

OSPREY OBSERVER



MARCH 2026

NEWS FROM GLASLYN OSPREYS



ARAN



014



ELEN



Z2/AERON



KC6/TEIFI

Here we go!

With high-definition cameras now on both the Glaslyn nest and Friends of the Ospreys' Pont Croesor nest visitors can look forward to seeing stunning live close-up pictures of two Osprey families this season.

We're hoping normal service will resume on the Glaslyn nest following last year's disappointment when there were no chicks for the first time since 2004.

Will Aran time his return this year to pair up once more with Elen or will K6/Teifi stake his claim on the nest again?

Thanks to our collaboration with Friends of the Ospreys viewers will also be able to watch live footage from their Pont Croesor nest where Z2/Aeron (Dyfi, 2017) and Blue 014 (Poole Harbour, 2018) have been successfully breeding since 2021, raising nine chicks. Our new camera will allow us to follow their story more closely, from their arrival, to nest-building, feeding, and witnessing those special moments when the chicks hatch and grow.

For double the drama, watch it all unfold on both nests from the Visitor Centre and on our live YouTube channel.



GLASLYN NEST



PONT CROESOR NEST

**The Visitor Centre will open
for the new season on
Monday 23 March at 10:30**

Inside

Lights, cameras, action!
Meet our newest Trustee
Swan survey
Glaslyn volunteers spread their wings

Ready and waiting

Work to prepare the Glaslyn nest and camera equipment for the return of the Ospreys got under way on 1 February.

Expert raptor conservationist Jimmi Hill of Raptor Aid and ecologist Sam Harmer of Rooted Climbing Ltd carried out annual maintenance work on the nest atop the 80-foot Silver Fir tree. The structure of the nest was checked for any damage, any gaps filled in and excessive soil and debris removed to reduce the weight.



One of the 4K cameras, which had been removed for repairs, was also successfully reinstalled and checked by technical consultant Andy Richards from CCW Solutions.



Jimmi and Sam returned on 20 February with Joe Cooper, Naturewise Ecology and worked through heavy rain, strong winds and the occasional clap of thunder to fix a new airFiber dish to the tree. During their previous visit the original dish was found to have been storm damaged.

The airFiber is a vital piece of equipment, as it brings the wireless communication link across the valley to the Visitor Centre. Andy Richards also replaced the dish on the Glaslyn Osprey Visitor Centre at Pont Croesor.

A big thank you to the team for working through atrocious weather conditions to ensure all the equipment is up and running.



Our **Chatters' Extra Time** event for Live Stream followers will be on the afternoon of Monday 6 July at Pont Croesor. Check our Facebook page nearer the time for details on how to book your place.

Great news – a new chapter

We are excited to share some fantastic news with our supporters and Osprey followers everywhere.

Bywyd Gwylt Glaslyn Wildlife is delighted to announce our collaboration with the Friends of the Ospreys, whose dedication to Osprey conservation in Wales is well-known. We now have an exciting new project at the Pont Croesor nest with the installation of a live-stream camera.

Viewers will be able to watch live footage from the Pont Croesor nest. Z2/Aeron (Dyfi, 2017) and Blue 014 (Poole Harbour, 2018) have been successfully breeding at this nest since 2021, raising nine chicks. Our new camera will allow us to follow their story more closely, from their arrival, to nest-building, feeding, and witnessing those special moments when the chicks hatch and grow.



Friends of the Ospreys manage the Pont Croesor nest and we thank them for enabling this new chapter in the Glaslyn Valley Ospreys success story.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. Together, we're helping Ospreys in the Glaslyn Valley and bringing their story closer to everyone.

Message posted on social media from Birds of Poole Harbour

We were ecstatic to learn that a new Osprey nest cam will start this spring, and not just any Osprey cam. We started our Osprey translocation back in 2017, releasing eight chicks in total that first year. One chick from that first year (LS7) did return as a two-year old, but sadly didn't arrive back after that and it was actually a chick from the 2018 cohort that finally established the first nesting attempt as a result of our project. That chick was female 014, and her chosen nesting location wasn't Poole, rather she decided upon Wales. 014 started nesting at the Pont Croesor nest site in 2021, and has successfully nested there each year since. Therefore it was brilliant news to hear that the Friends of the Ospreys group have partnered with Glaslyn to put a live stream webcam on her nest this spring and summer.

All of us here at BoPH have fond memories of 014, and she's an incredibly special bird for lots of reasons. So we thought it would be nice to show you some photos of the day she arrived in Poole and a photo of her two days after release in July 2018, looking fit and healthy.



Important update from Gill Pritchard, Chair, Board of Trustees, Bywyd Gwyllt Glaslyn Wildlife

As you will be aware we were very sad to report that we are unable to move forward with our planned land purchase of the Pont Croesor site, car park and adjoining field known as 'Traeth Bach'.

Unfortunately, the landowners decided to withdraw from negotiations due to business reasons. We understand that this is a challenging time for the farming community and it was not an easy decision for the landowners, especially as they are our landlords and have always been very supportive of BGGW. This was such an exciting project and we are all so sad that it will not happen now.

We had hoped to develop the Traeth Bach area into a vibrant riverside meadow which would enable native wildlife to thrive. As a conservation charity we had hoped to be part of nature recovery initiatives in Wales to protect and restore habitats.

However, all is not lost. Although our Traeth Bach plans will not be realised, we want to develop our existing Pont Croesor site and car park area to be more nature-friendly with hedge planting and by establishing a wildlife meadow and wetland. Improving biodiversity, even in a smaller area is worthwhile.

The intention was to fund the Traeth Bach project through the use of existing funds, grant funding and a targeted appeal which we launched at the end of August 2025 with the support of naturalist Iolo Williams. We were overwhelmed by the amazing response from members, volunteers and supporters and we easily reached our £35,000 appeal target.

Although all donors were subsequently given the option of a refund, so far we have not had a single request. We thank everyone for their many letters of support stating that we must use their donation as we think best. We have been overwhelmed by people's kindness and generosity. Our commitment to Osprey conservation in the Glaslyn Valley remains as strong as ever and we look forward to a new season and what will hopefully be a successful year for the Glaslyn Valley birds.

Remembering Alan Price

It is with great sadness we share the news that our long-standing Glaslyn Osprey Protection Volunteer Alan Price, passed away suddenly shortly before Christmas.

Alan first started volunteering at the Glaslyn Osprey Protection Site for the RSPB and continued as a regular volunteer when BGGW took over the management of the project in 2014.

He was a renowned wildlife photographer, winning many awards for his fantastic images. He regularly shared his wildlife photographs on the Glaslyn Osprey Group facebook page, which were always very popular with members of the group. Alan was also one of the judges of our very first photographic competition back in 2020. He will be greatly missed by us all and we will miss seeing his wonderful photographs of the natural world.

Our sincere condolences go to his partner Beth, his family and friends.



Meet the team

In this edition we introduce our newest Trustee Neil Atkinson who joins the team of eight other Bywyd Gwyllt Glaslyn Wildlife Board members who run the project.

Neil's involvement at Glaslyn goes back some 12 years when, visiting the area, he saw the yellow road signs pointing the way to Pont Croesor.

"I had always enjoyed walking and being outdoors and when I first visited the Osprey centre it really captured my imagination especially the live cameras which were beaming all the activity on the nest far and wide." recalled Neil.



A native of Liverpool, Neil moved to live to nearby Wirral as a teenager and later graduated in ancient history at Nottingham University. His first career was with the armed forces, when he joined the Army for three years. He then embarked on a new role in the brewery and pub management industry in the North West. In his late thirties however a career in education beckoned and he has been teaching primary children at a school on the Wirral, where he lives, ever since.

When he's not at work, and with a family caravan at Cricieth, Neil has also been able to volunteer at Glaslyn over the past ten years and particularly enjoys covering overnight shifts at the Protection site.

Back at school on the Wirral, he decided he could integrate his Glaslyn experience with his teaching as there were elements of the Ospreys' story he could transfer into the school curriculum. This resulted in him regularly showing the live stream to year four and five pupils, aged 8 to 10, as part of their studies.

"It fitted into the curriculum, covering life cycles, reproduction, habitats and adaptations," explained Neil. "The children love following developments on the nest during the season and some have independently gone on to visit Glaslyn with their families to see it all first hand."

Neil, who became a dad four years ago said: "Now that our little girl Eliza is older, I decided I would have more time to become a Trustee and I am delighted to be taking on that role. Now seems a good moment to do so as it is an exciting time of change for the project with the number of Ospreys in the area significantly increasing - at least 20 intruders last season alone.

"BGGW is a wonderful small independent charity with firm roots in the local community which has always been important to me. I look forward to playing my part in taking the project from strength to strength".

Neil has also embraced the local culture by learning Welsh.

"Near where we stay at our caravan in Cricieth, the landlord of the community run pub, in which we are also involved, having bought shares in it, commented that people visiting Spain or Greece might learn some basic phrases in those languages, so why not do so when visiting Wales. That's what prompted me to decide to learn the language and attend Welsh night classes at home on the Wirral," said Neil.

Neil was formally voted in as a new Trustee at the Annual General Meeting in December.

Swan survey



The wintering Whooper Swans in the Glaslyn Valley are monitored each month during the Wetland Bird Survey (WeBs) Core Count organised by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO).

The information we gather is passed to the BTO and helps to provide them with a good estimate of the total number of wetland birds present at the main wetland sites in the UK and Ireland. It does not account for any Whooper and Bewick's Swans that are present on non-wetland or temporarily flooded areas. Therefore, a more comprehensive International Swan Census is carried out every six years, focusing on Whooper and Bewick's Swans.

We were invited to take part in this census during the WeBs Core Count on January 18. We were required to record the total number of Whooper Swans seen and also had to note the number of juveniles and adults, as well as attempt to identify the number of family groups involved. We also had to record the type of habitat the swans were using. It was an interesting morning with three volunteers counting the large number of Whooper Swans that were mixed among Mute Swans and geese in the fields towards Llanfrothen.

We counted 59 Whooper Swans, of which nine were juveniles. We could only account for two distinct family groups, with three and two young respectively, they were slightly apart from the main group of swans. The remaining four juveniles were rather mobile among the Whooper Swans and were feeding in mixed groups that included Mute Swans and Greylag Geese, which made it impossible to link them to a specific Whooper Swan family. We did not record any Bewick's Swans, which are rarely seen in the area, but we did record five Pink-footed Geese. The next International Swan Survey will take place in 2032.

February WeBs count highlights

During the February Wetland Bird Survey on the Glaslyn Marshes we counted 42 Whooper Swans, along with 10 Mute Swans. We also recorded seven Russian White-fronted Geese amongst the Greylag Geese and large numbers of Canada Geese. Other notable sightings during the day were a Great White Egret close to the Visitor Centre, a single Shelduck and a Lapwing. The highlight of the day for the WeBs counting team was the incredible sight and sound of 11 Curlews who circled repeatedly above us making their haunting cries. A Whooper Swan family called to one another on the river at the same time, making it a truly memorable moment that more than made up for the cold wet weather.

Pictures: Joanne Harvey



Glaslyn Family Tree



The number of ringed ospreys has greatly increased over the past 20 years, with 50 young ringed at the Glaslyn nest alone, and consequently ring numbers are becoming harder to remember. Gone are the days of W0 or 9C; the oldest 2024 chick was given the ring number 6M8, which doesn't exactly trip off the tongue!

If you are finding it difficult to remember all these numbers, why not buy a copy of the 2026 Glaslyn Family Tree, available now from our online shop and from the Visitor Centre once we re-open on March 23. This smart poster gives the ring numbers of all the Glaslyn ringed chicks, with details as to where they have been seen since leaving the Glaslyn nest, their breeding success, and details of their own offspring that have been re-sighted.

With a copy pinned to your wall, the next time we mention that Blue 7C4 (Yorkshire 2022) has intruded at the Glaslyn nest, you will be able to nod knowingly that he is a son of KS1 (Glaslyn 2018) and therefore a grandson of Mrs G and Aran.

<https://www.glaslynwildlife.co.uk/shop/glaslyn-family-tree/>

Elsewhere in the UK...

Glaslyn volunteer Bronwen Lewis participated in an interesting public webinar recently hosted by Citizen Zoo, a leading urban rewilding organisation, to discuss the introduction of water voles and Ospreys to Welsh Harp, a reservoir in the London Borough of Brent.

Brittany Maxted, the Species Recovery Coordinator at Birds of Poole Harbour, raised the possibility of erecting nest platforms to encourage Ospreys passing through the landscape to breed there. Urban Ospreys are well-known in the USA, where there is, for example, a livestreamed nest at the edge of a parking lot in Hellgate, Montana. The translocation programme at Poole Harbour is demonstrating that Ospreys can adapt to a human-dominated landscape.

A site visit to Welsh Harp has thrown up challenges as well as opportunities - the reservoir is used for watersports, and there are many public paths, meaning that nests would probably have to be built out in the water. The quieter end of the reservoir already has a colony of Common Terns. Citizen Zoo hope to involve the local community in further survey work, to establish the feasibility of attracting Ospreys to breed in north London.

Did you know?

Mrs G now has 160 grandchildren, 22 great grandchildren and five great great grandchildren - that we know of!



Glaslyn volunteers spread their wings



A small group of Glaslyn volunteers – Joanne Harvey with her dog Boogie, Hedda Moore and Gail Edgley, equipped with spotting scopes, binoculars and cameras – met up on Sunday 8 February at Caernarfon Airport for a seasonal spot of birding on the tidal bay of Y Foryd.

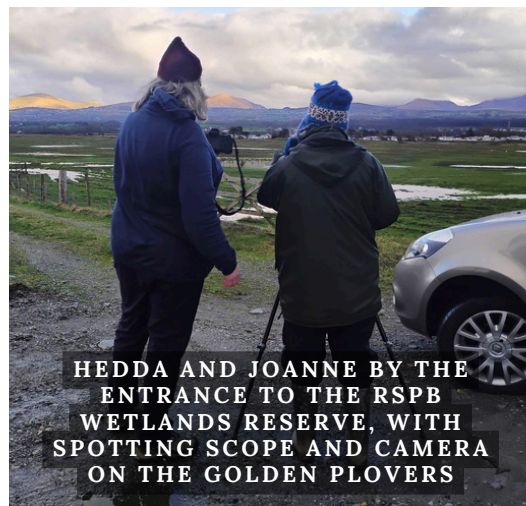
The trip was well-timed as, despite a few heavy downpours on arrival, a fortunate window of dry, sunny, albeit breezy conditions then presented, which, along with an incoming high tide, created a wonderful opportunity to enjoy the reserve and discover what wetland species were showing.

The primary quest – to spot the male Bufflehead duck, first seen at Y Foryd on 19 December – sadly wasn't to be (at least on that day) the last recorded sighting there being 29 January.

However, despite this Hedda's exacting records showed a wonderful total of 30 birds seen, of which five were new for her this year!

Sighting highlights for the group, in order of appearance were:

- a pair of Pintails with their characteristic elegant necks and elongated needle-like tail feathers
- splendid views of a male Goldeneye busily foraging with its striking black and white plumage, its dark greenish black head sheen shimmering in the sunlight
- three elusive Snipe with their distinctive long straight bills and camouflaged stripy bodies
- the stunning spectacle of hundreds of lapwings moving fast together through the air in beautiful dancing flight
- a pair of Brent Geese with their clean black head and neck, with the small white neck patch seen in adults



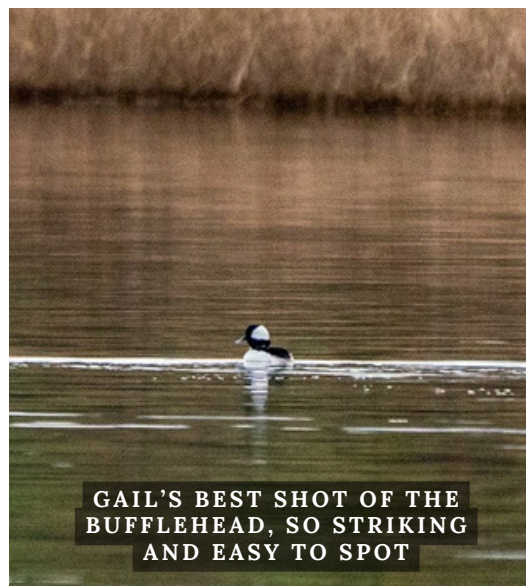
Refreshments in the award winning airport cafe, and then a final special spot of seven Golden Plover, incredibly well hidden in pale grasses on the wetlands of the RSPB Local Nature Reserve closer to Dinas Dinlle, completed a very enjoyable day.

Golden opportunity

Just one day later on 9 February an alert on BirdGuides showed the Bufflehead had been re-sighted at an inland lake on Anglesey!

So Gail and Hedda wasted no time, and early on the Tuesday morning were thrilled to spend several hours watching this very rare visitor to Wales busily foraging up and down the edge of the lake in calm waters. Particularly of note was its small size, the puffy 'helmet-head', the black-and-white feathers, the black with a lovely iridescent green and purple sheen, and the way it neatly dived to forage without making a splash!

On Friday 13 February Joanne too went to the same lake location in the hope of encountering the Bufflehead again. She soon found it, this time bobbing around in high winds and white horses. Yet, despite the challenging weather and water state, she was able to get some very nice close-ups with her superzoom lens.



Ospreys in The Gambia Education Programme

The ongoing peer-to-peer education programme Ospreys in The Gambia, run in partnership with Gunjur Project, recommenced in November. Two weekend sessions have been undertaken so far this winter, each consisting of a classroom-based day followed by a field visit to Gunjur beach and quarry the following day.

The first session in November was attended by 25 students, with a total of 16 Ospreys seen during the fieldtrip. This was followed by a second weekend workshop in January attended by 13 young people. A total of 32 Ospreys were seen, including a remarkable 25 along one 400m section of Gunjur beach, providing a memorable sight for the children.



THE JANUARY GROUP AT THE GUNJUR PROJECT



THE GROUP AT GUNJUR QUARRY

Each student received a copy of the book *Be an Osprey Expert*, published by OLF, to take home with them as part of the programme. The sessions were led by the young leaders who were trained by Brendan Ringstead and Sulayman Jabang at the Gunjur Project. It is pleasing to report that all of the young leaders are growing in confidence.

The young leaders also participated in a coastal survey of wintering Ospreys on Sunday 8th February.

Naffie Sarr, who we hope will visit Glaslyn this summer joined the group for the classroom session on in November to learn more about the programme. She is pictured with Emmanuel Jatta (right) and Dembo Jatta at the River Allahein near Kartong. All three are part of OLF's Evolving Conservation Leaders programme.



NAFFIE SARR WITH DEMBO JATTA
AND EMMANUEL JATTA

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

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