

Long Lifespans of Osprey Siblings Produced in Montana

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On 23 August 2020, an adult male Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) wearing a USGS band on the left leg (608-49143) and a bicolored auxiliary band (silver over yellow) on the right leg was found electrocuted atop a 69kV power pole near Fairfield, Teton County, MT (47° 35' 48.3535" N, -111° 53' 51.1908" W). The bird was 18+ years old at the time of death. The Osprey had been banded as a nestling on 25 July 2002 along the Missouri River near Townsend, Broadwater County, MT. He had two siblings and was raised on a 230kV power pole (46° 17' 29.6154' N, -111° 31' 24.4422" W). The distance between the natal nest and recovery location was 148 km. We lack information on the breeding history of the bird, but the date of the recovery suggested he was not a migrant.

The age of adult male 608-49143 was noteworthy. Only nine percent of males in Michigan lived longer than 12 years (Postupalsky 1989). The male would be the seventh oldest Osprey listed on the Longevity Records of North American Birds webpage (Bird Banding Lab [BBL]), and would be the first long-lived Osprey encountered west of the Mississippi River. When we accessed the webpage, the Longevity Records were current through July 2020 (https://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/BBL/longevity/Longevity_main.cfm).

Restani and Harmata (2014) previously reported on one of the male's siblings, an adult female. She (608-49142) was found breeding along the Yellowstone River, Carbon County, Montana (45° 33' 53.9208" N, -108° 48' 51.218" W), 225 km from her natal nest. When discovered in 2014, the female was 12 years old and nested there for three more seasons. Her nest was occupied by an unbanded adult female in 2018, which meant that 608-49142 was at minimum 15 years old in 2017, when she failed to return to the local breeding population the following season. Only 12 percent

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of female Ospreys reached 12+ years of age in Michigan (Postupalsky 1989). Female 608-49142 would be the eighth oldest Osprey listed on the BBL Longevity Records (ninth after her sibling).

Encounters of Osprey siblings 608-49142 and 608-49143 demonstrated that banding continues to provide valuable information on raptor demography, in particular lifespan (see Bildstein and Peterjohn 2012). Continued banding in areas of low human density, such as Montana, may add new insight into raptor demography and mortality factors because encounters of banded raptors were more likely to occur throughout the eastern U.S. and West Coast (Lutmerding et al. 2012). Banding Ospreys does not come with the increased mortality associated with backpack-mounted satellite transmitters (Bierregaard et al. 2016), and provides reliable estimates of longevity.

S. Milodragovich coordinated the use of bucket trucks from NorthWestern Energy to access the Osprey nest in Townsend for banding in 2002. Osprey nestlings on the Missouri River were banded under A. Harmata's permit number 20357, and he reviewed the draft note. The Hahn Ranch kindly granted access to private land.

Literature Cited

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