



Friends of Osprey

Newsletter #6
November 2025

Welcome to our second newsletter for 2025

We defend what we love. We love what we particularly know. We particularly know through seeing deeply.

- ***Susan Holliday.***

In just over three years, Friends of Osprey has become one of the largest [Friends of Parks group](#) in South Australia, drawing donations from around the world and undertaking practical conservation activities which are making measured progress to improve this precious species' fragile population. So what has this success looked like, what has contributed to it, and importantly, where to next for Friends of Osprey?

Nest Platforms

There are now 21 [artificial nest platforms](#) around the State. A recent census of Osprey (undertaken between 2021 and 2024) has given cause for positivity, and genuine hope that our work is paying dividends, with preliminary results suggesting a recordable population increase, particularly in Friends of Osprey's focus regions.

The initial focus of Friends of Osprey's work has been on the construction of offshore nesting platforms – safe places to call home – which have given ospreys a chance to breed with minimal disturbance from humans and interference from predators. This has seen nests which had long struggled to produce young become productive, resulting in more birds fledging into the adult population. More birds mean more chance that they will pair up and establish new breeding territories.

Nest Monitoring

This breeding season Friends of Osprey have been trialling a nest monitoring process. Many of you will be aware of the very successful Hooded Plover nest monitoring and the Osprey program is based loosely on that. Volunteers are trained to recognise nest activity and have been visiting sites from safe distances throughout the breeding season to report on the activity observed. This information is being collated and provided to the Department for Environment and Water where it is uploaded to the [Biodiversity Database of South Australia](#) informing a critical information set for future decision making.

Incidental sightings are also collected and collated from members reports and any colour band information is sent to the [Australian Bat and Bird Banding Scheme](#). This work is proving incredibly valuable in identifying where birds are, where they are breeding and foraging and what threats are being observed. It is obvious from interrogation of the reports that Ravens are a significant threat to birds at the nest and the birds appear to be needing more fishing attempts than expected this year to catch fish.

Currently, we are about halfway through the breeding season and numbers are below last year's result. There are chicks at Price, Point Davenport, Gleasons Landing, Cummings Monument,

Thistle Island, Whalers Way, Streaky Bay and at a couple of nests on Kangaroo Island. Nests such as the Port Lincoln Barge, Tumby Island and Coobowie that were successful last year have not produced young this season.

On the Port Lincoln Barge the female stopped incubating her eggs and after several days the eggs were removed and sent to a laboratory for testing. They were found to have non-viable foetus with two being almost fully developed. It is not known what caused her to stop incubating. A new platform near Point Pearce was looking hopeful but disturbance from vehicles on the beach seem to have resulted in a failure at that nest this season.



Image 1 Port Lincoln barge osprey nest camera

Tracking and Banding

Twenty-two birds have now been fitted with [satellite trackers](#) but unfortunately most of trackers on the birds banded in the last season failed quite quickly and are not registering. This is an unacceptable outcome by any standard and as a result no birds will be satellite tracked until a solution to the problem can be found. The birds who are still registering are:

<p>Ervie continues to call Boston Bay, Port Lincoln home with occasional flights through Lincoln National Park. He spends his nights on the wharf at Port Lincoln.</p>		
<p>Giliath also spends his nights on the wharf, and his track often closely follows that of Ervie.</p>		

Will has been more far reaching than the other birds. He spent some time in Port Broughton but in more recent times he has been moving between Port Germain, Port Pirie and Cowell



Vincent moved north to the area around Port Davis and the channels around Port Pirie several weeks ago and has not moved far from the area since.



Colour bands fitted to birds, while not as effective as an active tracker, are a useful means of identifying bird movements. Recently one of the 2021 birds banded at Price was reported at Bird Island, Outer Harbour, in company with another unbanded Osprey. Regular reports are also received for Bradley (Port Lincoln 2023) at the Tod River, Libby (Coobowie 2024) at Point Turton, Phantom (Price 2021) at various locations on Kangaroo Island and Calypso (Port Lincoln 2019) has been resident on the Platform funded by Birds SA at Tulka since it was installed in 2024. Details of band colours are available on the [Friends of Osprey Facebook page](#).



Image 2 Osprey (Annie) resting near Point Turton - Photo by Nanou Carbourdin

Port Lincoln Desal Plant.

The South Australian Government has commenced construction of a desalination plant at Billy Lights Point, Port Lincoln. The pipeline corridor and associated road infrastructure required by-passes a popular Osprey foraging area known locally as Greyhound Road. There are three man-made ponds at the location which provide excellent fishing opportunities for the osprey at various times of the year.

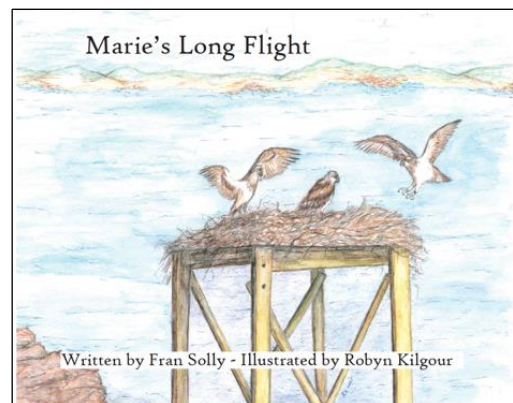
Friends of Osprey have been in consultation with SA Water to determine a suitable arrangement which benefits the local birds during the time of the disruption caused by this construction stage of the road and pipeline. Two simple perches comprising of a 5m high pole with a 1m

hardwood crosspiece are to be erected each end of the works, well away from harm. Hopefully the osprey will readily choose to observe and hunt from these artificial perches but being the inquisitive birds they are, they may find the high point of a grader just as advantageous.

As well as agreeing to the perches, all new power poles passing through the desal plant, Greyhound Rd vicinity will be fitted with animal guards to prevent potential electrocution of the osprey and the White-bellied Sea-eagle adults and chick which nest on an old wharf structure very close to the same Desal plant / Greyhound Road area.

Marie's Long Flight.

Many of you will remember in amazement at the incredible story and journey of Marie, one of the three surviving osprey chicks from the Coobowie artificial platform, 2024. Briefly, she was banded and had a tracker fitted. On her first flight she did not make it back to the nest and spent the night alone on the beach. She was rescued the following morning. It goes on but without giving it all away, Fran Solly, Vice President of Friends of Osprey was inspired enough to write a children's book of her incredible daring and stamina. It is illustrated by a Port Lincoln local artist Robin Kilgour.



It is hard cover, is available at various locations on Yorke and Eyre Peninsula or online [here](#).
(When you click the link you may need to press the back arrow and then scroll down to see the store)
Profits from the book sales are being donated to Friends of Osprey.

“Life of an Osprey”, The Movie.

Friends of Osprey Committee Members Kylie Correll and Max Barr from Yorke Peninsula worked with the Edithburgh Museum to access a grant through the [Northern & Yorke Landscape Board's Bite-size Grants](#) and enlisted the services of a local content creator and videographer, [Lauren Clift](#) to put together a short, informative movie about Osprey. It is complete with the latest facts and data, has incredible visuals and is wonderfully narrated by Elouise Fehring. Much of the footage was acquired from around the Coobowie site and is an excellent educational tool.

Community education and engagement

Committee members are keen to engage with the communities that are home to Osprey and would be keen to present our latest work if there is sufficient interest from a community for such a function.

If you would like to have a presentation in your community, please reach out to friendsofosprey@gmail.com and we will see what can be arranged.

As the year comes to a close we wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year. Thank you for your continued support of the Osprey.