

2021 OSPREY SEASON

Moraine State Park



Thank you Moraine Preservation Fund, ITG Networks and PixCams



A New Platform



Following a partial nest collapse at the end of the 2019 season and struggles with rebuilding upon their return, the osprey nested on a neighboring pole for the 2020 season. In hopes of having them return to the cam pole, a new 36" x 36" platform was installed on March 14, 2021.



A New Nest



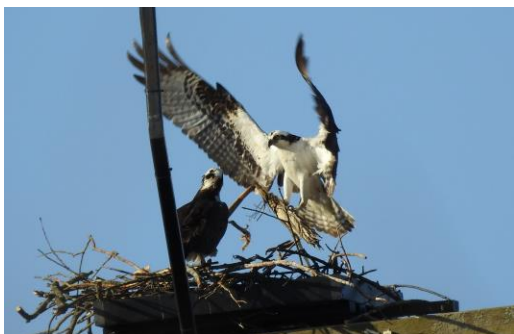
Dad's first view of the new platform



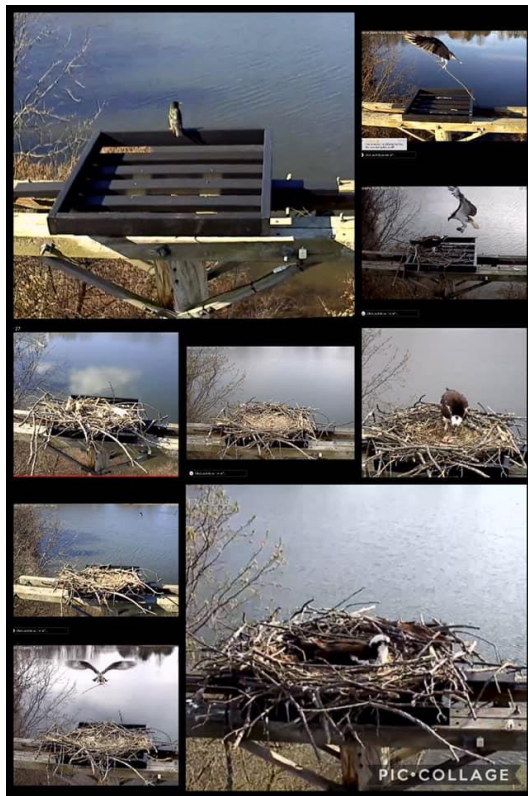
Mom's first view of the new platform



3/22/21 – First bonding on platform



Dad brings a cornstalk



4/27/21 Wingspan size reference

The Kids



First view over the rail



A very full crop



O9 self-feeding



O10 practicing



August 7 – Last view on cam. Dad brought them both a fish



O10 left, O9 right July 14, 2021

The Loss of O11



On the morning of June 19, there were only two chicks in the nest on the cam. One went missing between 11:30 pm & 4:00 am when the cam was off. The chick was found on the ground approximately 300' from the nest. It was taken to Tamarack Wildlife Center where it was evaluated. No physical injuries were apparent and plans were started to return the chick to the nest. Unfortunately, its respiratory rates were high the evening of June 21, it was in guarded condition and passed away that night at Tamarack.

Following the event at the nest, Mom, who would perch on the side rail and leave the chicks to sleep alone at night previously, stayed on the nest every night for almost 2 weeks. She would not sleep but perch and stay alert, watching over the two remaining chicks.

From Carol at Tamarack Wildlife Center regarding the necropsy & her thoughts: Necropsy of the Osprey by the PGC showed no visible injuries, but a build up of urates in the kidneys and cause of death appears to have been visceral gout due to kidney failure. Based on those findings, the PGC estimates that the bird either lost parental care or fledged too soon. These findings combined with what we observed in the bird, lead me to conclude his internal organs were too damaged to recover at the time he came into our care. Sometimes when that occurs, it is not unusual for a patient can appear to stabilize at first, and then die a few days later. The chick was a female.



2021 - Important Dates



Dad Returns



Mom Returns



First Egg

April 11 – First Egg, While Cam was Off

April 14 – Second Egg, While Cam was off

April 17 – Third Egg, While Cam was off

May 18 – 7:37 am First Hatch Confirmed (O9)

May 19 – 5:09 pm Second Hatch Confirmed (O10)

May 21 – 2:36 pm – Third Hatch Confirmed (O11)

July 14 – O9 Fledges



Second Egg



First Hatch



Second Hatch



Third Egg



Third Hatch



O9 Fledges

A Successful Season



The Other Osprey Nests



Although the Muddy Creek Osprey pair were initially seen sitting on the nest early in the Spring, they had an unsuccessful season for unknown reasons. Observations throughout the summer found them continuing to hunt and protect their territory.

A new nest was confirmed at the Butler Fairgrounds on top of a cell tower. They fledged one chick successfully. There was an adult osprey spotted near the old 422 bird observation area with a string, fishing line or other foreign object wrapped around its leg/foot near the end of the season. It may have been an adult from this nest. There were no further observations so our hope is the situation resolved itself and the adult osprey was fine.





Davis Hollow Bald Eagles



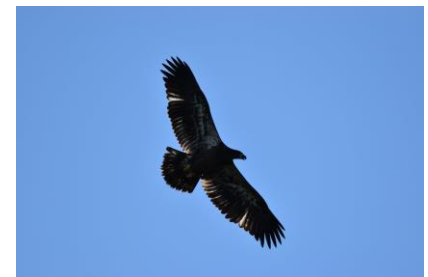
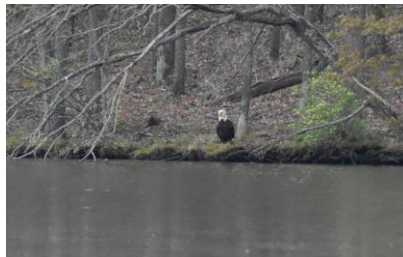
The female bald eagle at Davis Hollow (banded V87) found her new mate and on March 30, a sighting confirmed her sitting on the nest. They successfully fledged one eaglet. We believe this is their first successful season in 3 years. All photos by Mark Lefebvre



Propagation Bald Eagle Nest



The Propagation Bald Eagle pair had another successful season with two fledglings. The female is banded with a red band on her left foot, silver on right foot. We haven't been able to confirm the band number but did find out that she was most likely banded in either Maine or Massachusetts. We'll continue to try to get legible photos of the numbers to confirm the banding information. All photos by Mark LeFebvre



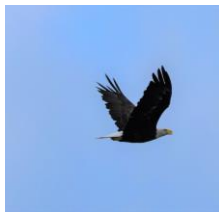
Other Wildlife at the Park



This doe visited me regularly at the osprey nest. She had two fawns that were left between the bike trail and the lake for the day. I only saw the fawns twice, in the evening after she 'picked them up'. We did see the doe and one fawn drinking below their hiding spot while kayaking. All other sightings were of her alone.



Photo by Mark Lefebvre



It seems the number of juvenile bald eagle sightings increase every year. Photos by Mark Lefebvre

The fox family near Davis Hollow made regular appearances for visitors. Photos by Mark Lefebvre

Ospreys Rebuild in Moraine State Park

Eddie Trizzino Eagle Staff Writer

March 25, 2021 Local News



A young couple recently moved in at Moraine State Park after their previous home there was destroyed in 2019.

The couple, a male and a female osprey, have built a nest atop a special nesting tower at Moraine where they live, feed and will someday raise their babies, and the world has watched via an "osprey cam."

Cassandra Dixon, vice president of the Moraine Preservation Fund, said the fund installed a new nesting tower this year to bring back osprey after a storm destroyed the old tower in 2019. The organization wants to promote a good environment for animals at the park, including osprey, which were once considered an endangered species.

"We'd like to see them increase in population," she said. "Our focus is going to be having a sustainable place for them to come and live."

A male osprey eats a fish caught from the lake on its first day back at Moraine.
Michelle Huff/Submitted Photo

According to Dixon, members of the Moraine Preservation Fund worked throughout the mid-1990s to bring osprey back to Pennsylvania after a long absence. The organization raised 96 osprey chicks at Moraine from 1993 to 1996, and Dixon thinks the ones currently nesting at the park are descendants of those osprey.

Viewers of the osprey cam will see the male and female come and go from the nest and later return with sticks or fish, and sometimes they even bond through physical interaction, which Dixon said will likely lead to mating. She explained some of the interactions viewers might see on the osprey cam in the coming weeks, comparing the two birds to a young couple.

An osprey holds a fresh catch on one of the nest perches across from McDanel's Boat Launch at Moraine State Park earlier last summer.
Seb Foltz/Butler Eagle

"The male does most of the bringing to the nest; he's the forager," Dixon said. "The female, she'll be there cheering him on, and she does more of the interior decorating. Sometimes, the male will land on the female's back, and that's them bonding."

Dixon expects the female to lay eggs in early April, with chicks probably due in mid-May. The flying family will nest at Moraine until September, when they will migrate to South America until next March. Dixon said park visitors during this time should stick to watching the birds via the osprey cam, so the birds don't get scared off, never to return.

Bringing osprey back to the park not only helps the species gain in population, but also builds appreciation from birdwatchers and nature enthusiasts who visit Moraine for sightseeing.

Moraine State Park's director Dustin Drew said the park's mission is to preserve wildlife and promote nature, and helping to supplement the osprey population is an ongoing part of that mission.

"When there's species out there that have endangered or threatened status, we want to provide them a good amount of protection," Drew said. "If it comes along that we can aid or improve things for them, that falls into our mission of conservation."

While the fund has given osprey a place to nest at Moraine, Dixon said the organization has to continue maintaining a suitable environment for them to live. This could be done by evaluating the water quality in coming years or simply letting visitors know how to properly interact with the ospreys.

"Our focus is going to be having a sustainable place to come and live," Dixon said. "We may need to look at ways to keep them safe."

A link to watch the osprey cam is at MorainePreservationFund.org.

Osprey chick found at Moraine dies

By Eddie Trizzino

Eagle Staff Writer

An osprey chick that was living on the nesting tower at Moraine State Park died Monday night.

Rehabilitation specialists at the Tamarack Wildlife Center treated the chick after Moraine rangers brought him in Saturday afternoon. He was found outside his nest Friday night.

Initial evaluation at the Tamarack Wildlife Center found that the chick was not severely injured beyond dehydration.

However, Carol Holmgren, executive director of center, said the chick had some further health issues. "There could have been a pulmonary embolism he obtained from the fall," she said Tuesday. "We put a lot into our patients, and it is hard emotionally when they pass away."

The Tamarack Wildlife Center in Saegertown, Crawford County, is a non-profit wildlife treatment center that takes in injured wild animals from the public. The center treats animals at no charge and is funded by donations.

Holmgren said the staff performed all the usual checks on the fallen osprey, including its nutritional status, wounds and external injuries, and they even performed blood work tests and X-rays.

While the animal doctors at Tamarack were unable to save the patient, Holmgren said they will try to find the root cause of death to help treat similar injuries in the future.

"We put a lot into this little tyke and we would like answers," she said. "Part of



The Tamarack Wildlife Center in Saegertown, Crawford County, treated an osprey that was found outside his nest at Moraine State Park on Friday night. The bird died of its injuries on Monday.
TAMARACK WILDLIFE CENTER PHOTO

what we take comfort in is knowing we are doing the best for our patients, and dedicating ourselves to learn from every case."

Moraine State Park has been working to improve its osprey population for years after the species had been listed as endangered in the 1980s. The Moraine Preservation Fund built a nesting tower specifically to help the birds repopulate, and an osprey family has been nesting on top since March.

Holmgren said the injured osprey has two siblings in the nest, along with its parents. For this reason and because of his young age, the staff had to take

precautions in treatment to avoid imprinting or other negative effects of human interaction. She also said the remaining chicks could have a better chance of survival because they will have a bigger share of food.

Despite the challenges in treating the osprey, Holmgren said it is worth it because of the unique qualities of the bird, and the difficult history of the species. "These birds have made a very successful comeback," Holmgren said. "It's a real privilege to treat this little guy."

To watch development of the other chicks, visit MorainePreservationFund.org.