

Osprey

Pandion haliaetus



Photo by: George DeCamp - Osprey in Kings Park, Long Island



Photo by: Scott Kruitbosch - Osprey nest at Long Beach West

The Osprey, also called a Seahawk, is a unique hawk (they get their own family!) that, unlike other raptors, preys almost exclusively on fish. Ospreys are commonly found along shorelines and other bodies of water looking for fish. Though more common nowadays, they were endangered in the past due to pesticides that thinned its eggshells. It is the OFFICIAL Nassau County bird, having been elected in 2006 with assistance by the Garden City Bird Sanctuary. Over 11,000 votes were cast. During 2014 a young, male osprey was a frequent visitor at the Garden City Bird Sanctuary, living off of fish caught at nearby stormwater basins and backyard ponds.

Thank you Crystal Chang for creating this datasheet May 2015

Description

Size and Shape- Large, distinctive hawk with a slender body, narrow wings, and a kink on its wings.

Color Pattern- White belly, head, and neck; brown stripes down side of face; brown and sometimes white wings and body; striped white and black under wings and tail.

Behavior- Flies by steadily beating its wings over bodies of water to look for prey, and lunges feet-first when prey is spotted.

Song- Loud chirps

Habitat- Near any body of water such as rivers, lakes, estuaries, ponds, salt marshes, reservoirs, and anywhere with fish.

Range- Northeast through Canada during summer; South America during winter.

Diet- Mostly fish, saltwater or freshwater, usually about 5-16 inches long. Rarely eats anything else, such as mammals.

Bird Statistics

Scientific name- *Pandion haliaetus*

Family- Pandionidae

Conservation Status- Least Concern

Length- 21.3-22.8 in (54-58 cm)

Wingspan- 59.1-70.9 in (150-180 cm)

Weight- 49.4-70.5 oz (1400-2000 g)

Egg Statistics

Color- Cream with red-brown speckles

Nest- Sticks lined with grass on a tall place with an open surrounding near water

Clutch size- 1-4

Number of broods- 1

Length- 2.2-2.7 in (5.5-6.8 cm)

Width- 1.7-2 in (4.2-5 cm)

Incubation period- 36-42 days

Nestling period- 50-55 days

Further Information

Additional sources of information regarding the “election” of the osprey as the Official Nassau County Bird are included below:

<http://archive.nassaucountyny.gov/agencies/legis/countybird.html>

<http://archive.nassaucountyny.gov/agencies/Legis/LD/16/NewsRelease/2006/102006birdwinnerjj.html>

<http://m.gcnnews.com/news/2007-02-16/Community/O48.html#.VVl8N5hO2uk>

<http://longislandsoundstudy.net/2010/07/osprey/>

<http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Osprey/id>

<http://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/osprey>

<http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/birds/osprey/>