and incubation responsibilities, a very modern couple indeed!

In early June, two of the eggs hatched, and 372 and LJ2 returned to a more traditional osprey family dynamic of LJ2 fishing and 372 staying on the nest with the chicks.

The chicks were ringed on 8 July and we found we had a male and female chick. The male was ringed 8B8 and the female 8B9. Names were chosen for them through the Brenig Osprey Project Facebook poll, names from Ac Yna Clywodd Sŵn Y Môr by Alun Jones, 8B8 became Emrys and 8B9 Bethan. They successfully fledged later that month.

The Brenig nest had a number of two-year-old visitors during 2024, including our own 2022 Brenig chick, KA9/Gelert. The only other Llyn Brenig chick to return previously was KA5/Roli, born 2019. Roli has of course made several appearances at Glaslyn.

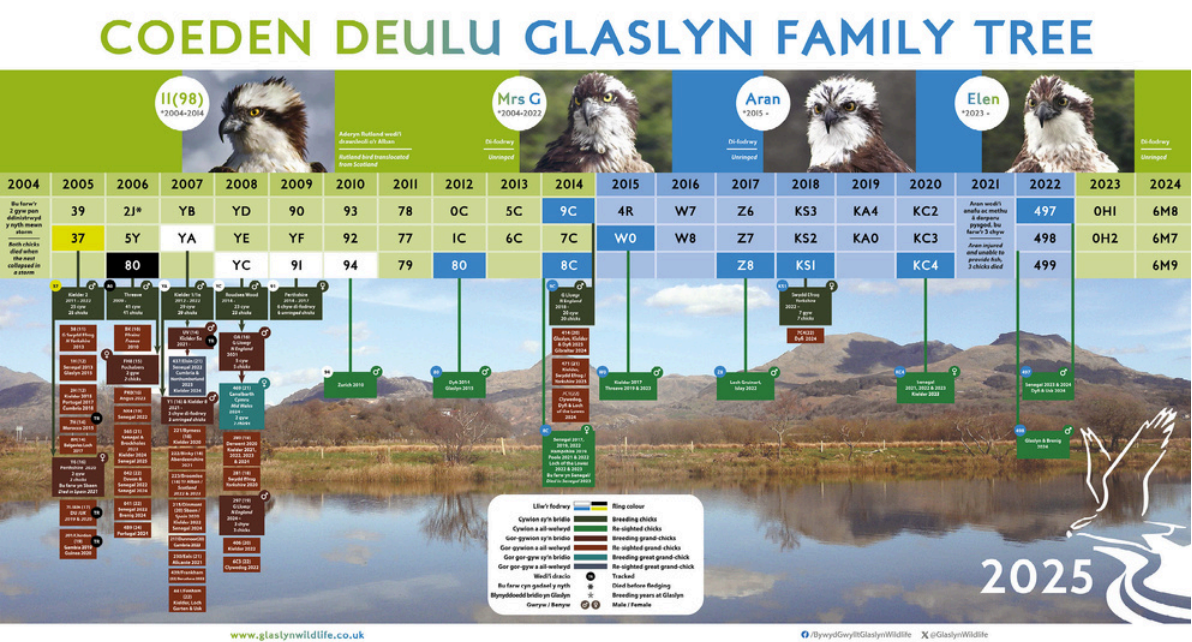
One of Mrs G's last brood Blue 498 was also a visitor as was grand-chick Blue 041 born at Threave in 2022.

Thank you, Glaslyn Ospreys, for inviting us to tell you all about the 2024 season at Llyn Brenig.



PHOTO CREDIT: DAVID WITTRICK

Family Tree



The latest edition of the Glaslyn Family Tree will be available soon to buy online and at the Visitor Centre. We were delighted to add two very important sightings in Wales in 2024 namely two of Mrs G's last brood, Blue 497 and Blue 498.

Join us

Do you have a passion for nature and conservation?
Would you like to make new friends and meet like-minded people?
Why not volunteer with us!

We are always looking for new people to join our team of volunteers, whether it be protecting and monitoring our Ospreys at the Protection Caban or engaging with people at our Visitor Centre.

If you are interested in learning more contact Heather Corfield
heather@glaslynwildlife.co.uk

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