



Kawartha Osprey Are On Their Way Home

By: **Barbara Puxley**

The Osprey have left their wintering grounds in South America, and will be arriving back to their Kawartha Lakes home during the last week of March and first week of April. The older male Osprey comes first to check out their nest site from the previous year; the same male always returns to the same nest, while the females return to the same nest only seventy percent of the time.

We always have younger male Ospreys returning and seeking a good nesting site. This is where the public is needed to watch where these young, inexperienced birds try to set up home. These places include TV towers, telephone or hydro poles, which may be dangerous to the birds, or result in lousy TV reception. Those with TV towers should start checking their towers because our young Osprey would like to make that tower his happy home. His mate always has to approve the nest before she will allow him to breed.

After breeding, the female will lay an egg within the week. It is illegal to disturb a nesting Osprey once an egg has been laid. The eggs will hatch in early May, and that is when you will see the female Osprey perched on the edge of the nest. The male will be out fishing, and when he returns with a fish, the female will tear the fish apart and feed her chicks. It will take four to six weeks before the young become strong enough to rip a fish apart themselves. This is when you will start to see the young Osprey in the nest (about early July).

The best time for Osprey watchers will be July; and this is when the Friends of the Osprey need your help in observing the nest, and telling us where the nest is, and how many chicks are in each nest.

Please, if you see a nest that could be hazardous in the early spring, please call 705-738-6271 so that Friends of the Osprey can examine the nest situation, and arrange with Ontario Hydro or Bell Canada for fixing the situation.