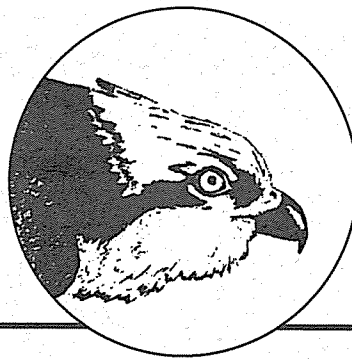


# The International Osprey Foundation



## Osprey Observer

Sanibel Island, Florida

March 2006

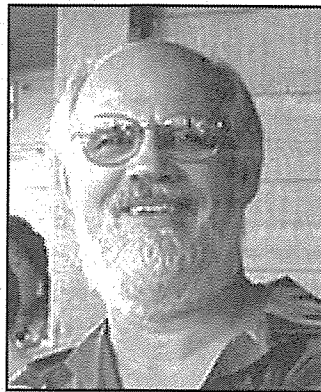
### Dr. Bortone to Talk About Water Quality at TIOF Annual Meeting March 19

Stephen A. Bortone, Ph.D., director of the Marine Laboratory at the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation, will be the speaker at The International Osprey Foundation annual meeting on March 19. Formerly he served as director of environmental science at the Conservancy of Southwest Florida.

For the past 35 years, he has conducted research on the life history of estuarine organisms, especially fish and sea grass, chiefly in the southeastern U.S. and the Gulf of Mexico.

His talk is of special interest at present because of the problems Sanibel is experiencing due to the fresh water releases from Lake Okeechobee.

Marine resources are as important to our future well-being as those found on land.



Dr. Bortone

The Marine Laboratory was established to assess status and trends and promote the health of the habitat and fauna within the marine nursery areas in and around the barrier islands of Sanibel and Captiva. Data

from the lab's ongoing activities and projects will aid in improving the understanding of the changes to flora and fauna

### Platforms Rebuilt in Time for Nesting Season

Hurricanes Charlie and Wilma damaged many Osprey nesting platforms.

TIOF President Tim Gardner and Jim Griffith have worked hard to repair or replace a total of 64 of these platforms. Luckily, there was time to do all of this before the nesting season began in early January. □

We are VERY indebted to the Lee County Electric Co-op for donating and installing the poles and for doing other work we could not do ourselves. A special thank you to both Laura Zocki for arranging for the work to be done and to Dale Guernsey for actually doing all of this work. Thanks LCEC!

## Ospreys, Hurricanes and Lake Okeechobee

By Tim Gardner, President, TIOF

The several hurricanes we have experienced in 2004 and 2005 have dramatically changed the overall habitat for all of our Florida wildlife including Ospreys. Everything is complicated – the hurricane winds destroyed thousands of square miles of traditional Osprey habitat and the torrential rains all across Florida added huge amounts of water to Lake Okeechobee which, eventually, had to be released – mostly down the Caloosahatchee. More rain continues to come and because of over one hundred years of diking the lake and channelizing rivers and streams and vast systems of very large canals, there is no place else to release the water in the short-term or even in the long-term until political and engineering problems can be resolved. Not good.

The quality of our waters and its marine life is now at risk because of massive and prolonged water discharges from Lake Okeechobee into the Caloosahatchee. These discharges contain heavy nutrient loads, especially nitrogen and phosphorus, that contribute to algae blooms, as well as dense sediments that cover grass beds and that can be re-suspended in the water column and move around whenever the wind blows.

Hurricanes Charley and Wilma and the near misses of Francis, Ivan, Jeanne, Dennis, and Katrina did two things: destroyed most of the existing natural nests and all of the tall trees that Ospreys traditionally use for nesting plus most of the platforms in our area; however, the broken off trees created thousands of NEW nesting possibilities for Ospreys and other birds. □ Interesting! □ It is too early to tell about nesting success rates, but we are monitoring about 20% more nests and platforms in 2006 than we had in past years. Very interesting!

The speaker at our Annual Meeting in March will be Stephen A. Bortone, Ph.D, the Director of the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation's Marine Laboratory. For the past 35 years, he has conducted research on the life history of estuarine organisms, especially fish and sea grass, chiefly in the southeastern U.S. and the Gulf of Mexico.

Marine resources are as important to our future well-being as those found on land. The Marine Laboratory was established to assess status and trends and promote the health of the habitat and fauna within the marine nursery areas in and around the barrier islands of Sanibel and Captiva. Data from the Lab's ongoing activities and projects will aid in improving the understanding of the changes to flora and fauna within the estuarine habitat. Ongoing studies and evaluations include: water quality, monitoring of freshwater influxes to the estuary, fitness of mangroves, sea grass, other bottom habitats, and specific species of marine organisms such as oysters, sea trout, and scallops.

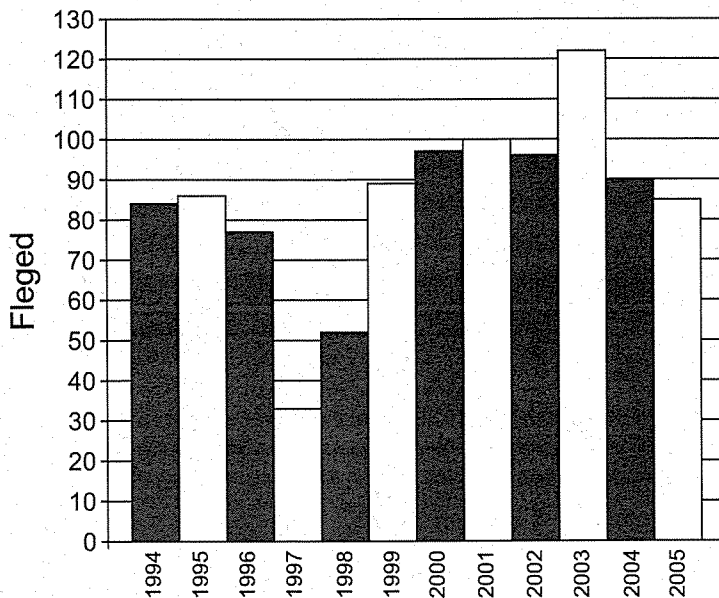
Although the huge water quality problem has not yet changed the fishing potential for Ospreys, it soon will. Dr. Bortone will help us understand what is going on with these massive fresh water releases from Lake Okeechobee and where all of this might be going. □

Please come to our annual meeting on March 19 at the Sanibel Community Center.

# Taking stock of 2005 nesting season: an average year

The 2005 nesting season produced 85 chicks that fledged from the nest. It was not a stellar season compared with other years, but not a poor one either (see chart).

Six groups of volunteers monitored 107 nests throughout the nesting season from about January through April. Of those nests, 39 were natural, meaning they were built in trees. The rest were on platforms and man-made structures, including two on dishes and one on a chimney.



Source: TIOF nest data

Thanks to the teams of volunteers who continue to monitor these nests, and to the team leaders, Charmaine Yeadon, Julie and Don Schwartz, Henry and Inge Glissman, James Metzler and Sarah Ashton, Hartley Kleinberg, Tim Gardner and Claudia Burns.

## Osprey coloring books go to second printing

The International Osprey Foundation has sponsored the printing of 10,000 more copies of the osprey coloring book, "Look Who's Flying!" by Claudia Burns and Dave Horton.

The book is given away free around the region and the first 10,000 copies just flew off the shelves!

The 16 pages of drawings have narration explaining the osprey life cycle and there's a test at the end. The book is available at the "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel, among many other places on the islands and around Lee County.

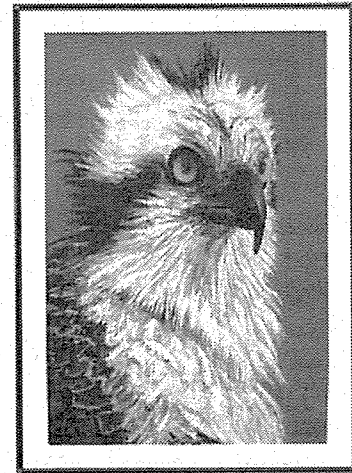
We think it's a great educational tool. See page 3 to read what one young visitor thought about the book.

## TIOF life members

Mr. and Mrs. Porter Goss  
Dr. Eugene Majerowicz  
Mr. Harvey Rothstein  
Mr. Charles Rubright  
Mr. Jim Fowler, San-Cap Nature Calendar  
Ms. Margaret Smith  
Mrs. Carmen Sanchez  
Mr. and Mrs. William Alquist  
Mr. Dwight Anderson  
Mr. and Mrs. David Ladd  
James and Martha Kannry  
Robert and Rita Southern  
RJW Foundation  
Brenda and Sam Tischler

## TIOF board

Tim Gardner, President  
Anne Mitchell, Vice President  
Inge Glissman, Treasurer/Secretary  
Mark "Bird" Westall, Project Director  
Jerry Nickerson, Webmaster  
Debbie Friedlund, Volunteer Coordinator  
Hartley Kleinberg



## "Osprey Eyes"

Image courtesy of notecards titled "Osprey Eyes" by artist Randon T. Eddy, available at [www.randonstudio.com](http://www.randonstudio.com) or by calling 239-395-4518. Randon specializes in scenic and bird paintings with limited giclee prints. Single cards are \$2.50 and packs of five are \$10 plus postage.

## Platform brochure

With the help of the Lee County Division of Environmental Sciences and the Lee County Electric Co-op, TIOF has available brochures that show how to build and erect an osprey nesting platform.

For a brochure, write to TIOF at P.O. Box 250, Sanibel, FL 33957, or go to our Web site at [www.ospreys.com](http://www.ospreys.com).

## From our mailbox



The International Osprey Foundation  
P.O. Box 250 • Sanibel Island, FL 33957

Dear Osprey Foundation,  
I've learned lots about ospreys. I really think they're neat. I sometimes see their nests in the wild. Thank-you for the fun little booklet I got at Everglades National Park.

**Sincerely,  
Shy (Shyenne Isaac)**

Dear Mr. Gardner,

Attached is my check for \$25 to continue my family membership in the International Osprey Foundation.

The pair of ospreys (Fred and Wilma) who live on our home lot shoreline (about 100 feet from our house in easy view) have been coming here every year since I built the platform. The birds arrive here (Dymer Creek, off the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay) every spring in the first week of March and leave mid-September to fly to their winter home in South America.

Fred and Wilma started here as new mates with no experience in raising a family. Their history is as follows:

- First year: nice new nest but no eggs
- Second year: two eggs but they did not hatch
- Third year: three eggs, one hatched but the chick only lived one week
- Fourth year (2005): three eggs, two hatched. Chicks grew almost to adult size and then were both killed in the nest (I think it was a great horned owl).

My wife and I teach a one-hour course on ospreys to our granddaughter's elementary school every year. We have used up all the osprey coloring books that you sent to us last year. We plan to teach this course again in late January. As such, would you please send me 25 copies of the Osprey Coloring Book.

Thank you,

**Dave Herndon,  
White Stone, Va.**

Dear TIOF

This membership is in memoriam of my father, Don Scott, who always was awestruck by the grace and skill of the osprey.

I know it would please my father (and me) if the monies contributed in his name were earmarked for educational programs.

Thank you!

**Gail Mears,  
Orlando**



## TIOF gives \$5,000 in grants

In 2005, The International Osprey Foundation awarded four grants totaling \$5,500 for research projects in the United States and abroad that further our knowledge of the osprey and other raptors and enhance our ability to protect them.

The 2005 recipients:

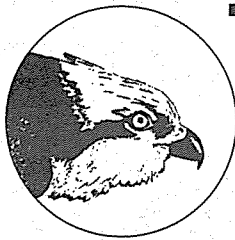
- Inge Marie Laursen of LaSelva Beach, California, for her project, "Studies of Demographics, Ecology and Health Status of the Breeding Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*) in Denmark."
- Michelle Clark of the University of Nottingham, School of Geography, England, for her project, "Ecology, Breeding Biology and Habitat Requirements of the Asian Fishing Eagles (*Ichthyophaga*)".
- Jennifer Rettew of Charlotte, North Carolina, for her project, "Observation of Breeding Behavior in a Population of Ospreys on Martha's Vineyard Island, Massachusetts."
- KEEP Inc. in Dawson Springs, Kentucky, to help them build and erect many more osprey platforms in the Lake Barkley, Kentucky, area.

Since 1990, TIOF has awarded more than \$20,000 in research grants.

## New life member funds nesting platform

TIOF would like to thank Jennifer A Wilson and Rodney M. Wilson of the RJW Foundation in Excelsior, Minnesota for their generous donation of \$700, of which \$200 was earmarked for a new osprey platform at 17401 Captiva Drive, Captiva, and \$500 for life membership.

"Last spring you installed an osprey platform at the top of the remnant of an Australian pine tree trunk. The osprey family returned to the partial nest for a month and we are looking forward to their return this November," the Wilsons said in their letter.

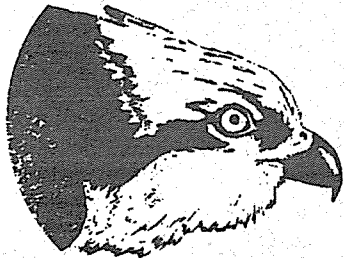


# TIOF

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The International  
Osprey Foundation  
Sanibel

## T-SHIRTS AVAILABLE

Our popular T-shirts in white, 100% cotton, feature a large osprey head in brown with yellow eye. Price is \$15 each, including shipping.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Quantity: Small \_\_\_\_\_ Medium \_\_\_\_\_ Large \_\_\_\_\_ Extra Large \_\_\_\_\_

Total T-Shirts \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for T-Shirts

Total Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Send with check or money order to:

TIOF, P.O. Box 250, Sanibel, FL 33957

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

\_\_\_\_\_ Please enroll me as a member of TIOF

\_\_\_\_\_ Please renew my membership in TIOF

Check Membership Category:

- |                     |      |                                   |       |
|---------------------|------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| _____ 1. Individual | \$15 | _____ 5. Contributing             | \$100 |
| _____ 2. Family     | \$20 | _____ 6. Donor                    | \$250 |
| _____ 3. Sustaining | \$25 | _____ 7. Life                     | \$500 |
| _____ 4. Supporting | \$50 | _____ 8. Corporate - \$25 or more |       |

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Country

ALL MEMBERSHIPS AND DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE  
MAIL TO: TIOF, P.O. Box 250, Sanibel, FL 33957, USA