

Audubon Society of Rhode Island

RHODE ISLAND OSPREY REPORT

Volume 5 · 2014

The Rhode Island Osprey Monitoring Project by Jon Scoones



Feeding time! Photo by Luis Mendes

What is the Rhode Island Osprey Monitoring Project?

The Osprey Monitoring project was initiated in 1977 by the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) to record the breeding success of Ospreys and to document their recovery from the effects of the pesticide DDT. In 2010 RIDEM passed management of the project to Audubon. Volunteer monitors continue to observe the state's Osprey population in order to help us monitor the health of osprey habitat throughout Rhode Island. It is a great testament to the dedication of Audubon's volunteer monitors that this citizen-science program continues to thrive and record important data, not to mention the great photographs taken of these amazing raptors!

In 2014 monitors logged over 819 hours in the field! They recorded more successful nests producing more fledglings than has been recorded since 1977!

Looking through past Osprey Reports, I was pleased to see the wonderful gains made by Rhode Island's Osprey population; from 8 fledglings in 1977 to 186 this past year! Be sure to read the Results section starting on page 3.

Observing Osprey provides us with information about the health of our local ecosystems. By watching these sentinels, we not only learn more about wildlife and natural habitats, but also the level of our impact on these special places and unique species.



Did You Know?

- BALD EAGLES AND OSPREYS INHABIT SIMILAR HABITAT
- BALD EAGLES WILL HARASS OSPREYS TO DROP PREY
- OSPREY MIGRATION
 IS STUDIED USING
 CELL PHONE TOWERS

Osprey platforms from the late 1800s remain intact By W. DeWolf Fulton

Among Osprey enthusiasts in the late 1800's, my great grandfather Dr. Herbert Marshall Howe left behind some of the original man-made nesting platforms that supported nesting Osprey populations at the turn of the 19th century.

Bird lover and outdoorsman, Dr. Howe owned waterfront land on Bristol's Ferry Point and erected perhaps the earliest known Osprey platforms from steel pipe with spoked industrial wheels attached to the top to support the nests. One of the posts, over 20 feet high, was erected behind Howe's home on a Ferry Road site now the residence of Roger Williams University's president. The other post, somewhat shorter, was nearby to the west on the property of a home he built for his daughter overlooking Hog Island.

Both posts supported active nests in their day, and Howe preserved their memory in his personal photographs, which also still

Inside this issue:

Articles	2
2014 Nesting Results	3
2014 Nesting Activity by City	5
Volunteers	13
Get Involved	14

(Continued on page 2)



Dr. Howe's Osprey platform with nest c. 1885, Hog Island and Low House in background.

Dr. Howe's Osprey platform and hedge blind (foreground) current day.

(Continued from page 1)

exist. One shows the post to the west of his home supporting a substantial nest, the famed Low House and Hog Island clearly in the background.

Dr. Howe, son of Bishop Mark Anthony De-Wolf and Elizabeth (Marshall) Howe, was born 1844 in Roxbury, Mass. He was educated at the Rectory School (Hamden, CT), served as a medical cadet in Philadelphia during the Civil War, received his M.D. from Univ. of Pennsylvania in 1865 and became a physician and industrialist.

He had many business interests in his life and maintained a residence in Philadelphia, but it was his love of Narragansett Bay, which drew him to Bristol each summer. He built several residences in this area and three of the properties remain with his descendants' families who gather each summer in number. He correctly knew that his descendents would always return to beautiful south Bristol.

During his time, this landscape was very different from today. It was dominated by agricultural land use resulting in a minimal number of suitable trees to support Osprey nests. Dr. Howe's platforms may have been the only structure to support a nesting pair in the surrounding landscape.

However, today, Ospreys no longer nest on either of these platforms. My brother Frank

and I now maintain the relic posts as proud lawn ornaments and testament to our great grandfather's Osprey enthusiasm.

It appears my great grandfather's enthusiasm for Ospreys extended beyond just the platforms. I recently discovered an overgrown privet hedge 35 feet from one of the Osprey towers, planted in the shape of a 6 by 10 foot box with a clear opening at one end. It appears the hedges served as an observation blind, built by Dr. Howe probably to watch these magnificent birds and most likely photograph them up close.

To honor my great grandfather's Osprey conservation efforts, I hope to build two Osprey towers in the area, including one in a field at Roger Williams University east shore overlooking Mt. Hope Bay (in conjunction with Eric Walsh and RWU adjunct faculty member and ornithologist Charles Clarkson). Until my mother (and Dr. Howe's granddaughter) sold it to Roger Williams University (RWU), the property was Dr. Howe's Ferrycliffe Farm. I am quite certain he would approve of the new nesting sites.

-W. DeWolf Fulton, Bristolian and bird enthusiast, teaches English in Providence public schools. "BOTH POSTS SUPPORTED ACTIVE NESTS IN THEIR DAY, AND HOWE PRESERVED THEIR MEMORY IN HIS PERSONAL PHOTOGRAPHS"



Dr. Herbert Marshall Howe

2014 Monitoring Results by Eric Walsh

Summary: In 2014, 66 volunteers monitored 199 known Osprey nest sites across Rhode Island. Of the 199 nests, 127 were considered active. Of the active nests, 105 produced at least one fledgling, while a total of 186 young Ospreys successfully fledged.

The Rhode Island breeding population produced an average of 1.77 fledglings per successful nest and 1.46 fledglings per active nest.

There were 54 inactive nest sites and 5 "housekeeping" nests. A "housekeeping nest" is a nest with Ospreys present but no observable incubation. Often these nests are built by sub-adult ospreys.

The town with the greatest number active nests (17) and fledglings (27) was Barrington . South Kingstown had the second greatest total fledgling count (23).

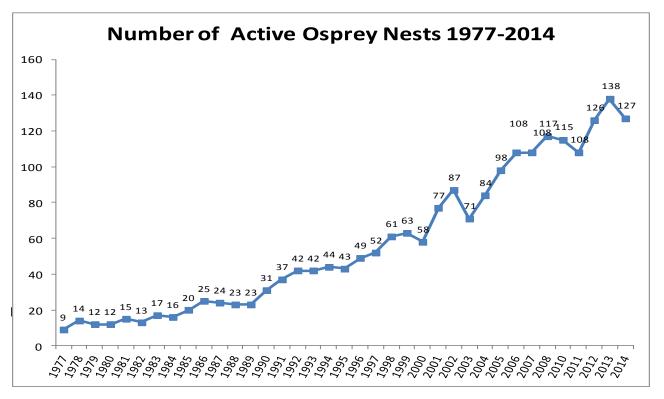
Glossary

Unknown: Observations or input was inconclusive Not Active: No nesting behavior observed Housekeeping: Osprey present at nest; nests are incomplete; no incubation behavior observed Active Nests: Mating/incubation behavior was observed Successful: Fledgling(s) observed Eledgling: Young bird with flight feathers

Fledgling: Young bird with flight feathers



Osprey at Allin's Cove Photo by David Winsor



Osprey Nesting Results Over Time

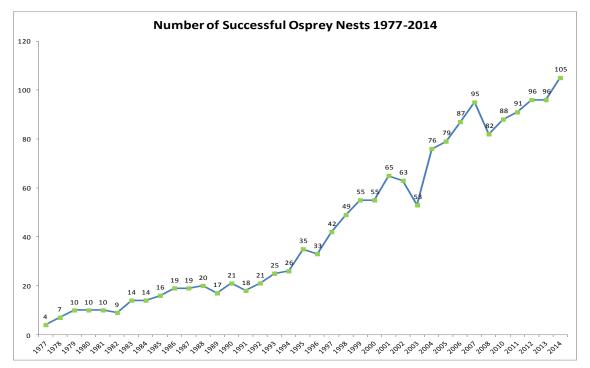


Figure 2. The total number of successful nest sites documented each year since the RI Osprey Monitoring Project began.

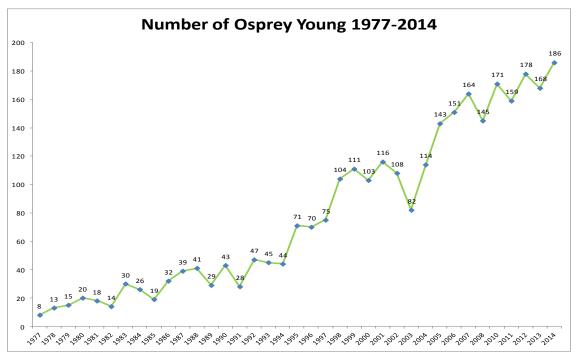


Figure 3. The total number of fledged ospreys documented each year since the RI Osprey Monitoring Project began.

Rhode Island Osprey Nesting Activity 2014

Nest sites observed: 199 Successful nests: 105 Active nests (eggs and incubation/includes Successful): 127 Housekeeping nests (Osprey present no incubation): 5 Inactive nest sites: 54 Unknown: 13 Total fledged young: 186 Average number of fledged young per active nest: 1.46 Average number of fledged young per successful nest: 1.77

City	Nest Name	Status	Fledged
Barrington			
	100 Acre Cove (Cove Ave)	Successful	1
	100 Acre Cove (Isl)	Active	
	100 Acre Tongue S	Active	
	Adam's Pt.	NotActive	
	Allins Cove E	NotActive	
	Allins Cove W	Successful	4
	Barneyville Rd	Successful	1
	Barrington H.S.	Successful	1
	Bourne Lane	Successful	2
	Brickyard Pond	Successful	3
	Cranesbill	NotActive	
	George St./Nockum Hill	Successful	1
	Johannis Farm Midway	Successful	3
	Johannis Farm N	Successful	2
	Johannis Farm S	Successful	1
	Little Mussachuck Creek 1	Successful	1
	Little Mussachuck Creek 2	NotActive	
	Nagtegaal Nest	NotActive	
	Osamequin	Successful	2
	Palmer River (Silviera)	Successful	1
	Rumstick Pt.	Successful	3
	Smith's Cove	Successful	1
	Sowams Tree Nest	NotActive	
		Total	27
Block Island			
	Block Island Power	Successful	2

City	Nest Name	Status	Fledged
		Total	2
Bristol			
	Audubon EEC	NotActive	
	Audubon EEC Tree Nest Platform	NotActive	
	Bristol Transfer Station	Active	
	Mill Cove	Successful	2
	Mill Gut	Successful	Э
	Mill Gut Tree Nest	Successful	1
	Musselbed Shoals Light	Successful	1
	Peter Road Cell Tower	Successful	2
	Siembab Nest	Active	
	Tupelo Street Cell Tower	Active	
		Total	g
Charlestown			
	Burdickville East	Active	
	Burdickville West	NotActive	
	Burdickville Westest	NotActive	
	Quonochontaug Pond	Active	
	Rt. 2 & Rt. 112	NotActive	
	Shumankunuc Rd.	NotActive	
	West Pond	Active	
		Total	
Coventry			
	Waterman Hill	Active	
		Total	
East Greenwich			
	American Legion Post	Successful	2
	Uncle Bob's Self Storage	Successful	1
	oncie bob s sen storage		5

City	Nest Name	Status	Fledge
East Providence			
	Bold Point	Unknown	
	Bucklin Hill	Successful	
	Bucklin Hill North	Unknown	
	Bucklin Hill Point	Successful	
	Catamore Blvd.	Unknown	
	East Bay Manor	Unknown	
	Hasbro	Successful	
	Marnoch Drive	Successful	
	Mink Road	Unknown	
	Mobil Tank Farm 1	NotActive	
	Mobil Tank Farm 3	Unknown	
	Omega Pond	Successful	
		Total	
Exeter			
	Metcalf Marsh	Unknown	
		Total	
Hopkinton			
	Hopkinton ACO/DPW	NotActive	
	Narragansett Way N	NotActive	
	Narragansett Way S	Active	
	Potter Hill East	Successful	
	Potter Hill East Potter Hill West	Successful NotActive	
	Potter Hill West	NotActive	
	Potter Hill West Potter Hill Wester	NotActive Successful	
	Potter Hill West Potter Hill Wester Tomaquag	NotActive Successful Successful	
Jamestown	Potter Hill West Potter Hill Wester Tomaquag	NotActive Successful Successful Successful	
Jamestown	Potter Hill West Potter Hill Wester Tomaquag	NotActive Successful Successful Successful	
Jamestown	Potter Hill West Potter Hill Wester Tomaquag Wood River Golf Course	NotActive Successful Successful Successful Total	
Jamestown	Potter Hill West Potter Hill Wester Tomaquag Wood River Golf Course Beavertail	NotActive Successful Successful Successful Total Successful	

City	Nest Name	Status	Fledged
	Lawn Ave. School	Successful	3
	Marsh Meadows	Successful	2
	Palmieri Property	Active	
		Total	11
Lincoln			
	Valley Falls Pond	NotActive	
		Total	
Little Compton			
	Goose Wing Beach	NotActive	
	Haeffenreffer 1	Successful	2
	Round Pond	NotActive	
		Total	2
Middletown			
	Coddington Cove	Successful	1
		Total	1
Narragansett			
	50 Barnacle Dr.	Successful	1
	Canonchet Farm	Successful	2
	Christofaro Park	Successful	1
	Galilee Bird Sanctuary	Successful	2
	Galilee Escape Rd.	Successful	2
	Indian Rock Rd.	Successful	1
	Lake Canonchet	Active	
	Long Cove	NotActive	
	Marine Drive	Successful	2
	Narragansett Elem. School	Successful	2
	Narrow River Mouth	Successful	1
	Pt. Judith Pond Sunnybrook Farm	Successful	2
	Salt Pond Plaza	Successful	1

City	Nest Name	Status	Fledged
	Sprague Park	Successful	:
	Wastewater Treatment Facility	NotActive	
		Total	19
Newport			
	Freebody Park	Successful	:
	Gooseberry Beach	NotActive	
	Hazard Marsh	NotActive	
	Navy Yard S	Housekeeping	
		Total	
North Kingstown			
	Bailey Rd.	NotActive	
	Mainsail Drive	NotActive	
	McGinn Park	Successful	
	North Kingstown Dog Pound	Active	
	North Kingstown High School North	NotActive	
	North Kingstown High School South	Active	
	Northrup Road	NotActive	
	Old Baptist Rd	Successful	
	Pendar Rd.	Active	
	Quonset - Allen's Harbor	NotActive	
	Rabbit Island	NotActive	
	Ryan Park	Successful	
	Snuff Mill Rd. & Rt. 1A	Successful	
		Total	
Portsmouth			
	Bay Point Inn/DPW Cell Tower	NotActive	
	Bristol Harbor Rock	Successful	
	Carr Point Left Field	Successful	
	Carr Point Right Field	NotActive	
	Hog Island	Housekeeping	
	Jepson Rd. Substation	Successful	

City	Nest Name	Status	Fledged
	Melville	Successful	2
	Portsmouth Fire Department	Successful	2
	Town Pond 1	NotActive	
	Town Pond 2	Successful	2
	Town Pond 3	NotActive	
		Total	14
Providence			
	Port of Providence	Unknown	
	Roger Williams Park	NotActive	
		Total	
Prudence Island			
	Coggeshell Cove	Successful	1
	Gull Point	Successful	1
	Nags Creek N	Active	
	Nags Creek S	Successful	3
	Potter Cove	Successful	1
	Sheep Pen Cove	NotActive	
		Total	6
Richmond			
	Beaver River/Rt. 138	Successful	1
	Buttonwoods Rd.	NotActive	
	RPE Waste Services Cell Tower	Successful	1
	Rt. 95 /Old Switch Rd.	Successful	1
		Total	3
Scituate			
	Clayville	Unknown	
		Total	
South Kingstown			
	Billington Cove	NotActive	

City	Nest Name	Status	Fledged
	Broad Rock Athletic Fields	NotActive	
	Buttonwood Pt	Housekeeping	
	Factory Pond	Successful	2
	Great Swamp IMP #1 (Water)	Successful	2
	Great Swamp IMP #2 (Water)	Successful	2
	Great Swamp IMP #3 (Water)	Successful	1
	Great Swamp IMP #4 (Water)	Successful	2
	Great Swamp IMP #5 (South)	Housekeeping	
	Great Swamp IMP #6 (South)	Housekeeping	
	Great Swamp IMP #7	NotActive	
	Great Swamp IMP #8	NotActive	
	Great Swamp Range	NotActive	
	Great Swamp Substation	Successful	1
	Jerusalem Lab	Successful	1
	Old Mountain Field	Successful	2
	Pettaquamscutt Cove West	Successful	2
	Pond St.	Successful	3
	Potter's Pond	Successful	1
	Rose Hill	NotActive	
	Shannock Rd	NotActive	
	Succotash Water Tower	NotActive	
	Theatre by the Sea	Unknown	
	Trustom Pond Osprey Point	Successful	1
	Trustom Pond Otter Point	Successful	3
	Turner Cove 1	NotActive	
	Turner Cove 2	NotActive	
		Total	23
Swansea			
	Merriman's Pond #3	Active	
	Merriman's Pond 2	Successful	2
		Total	2

City	Nest Name	Status	Fledged
Tiverton			
	Fogland Marsh	NotActive	
	Ruecker Refuge	NotActive	
	Tiverton Land Fill	Successful	4
		Total	4
Warren			
	Belcher Cove Middle	Active	
	Belcher Cove N	Successful	1
	Brown St.	NotActive	
	Cell Tower Near FedEx	Active	
	Charley's Platform	NotActive	
	Fatima High School	Successful	2
	First Student Nest	Successful	2
	Jacob's Point	Successful	1
	Kickemuit Middle School	Successful	3
	Market St. Land Nest	Successful	2
	Palmer River Tree Nest	Successful	1
	Swansea Golf Club N	Successful	2
	Swansea Golf Club S	Active	
	Veteran's Field Nest	Active	
	Wujick Farm Nest	Successful	1
		Total	15
Warwick			
	CCRI	Unknown	
	Mickey Stevens	Successful	1
	Pawtuxet River-Electronics Drive	Unknown	
	Rocky Hill School	Active	
	Sleepy Hollow Farm	Successful	1
	Washington Trust Bank	Successful	2
		Total	4

West Greenwich

City	Nest Name	Status	Fledged
	Big River Mgt. Area	NotActive	
		Total	
West Warwick			
	Bucci Insurance	Successful	1
		Total	1
Westerly			
	Avondale	Successful	2
	Breen Road Island	Successful	2
	Maschaug Pond	NotActive	
	Misquamicut West	Successful	3
	Napatree Pt. W	Successful	2
	Pee Wee Football	Successful	2
	Rt. 78 & Rt. 91	Unknown	
	Tom Harvey Rd.	Successful	1
	Westerly Police	NotActive	
	Winnapaug	Successful	3
	Winnapaug Breach Dr.	NotActive	
		Total	15
		Total	186



American Welding Nest in W. Greenwich Photo by Laura Landon

Napatree Point Photo by Janice Sassi



A Thank You to Our Volunteers...

The Osprey monitoring program would not be possible without dedicated volunteers. This year 65 volunteers reported on the status of 199 nest sites around Rhode Island. We'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge them and thank them for their time and efforts.

David	Abell	Maris	Humphries	Laura	Rosenthal
Mark	Anderson	Dick	Hutchins	Paula	Samos
Mary	Arakelian	Rick	Johnson	Paul	Sanromá
Charlie	Biddle	David	Jones	Janice	Sassi
				Sandra	Saunders
Finn	Brudevold	Rick and	Jurczack	Eric	Shaw
Mary Jane	-	Richard	Kaiser	Barbara	Sherman
Alex	Carlino	Mary	Ladouceur	Susan	Silvia
Jane	Carlson-Pickering	Laura	Landon	Tracy	Silvia
Jim	Cole	Butch	Lombardi	Charlotte	Sornborger
Barbara	Costa	Leslie	MacDougall	Prentice	Stout
Wendy	Davis	Grace	MacPhee	Barbara	Sullivan Watts
Cindy	Dibble	Jim	McEnaneny	Andy	Thompson
Claus	Emerling	Bill	, McMullen	Karin	Walker
Mark	Emmanuelle	Luis	Mendes	Jean	Whatley
Ann	Ferguson	Joop	Nagtegaal	Cheryl	Wiitala
Jennifer	France	Jerrod	O'Connor	Andrew	Winner
Nancy	Fritz	Susan	Orban	David	Winsor
Michael	Gerhardt	Jennifer	Osojnicki	Sandra	Wynacht
Amy	Hagen	Jane	Pavitt		,
Jay	Higgins	Jill	Peterson		
Rita	Holohan	Julie	Polana		
Cynthia	Hosley				



...And Best Wishes to Eric Walsh!

Eric Walsh is an architect of the program and has been a stalwart supporter for several years. With a steady hand and a ready smile he helped to bring the program into the 21st century with the addition of a GIS map of nest sites, database for historical & current data, and a user-friendly website.

Eric currently maintains the website, compiles the observation data and answers a myriad of Osprey-related questions from all of us. And somehow he found time to obtain his Masters degree from the University of Rhode Island! Come Spring, Eric will be stepping away from the program to obtain his Doctorate. We wish him good luck and many thanks for his tireless support of the Osprey monitoring program.

GET INVOLVED: Support the RI Osprey Monitoring Project!

Volunteer to monitor an Osprey nest: Commit to observe one or more nests every two weeks from April through August. Monitors are especially needed in southern Rhode Island.

Interested in being a monitor? Attend one of our orientation sessions and join the fun!

- March 8 in Charlestown @ 2:30
- March 15 in Bristol @ 4:00
- March 22 in Smithfield @ 2:30

Osprey Monitor Orientation

Contact Jon Scoones to find out more: jscoones@asri.org or 401-949-5454 x3044.

- **Donate supplies**: Spotting scopes, binoculars, and GPS units are all very much needed to improve monitoring. Powerful computers that can efficiently run GIS software would also be helpful; contact Jon Scoones for details.
- **Become a member**: Your tax deductible membership dollars help support not only the Osprey program, but education, conservation and advocacy programs across the state. A membership form is on the back page of this publication, or you can go to <u>www.asri.org</u> to join or donate online.

Rhode Island Osprey Monitoring Website

All monitoring forms, information, instructions, maps and updates can be found at: <u>www.riosprey.info</u>

Support Environmental Conservation through Education Order an Osprey License Plate



Plate Fee is \$41.50*

*\$21.50 pays for the production of the plates and \$20 supports the environmental education programs of Audubon Society of Rhode Island and Save The Bay.

Note: A \$10 fee will be added upon renewal of your registration to support environmental education.

Visit <u>www.asri.org</u> and click on the Osprey plate for your form to order an Osprey plate.



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The Audubon Society of Rhode Island was founded in 1897. Today, with 17,000 members and supporters, the Audubon Society of Rhode Island is dedicated to education, land conservation and advocacy. Audubon independently protects or owns almost 9,500 acres of woodlands and coastal property embracing diverse natural habitats. More than 33,000 students from area schools participate annually in our educational programs. A voice in statewide ecological issues, the Society actively fulfills its environmental stewardship through preservation and protection of Rhode Island's natural heritage.

Audubon is a donor-supported organization. Everything we do is made possible by the generosity of donors like you. If you value programs such as Osprey monitoring, the conservation of wildlife habitat, good environmental policy, and school programs that education children about the amazing natural world around them, then please join us and become a member today.

Become a member today!

1.) Join By Mail: Fill out the form below and mail it to Audubon Society of Rhode Island, 12 Sanderson Road, Smithfield, RI 02917.

2.) Join Online: Visit www.asri.org/join/member.html to read more about membership benefits. Click "Join us!" for the secure web link.

Yes! I want to support the Audubon Society of Rhode Island's mission of protecting the state's natural resources.

Standard Benefits for all membership categories

- Free admission to the Environmental Education Center (EEC) •
- Exclusive members-only events and product sales
- Free access to 13 ASRI Wildlife Refuges
- Monthly member email updates
- Discounts on facility rentals
- Discounts at our Nature Gift Shops
- Access to Audubon's Library for books, tapes and videos
- New Member Package including map of ASRI refuges
- Invitations to special events
- Discounted program, lecture and workshop fees
- Discounts on Summer Camp and Birthday Parties
- Year subscription to Report, our bi-monthly newsletter
- Access to Voice of Audubon; wildlife telephone alert

🗖 Individual \$35	Family Plus \$55	Defender \$100	Conservator \$500
Family \$45	Steward \$75	Advocate \$250	Benefactor \$1,000

* contributions and dues in excess of \$3.00 are deductible for tax purposes as permitted by law and are eligible for corporate and matching gifts.

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□ Yes! Sign me up for	eWing, an e-newslett	ter of Audubon events and	d news.		

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