

Mandurah Environment and Heritage Group are looking for volunteers to help find out how many active nests we have in the Peel Inlet, Murray, Harvey and Serpentine rivers and how many osprey chicks are raised. Get in [contact](#) if you are able to adopt a [nesting site](#) and report on the progress and outcome of its breeding pair.
Photo – David Wrigglesworth.

Mandurah Osprey Census

– Volunteers wanted

By Lisa Wray and Marcus Singer



Volunteers wanted for the Mandurah osprey census

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Ospreys are a majestic bird that grace our waterways and inlets as they fly overhead in search of fish. Ospreys execute a spectacular plunge to catch their prey with wings folded back and their legs extended forwards. They will partly submerge and rise out of the water with a large fish.

Ospreys build their nests close to water, in an elevated position and this can even be in a tree in someone's front yard, an artificial nesting platform, mobile phone tower or other tall structure.

One osprey nest can be found on top of the Telstra mobile phone tower on the corner of Pinjarra Road and Forrest Street in Mandurah.

The breeding season starts in May/June when nest repairs are undertaken, and pair bonds are strengthened. Incubation during August and September takes about 36 days and chicks are usually first seen in early October and leave the nest around Christmas time.

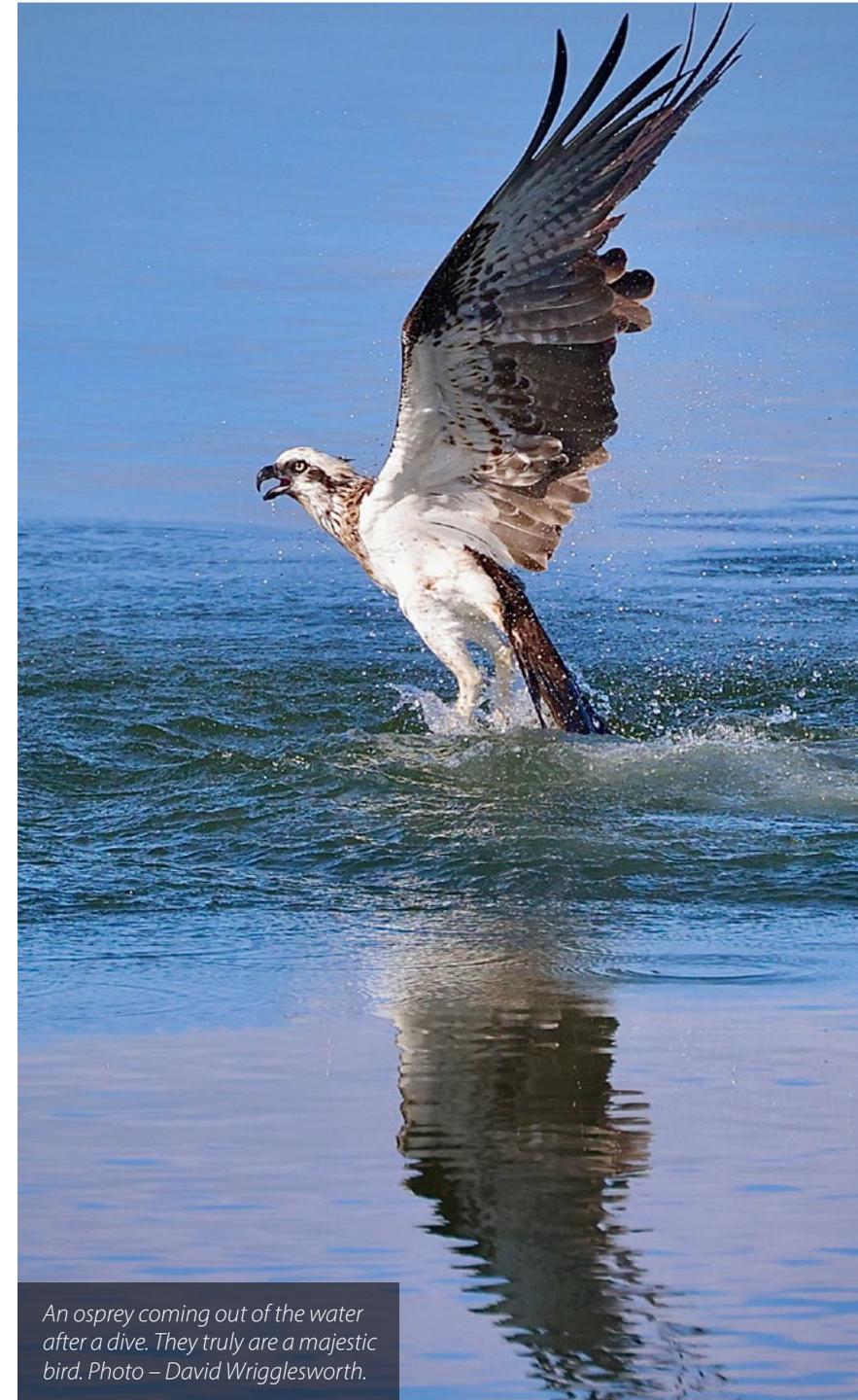
[Mandurah Environment and Heritage Group](#) are working in close conjunction with the City of Mandurah and Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) to census how many ospreys are breeding around the Peel-Harvey Inlet and along the Serpentine, Murray and Harvey rivers.



Ospreys are an indicator species on the health of the Peel-Harvey Inlet, fish stocks and surrounding habitats. A register of the number of breeding pairs will allow us to monitor future trends.

The Peel-Harvey Inlet has the largest osprey population in the south-west of Western Australia. Although we have surveyed around the Peel-Harvey Inlet and located about 40 Osprey nesting sites, many of these are no longer active or have fallen into disrepair. Ospreys also breed along the Serpentine and Murray rivers. This season we hope to get a better understanding of the distribution of osprey breeding sites around the inlet and we are looking for volunteers who will adopt a [nesting site](#) and report on the progress and outcome of its breeding pair. We are confident that with your help we will be able to find out how many active nests we have and how many osprey chicks are raised.

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An osprey coming out of the water after a dive. They truly are a majestic bird. Photo – David Wrigglesworth.

There are still many nest sites to be discovered and we are keen to hear about these. Some residents might have historical information about a nesting site that they have been monitoring for many years, even decades. This information is very valuable in clarifying the past distribution of ospreys. Some sites can only be surveyed by boat. At present the eastern side of the inlet is poorly surveyed as is the region around the Harvey River.

Ospreys must contend with an increasing number of boats churning up the water, removal of large nesting trees due to housing developments and discarded fishing lines with hooks. Storms will cause nests to collapse, heat waves cause mortality among chicks and Australian ravens continuously harass ospreys.

The Mandurah osprey census is a new project but an osprey census has been conducted in Perth along the Swan and Canning rivers since 2016. [The Perth region](#) has on average six breeding pairs, and they raise eight juveniles each year. Monitoring ospreys around the [Leschenault Estuary](#) near Bunbury have found on average four active nests each year and these raise on average seven juveniles.



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Ospreys execute a spectacular plunge to catch their prey with wings folded back and their legs extended forwards. They will partly submerge and rise out of the water with a large fish. Photo – David Wrigglesworth.