

OSPREY NEST PLATFORM PLACEMENT ADVICE

Placement of man-made nest structures for ospreys affects the chances they'll be used. As a general rule, the closer to water, the better. Colonization of new sites is related to how close ospreys presently nest to the new site, since young birds returning to breed usually take up nesting within one to several miles of their natal area.

Another very important consideration is predation. We recommend single pole structures with a platform on top, on mainland areas and any area where raccoons and other predators are present. Single poles are easily outfitted with a predator guard (inverted cone, or a sleeve of aluminum flashing) that prevent raccoons from climbing into the nest. A raccoon has been seen climbing into a 30-foot high nest, so a guard is very necessary on most nests. At a minimum, a 24" tall sleeve is needed (the larger the better). We often do two wraps of trim coil for better protection. Platforms should be placed far away from forested areas, where bald eagles and great horned owls thrive.

An attractive nest, to an osprey, includes a nearby perch. After a successful hunt, the male prefers to perch away from the nest to feed. Once young have hatched, feeding occurs on the platform. A 2x4" that rises one to two feet higher on both sides of the nest platform is ideal, as is a perch pole of at least 4 feet in height, placed nearby. A simple perch consists of a 2x4" with a wood branch (~1 1/2 to 2" in diameter) mounted perpendicularly on top of the 2x4. Ospreys generally return to New Jersey in late March and take up nesting in April. Nest structures should be in place by mid-March for use that spring. Ospreys are most sensitive to disturbance during April, when they are laying eggs, and are most likely to abandon the nest if disturbance is too great. They will grow more defensive of the nest area in May and June when they have young, and the male must forage intensively to keep up with all the appetites. The female remains very close to the nest platform until after the young fledged in 7-8 weeks after hatching. It is important that disturbance remain low during this time as well.

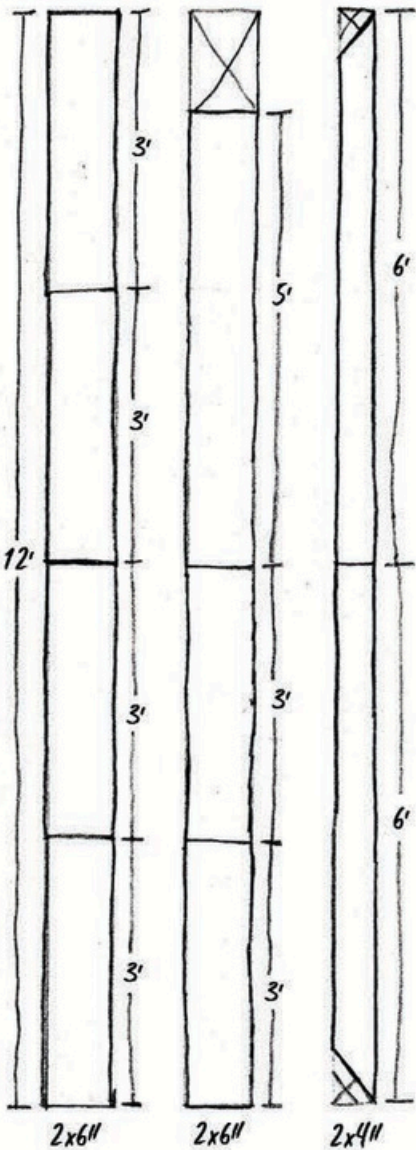
Ospreys have exhibited tolerance of certain types of disturbance, such as boat traffic on waterways, as long as such traffic ignores them. Disturbance increases as boats stop nearby and people focus on the birds at close range. A safe distance from which to observe ospreys will vary depending on the area, but observers must stay beyond the distance at which the adults react. Their reaction must be judged as even their attention to the observer, not simply when they lift off the nest in defense.

You should have permission from the landowner where you install a nest platform. Landowner information can be obtained at the municipal or township office. For land in state ownership, a special use permit may be required by the Department of Environmental Protection.

If you put up an osprey nest platform, please send GPS coordinates or a Google map link and email us the location. We include all potential nest sites in our surveys and censuses of ospreys in the state. If the nest is used by ospreys, please notify us. You can also map the structure yourself on Osprey-Watch.org and add it to the New Jersey Osprey Monitoring Project so that it will be added to our database.

Finally, we offer technical assistance to private consulting firms, individuals, school groups, environmental commissions, Boy & Girl Scouts, and anyone else who is interested in building and installing osprey nesting structures. We can help you choose the most suitable location to place a platform so it will not negatively impact any other wildlife that may live in the area. Please do not hesitate to contact us for more information or if you have a question. For further information, please contact Kathy Clark, Supervising Zoologist, NJ Fish and Wildlife or Ben Wurst, Senior Wildlife Biologist, Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ.

BUILD AN OSPREY NEST PLATFORM



(use treated or cedar lumber)



NEW JERSEY OSPREY PROJECT



OSPREY PLATFORM MATERIAL LIST



Item	Quantity	Size	Description
Lumber			
Pole	1	16'	6"x6" pressure treated
36" Box frame	1	12'	2"x6" pressure treated
Bottom box supports	1	12'	2"x6" pressure treated
Perch / brace	1	12'	2"x4" pressure treated
Red cedar branches (or other wood)	2	~3'	~ 2-3" in diameter
Fasteners			
Stainless deck screws	18 total	3"	1 lb. box stainless wood screws
Galvanized bolts	1	1/2"x10"	galvanized carriage bolt
	2	1/2" x 6"	galvanized lag bolts
	2	3/8" x 8"	galv. carriage bolts
Washers and nuts	3	1/2"	galv. flat washers
	1	1/2"	galv. locking washer
	1	1/2"	galv. nut
	2	3/8"	galv. flat washers
	2	3/8"	galv. locking washer
	2	3/8"	galv. nut
Predator Guard			
Aluminum flashing *	1	24"x26"	Trim coil (painted)
Nails	5	4d	Galvanized roofing nails (1 lb.)

Note: Prices of materials were removed due to the fluctuation of prices from different suppliers.

***Painted trim coil is the preferred type of flashing, which comes in 24" wide rolls that are 50' long.**

For help in siting a nest platform refer to our nest structure placement advice page. Please let us know where you place the nest platform(s) and when they are used by a pair of ospreys. Alternatively, you can map your nest online @ osprey-watch.org and add to the New Jersey Osprey Project Monitoring Group. We will include the site in our annual surveys.

Thank you for helping ospreys in New Jersey!



For more information:

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