

## Ospreys in the Borders - a visit to see ringing July 2019

On Friday 5th July, Rosemary, Marian, Michael and myself travelled to the Borders to watch Tony Lightley and his colleagues ringing a young Osprey. Tony is the Environment Forester in the Borders Region for Forestry and Land Scotland. In April he came to the club to talk about his work, particularly the Osprey project in the Tweed Valley, and donated raffle prizes of watching a juvenile being ringed.



By far the longest part of the operation was the preparation and climbing of the tree.



I thought that Tony would lay a ladder against the tree and that would be it - not so. Half of the climb was just that with Tony using spiked boots and ropes to get to the nest - quite a feat.

The juvenile was then put carefully in a bag and lowered to the ground. There we could see the beautiful markings and the vicious talons. Tony's co-workers carefully ringed the bird with a darvic ring.

The tricky bit was trying to make sure that the bird didn't bite and to try to avoid that it bit on a stick instead of a finger.

Eve showed us, and explained, the nature of the talons and the pads on the feet which help the Osprey grasp the fish it catches.



The various biometrics, such as weight, were recorded and then it was back to the nest for the juvenile.



During the ringing the female circled the nest whilst the male made the occasional visit.





The whole ringing operation took about two hours and the group, minus NNBC members, were off to carry out another ringing that afternoon.

Many thanks to Tony and his colleagues for letting us be part of the morning's work and for teaching us more at first hand about Ospreys - no longer such an endangered bird thanks to the work of environmentalists such as Tony and his colleagues.

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