

Lake District Osprey Project



media release

Issued by the Lake District Osprey Project

A partnership of The Forestry Commission and the RSPB, with the support of the Lake District National Park Authority

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AND THEN THERE WERE TWO SECOND OSPREY CHICK HATCHES IN LAKE DISTRICT

Two chicks have now hatched in the osprey nest at Bassenthwaite Lake in Cumbria, the Lake District Osprey Project confirmed today (Tuesday 31 May 2005).

The first chick hatched out at around 5am on the morning of Saturday 28th May and the second chick hatched at 8.15pm on the evening of Monday 30th.

The female osprey is known to have laid three eggs but, as they were laid several days apart and will hatch at different times, it could be several days before it is known whether all three eggs have hatched.

Wardens carrying out a 24-hour guard on the nest witnessed the arrival of the first two chicks. They watched the dramatic arrival of the second chick on CCTV as it broke out of the egg.

The male bird is now busy catching fish for his newly arrived offspring, while the female birds is tenderly feeding and brooding them.

The good news comes as a relief to the project partners and the thousands of people who have watched the dramatic events unfold at Bassenthwaite this spring. People from all over the world are following Cumbria's famous wildlife family thanks to a 'Big Brother'-style nest camera overlooking the nest.

Over the Bank Holiday weekend, thousands of people visited the viewpoints set up by the Lake District Osprey Project near Keswick. There were around 700 visitors on each day to the Forestry Commission's Whinlatter Visitor Centre, with similar numbers visiting the viewpoint at Dodd Wood. Visitors were able to catch a glimpse of the chicks at the Whinlatter Centre, where live pictures beamed from a camera overlooking the nest are show on a videowall.

The Lake District Osprey Project is a partnership between the Forestry Commission, and the RSPB, with the support of the Lake District National Park Authority

Welcoming the news, Nathan Fox of The Lake District Osprey Project, said: "It has been an exciting and nail-biting season so far and we are absolutely delighted that at two of the eggs have successfully hatched so far. The many fans of the Lake District's famous ospreys will be thrilled to hear the news.

"It is a major undertaking to run the osprey project each year and we rely on a huge team of volunteers to help make it a success. The news that there are two chicks in the nest is testament to all their enthusiasm, dedication and sheer hard work in helping to safeguard these fantastic birds."

The Bassenthwaite ospreys were not re-introduced into Cumbria, but re-colonised England in 2001 as part of a natural population expansion from their stronghold in Scotland. The Lake District Osprey Project team helped them by providing artificial nests for them to use in the Bassenthwaite area.

This is the fifth year that ospreys have nested near Bassenthwaite Lake and they have already successfully raised five chicks – one chick in 2001, two in 2002, one in 2003 and one last year.

So far, the male osprey has delivered a total of 127 fish to the nest for the female. However, now that the eggs are hatching he will have to almost double his daily total to feed his offspring. If all goes well, this year's young should make their first flight in August, and remain in the area until September.

The project partners have provided two viewpoints near Keswick where visitors can watch the action.

An open-air public viewpoint is now welcoming visitors at the Forestry Commission's Dodd Wood near Keswick. The osprey project team set up telescopes between 10am and 5pm daily for visitors to watch the action as part of the RSPB's Aren't Birds Brilliant! initiative. Everyone is welcome at the viewpoint.

At the FC Whinlatter Visitor Centre, near Braithwaite, pictures beamed from the nest are screened on a giant videowall. Images from the nest can be seen online at www.ospreywatch.co.uk and www.bbc.co.uk/cumbria

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For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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Additional notes:

1. The Lake District Osprey Viewpoint at the Forestry Commission's Dodd Wood gives open-air viewing of the birds and will reopen on Monday 11 April. It is located, 3 miles north of Keswick, off the A591 – follow signs to Mirehouse. The Viewpoint is open all

daylight hours. Between 10 am and 5 pm, the osprey project information team are on hand with telescopes for visitors to use. Pictures from the nestcam are shown on a videowall at the FC's Whinlatter Visitor Centre, near Braithwaite.

2. The Bassenthwaite ospreys re-colonised England naturally in 2001 as part of a population expansion in Scotland, following the return of ospreys there in the 1950s after an absence of more than 50 years. It was the first time that ospreys had nested in the Lake District for at least 150 years.
3. Bassenthwaite Lake has been owned and managed by the Lake District National Park Authority since 1979 and is now a National Nature Reserve.

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