

Outstanding Ospreys

- Osprey Observation- Take 15-20 minutes to watch our Osprey cam (the link can be found on the park website). Record the different activities you witness. Did you see the eggs? Maybe chicks? Did you witness them building a nest, or eating a meal? **Internet required**
- Best Nest- Ospreys build their nests out of anything they can find in their environment, which can be anything from sticks and grasses to plastic or boots. Gather items to build your “best nest”. Take a picture of it when you’re done, then spread the nest material back out so you leave no trace!
- Lucky Fishing- Smallwood State Park is well known for its fishing, and the Ospreys know it too. On average an Osprey catches a fish every 1 in 4 attempts. Watch the Osprey fish and see if they beat the odds on their fishing expedition. Record your results!
- Fast Fishing- An Osprey usually catches a fish within about 14 minutes of starting to fish. Bring your fishing pole and try your odds. Can you catch a fish as fast as an Osprey? **Fishing gear required. A MD Bay Sport License is required for ages 16 and older.**
- Top of the Food Chain- Osprey are at the top of their food chain with no natural predators. They do, however, often compete with Bald Eagles for food supply. Take 15-20 minutes to observe our waterfront and count how many Osprey and how many Eagles you see. An ecosystem with lots of both species has an abundance of food! Record your results.
- Speed Dive- Osprey dive up to 200 ft to catch their dinner, often clocking speeds of 30mph, sometimes even reaching 50 mph before they hit the water. There is a 200 ft. section marked off in front of our Discovery Center. Take turns testing your Osprey speed by timing how many seconds it takes to run that sprint. Record your times! (Note- a diving Osprey would cover that distance in about 4.5 seconds.)
- Pollution Problem- Osprey use whatever they find around them to build their nests. The problem with this is that often they build trash and other human-made debris into their nests which can sometimes injure the Osprey and their chicks. Walk the shoreline and count the different types of trash you observe. Make a bar graph of the data you collect!
- Growing Up Osprey- Many factors play into how many chicks a pair of Osprey successfully raise. In a healthy ecosystem with an abundance of food, they often fledge 3 young. Using a die, you can play a simple game to “raise” your chicks. Roll the die. You must roll an even number to start (that makes an egg) If you land on an even number, your Osprey grows one stage (there are 3 stages- egg, chick, fledged (able to fly away)) If you land an odd number your Osprey doesn’t survive. See who can raise the most Osprey to fledge in 12 rolls. **Die/Dice needed**
- Face Forward Fish- Did you know that Osprey always carry their fish head up face forward? Turn a water bottle, a nerf football, or other item you happen to have with you into a “fish” (you can draw a face on it, or just determine which end is up and which way is front) Take turns tossing the “fish” between people in your group. Always try to catch the fish “Osprey” style. If you catch it wrong, you’re out! The last person standing is the Outstanding Osprey! **Water bottle or other “fish” needed.**
- Fact Catcher- Print the template for an old-fashioned paper fortune teller, find the answers to the facts, and then quiz your friends. **Printed template needed.**

Fact Catcher

Top-Left (Blue): What other bird competes with Osprey for food?

Top-Right (Red): How far can an Osprey dive for food?

Bottom-Left (Green): How fast does an Osprey travel when diving for fish?

Bottom-Right (Yellow): What do Ospreys build their nests out of?

Left Side (Blue/Green): How many attempts does it usually take for an Osprey to catch a fish?

Right Side (Red/Yellow): What nearly eradicated Osprey in the Chesapeake Region in the 1900's?

Inner Left (Green): Approx. how many minutes does it take for an Osprey to catch a fish?

Inner Right (Yellow): How big is an Osprey's wingspan?

- Print out and color the fact-catcher. Write the answers to the questions on the corresponding
- Cut around the outside of the square.
- Flip the page over so the words and pictures face down.
- Fold the paper diagonally in both directions, then unfold.
- Using the lines as a guide, fold each corner of the paper toward the center.
- Turn the paper over so the folded sides are face down.
- Again, fold all the corners to the center.
- Fold it in half, top to bottom, and then unfold.
- Fold it in half again, left to right, and unfold.
- Using your thumb and forefingers in the flap pockets, squeeze all four sides towards each other.

How to play:

- Fold back and forth
- Pick a question
- See if you can answer it