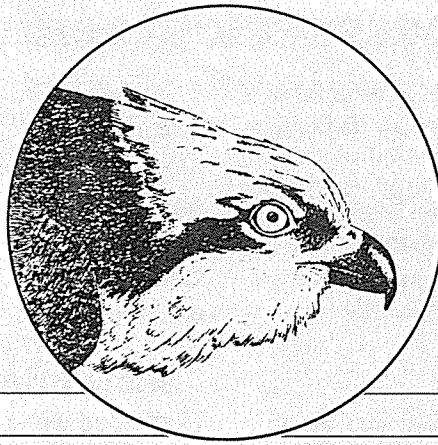


The International Osprey Foundation



Osprey Observer

SANIBEL, FL

FEBRUARY, 1992

'Burrowing Owls of Cape Coral' is topic for TIOF annual meeting March 24

Cindy Bear, who headed a five-year monitoring project on burrowing owls in Cape Coral, will describe these fascinating ground nesting raptors at the annual meeting of The International Osprey Foundation. The meeting will start at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 24 in the Sanibel Community Center.

Bear is a teacher of environmental education with the Lee County School Board. Her presentation, entitled "The Burrowing Owls of Cape Coral," will outline the findings of the project, the first ever carried out on Florida burrowing owls, which are a species of special concern. She will show slides to illustrate her talk about the life history, feeding habits and other characteristics of these small owls.

She said 25% of the owls' burrows were destroyed as a result of construction during the nesting season in the first year of the survey. Last year only 1% were lost and the owls now are "holding their own," she said.

Cindy Bear has a BSc. in wildlife ecology from the University of Florida and was a naturalist at the Lee County Nature Center for two years. She was on the board of the Southwest Florida Audubon Society for six years, two of them as president and is currently the vice chairman of Lee County's Bald Eagle Technical Advisory Council.

The evening's program will begin with a short business meeting during which Hartley Kleinberg, coordinator of TIOF's osprey nest monitoring program, will give a brief update on the program, now in its third year.

The recipient of TIOF's third annual \$1,000 research grant will be announced.

Members and non-members alike are invited to attend the annual meeting. A \$3 donation is requested of non-members.

Sanibel ospreys are faring well

The osprey population maintained status quo during the 1991 nesting season on Sanibel, despite a drought which sent other bird species' numbers crashing.

TIOF project director Mark "Bird" Westall said ospreys' resilience was partly due to their ability to feed off fish species that are not their usual fare if their main prey declines.

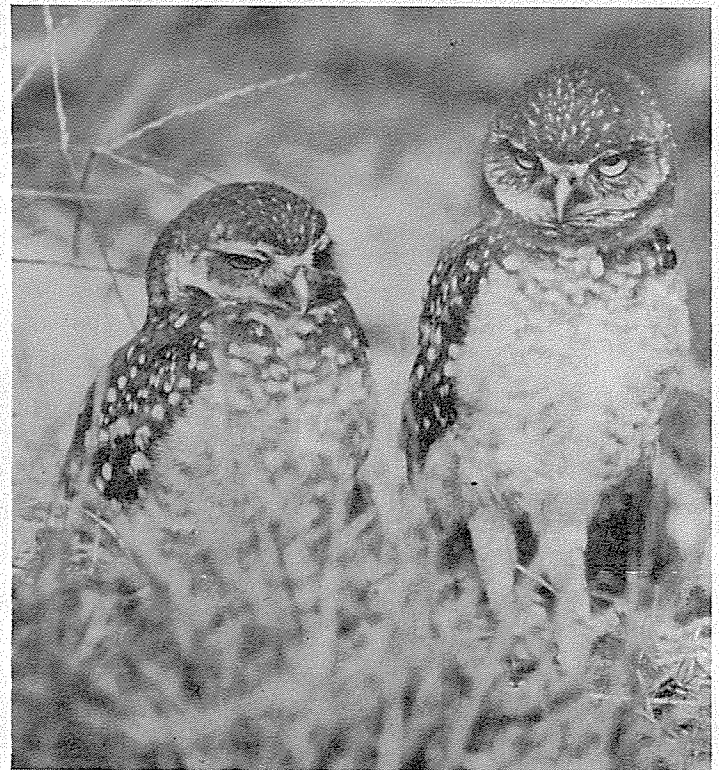
That was especially heartening in a year when wading bird populations dwindled.

An increase in nesting activity is reported this year and a number of new nests sites have been reported in addition to the 69 existing active nests on the island. TIOF volunteer nest monitoring groups have documented at least five new nest sites. We are noticing some ospreys attempting — some successfully — to nest on chimneys, power poles and lamp posts.

With a healthy osprey population come increasing osprey/people problems that may result in incidents like

that at Fort Myers Beach recently, when an osprey was shot after trying to nest on someone's boat.

Many of these incidents can be avoided. We'd like to remind everyone that flat-topped chimneys often prove irresistible to ospreys in the nesting season and we urge people building new homes in areas where ospreys are active to consider the chimney design carefully if they want to avoid unwelcome guests. Westall would be happy to pass on suggestions.



These young owls stay close to their burrow. Photograph: Ken Riddick, Fort Myers News-Press.

TIOF board members seek to renew two-year terms

All nine members of the board of The International Osprey Foundation have reached the end of their two-year terms and all are seeking reelection.

At the annual meeting March 24 in Sanibel Community Center, members will be asked to return them to the board for another two years. Paid-up members may make nominations from the floor.

For your information, here is the slate:

NORMAN BOWLES, a native of Durham, NC, graduated from UNC Medical School and after postgraduate training in Atlanta, GA, practiced medical pathology in the Atlanta area until he retired to Sanibel in 1985.

Since then he has been active as a volunteer with the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation, FISH of Sanibel, as a nest monitoring group leader with The International Osprey Foundation, and the City of Sanibel Wildlife Committee.

HARTLEY KLEINBERG, a graduate electrical engineer, was director of electronic design at a division of ITT in New Jersey.

He moved to Sanibel in 1989 and has been a volunteer with TIOF for the last three years, first as co-ordinator of volunteers, then as a nest monitoring group leader and, just recently as a board member, filling out the unexpired term after the resignation of board member Frank Irvin.

ERICK LINDBLAD has been executive director of Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation since 1986. He also serves on the City of Sanibel Wildlife Committee.

Before coming to Sanibel, he was the director of Newfound Harbor Marine Institute at Seacamp in the Florida Keys.

DAVID LOVELAND, TIOF's president since 1988, has been on the board for five years. He has been actively involved in the osprey nest-monitoring program starting in 1986 until this year.

He is a principal planner in charge of transportation activities for the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council.

ANNE MITCHELL, vice president and newsletter editor for TIOF, was born in Yorkshire, England, and moved to Sanibel in 1981. She is in her second season as a group leader for the osprey nest-monitoring program.

A lifelong journalist, she is a former editor of the Sanibel-Captiva Island Reporter and now works as a business writer for the Fort Myers News-Press.

BOB SOUTHERN is in his third year on the TIOF board. He helped with nest monitoring and later acted as group leader when the volunteer program was established. He is director of operations at Shell Point Village, Fort Myers. He moved to the area from Baltimore, MD, in 1979.

RITA SOUTHERN is in her second year as a board member. Like her husband, Bob, she helped with nest monitoring and has been involved with the volunteer program as well. She is director of supportive services at Shell Point Village. Rita moved here from Omaha, Neb. five years ago.

NORMAN R. "TAD" STURGIS came to Sanibel 10 years ago with his wife Linda after 30 years in Saranac Lake, NY where they owned and operated the Adirondack Store and Gallery.

He is actively involved in conservation and environmental projects here on Sanibel and in Maine, where he and his wife spend their summers.

MARK "BIRD" WESTALL, TIOF's treasurer and project director, moved to Sanibel in 1978, shortly after graduating from Indiana University. He founded The International Osprey Foundation in 1981 and served as its president until 1988.

He currently serves as Lee County's Eagle Technical Advisory Committee's chairman and is a councilman and vice-mayor of the City of Sanibel.

□ □ □

The TIOF board is sorry to lose **FRANK IRVIN**, who has been an enthusiastic and valued member. Frank resigned recently due to other commitments. Thanks for all you've done, Frank.

Lifetime members

TIOF has been delighted to welcome three lifetime members as the past year and is grateful for their financial support.

They are Jane Widener Forsyth and Bill and Helen Webb. Bill Webb is a former TIOF board member.

The Webbs' \$500 donation goes into the general fund while Jane Forsyth earmarked her \$500 donation for the endowment fund which each year awards a \$1,000 grant for Osprey or raptor research.

A friend in need . . .

We're looking for someone willing to offer occasional secretarial help, such as handling mail requests and typing a letter from time to time. If you'd like to help, call Janie Westall at 472-5218.

A good move for Bay Drive ospreys

A pair of ospreys that tried to get squatters' rights on the chimney of a house on Sanibel's Bay Drive last October has been given more suitable quarters, courtesy Sanibel City Hall.

A concerned neighbor, noticing the birds' unwelcome attentions on a neighbor's chimney, asked TIOF project director Mark Westall, a city

councilman, to intervene. A nesting platform in the vicinity seemed to be the answer, but city laws unintentionally categorize platforms as structures and any resident wishing to erect one would require a development permit.

Westall discussed the problem with City Manager Gary Price, and they

were able to sidestep that obstacle by erecting a platform in the city right of way.

It did the trick. The birds knew a good thing when they saw it and within a short time were building a new nest on the platform, where they are now reported to be settled comfortably and in process of raising a family.

OSPREY GLOSSARY

Adult description:

21-25 inches long (almost eagle-sized), males and females look alike, dark chocolate mantle with white chest (which can be somewhat streaked with dark brown), white head with a broad brown mask from eyes down cheeks and neck, eyes yellow, bill and talons black.

Immature description:

Very much like adults, but brown upperpart feathers look as if the tips were dipped in cream-colored paint, eyes are orange, fledglings will be adult-sized.

Mating behaviors:

Male will land completely on female's back.

Incubating:

Only the adult bird's head (at most) will be seen sticking above the nest's edge.

Nestling:

Young in the nest, will beg loudly (sometimes constantly) for food, may observe aggressiveness between siblings.

Brooding:

Adult bird will appear to be standing or crouched low over the nest.

Shading:

Adult bird is in the same position as brooding, but is more visible with the wings spread out.

Feeding behaviors:

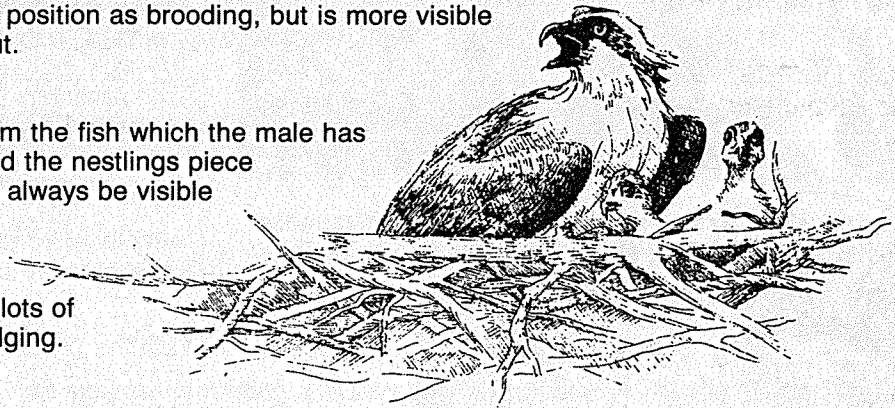
Female will tear flesh from the fish which the male has brought, and she will feed the nestlings piece by piece; young may not always be visible during feeding.

Fledgling:

Nestling after first flight; lots of wing exercise before fledging.

Post Fledgling:

Period when young are still under parental care but are free-flying.



NESTING SEQUENCE

1. Egg-laying can occur anytime during the 3rd week of December through the 1st week of April.
2. Incubation is then 35 days.
3. Fledging is 8 weeks after hatching.
4. Post Fledging can last a few days to several weeks after first flight.



Down to the wire

This osprey was one of a pair that kept trying to build a nest on pylons at the power plant on Sanibel. They eventually gave up. Photograph: Doug Sedgewick.

T-shirts going CHEEP

If you'd like a TIOF T-shirt, now's the time to buy, because we're selling them off cheap — or should we say cheep? — at \$7 instead of the usual \$10. The shirts feature a Molly Eckler Brown design of an osprey in flight and a TIOF logo. They're available in various colors.

They will be available at the annual meeting or contact any board member.

Wildlife Day set for March 14

Come visit us at TIOF's information booth at the annual Wildlife Day on Saturday, March 14 at Tarpon Bay Marina.

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MEMBERSHIP FORM

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Please renew my membership in TIOF

Check membership category:

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- 3. Sustaining/\$25
- 4. Supporting/\$50
- 5. Contributing/\$100
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NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

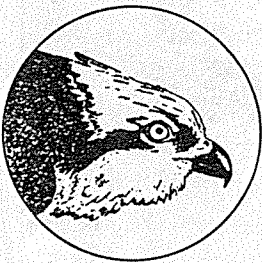
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ALL MEMBERSHIPS AND DONATIONS ARE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE.
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