



For Immediate Release

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Bay Area's Osprey video stars hatch their first chick

How do you say “Congratulations!” in Osprey language?

We'll never know, but Rosie and Richmond – the two avian celebrities at the center of the Bay Area's first live Osprey nest cam – are due for some big congrats. They hatched their first chick on Friday morning, May 12!

The pair are still incubating a second egg, which is expected to hatch within the next few days.

“The growing community of S.F. Bay Osprey fans is totally thrilled to welcome this new addition to the family,” said Cindy Margulis, Executive Director of Golden Gate Audubon Society, which launched the 24/7 live video feed of this nest in late March. “Over the next two months, we can all watch these youngsters close-up as they grow, explore their nest, and learn to fly.”

The Osprey nest, which is monitored by two video cameras, is located 75 feet above the ground on the Whirley Crane, a decommissioned World War 2 crane on the Richmond shoreline. People can view the live video feed at <http://sfbayospreys.org>, which also offers information on how we can help Ospreys thrive, downloadable lesson plans for teachers of grades 6-12, and live chat about the Ospreys.

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Rosie and Richmond's first egg was laid on April 1st. Rosie initially laid three eggs, but she removed one from the nest on May 1 after it developed a crack and was no longer viable.

The young Ospreys will spend 50 to 55 days in the nest before they fledge (learn to fly). Both parents will take turns feeding them and attending the nest to warm the chicks and protect them from predators such as eagles and ravens. The biggest potential threats to nestling Ospreys are predation, exposure, and lack of food.

"Rosie and Richmond so far have been terrific parents," Margulis said. "They kept the eggs consistently covered and warm, fought off interloping birds, and rebuilt part of the nest when it was damaged during heavy winds. We're hoping they will be just as good a team when it comes to feeding and tending their chicks."

While a successful hatch of Osprey eggs may seem routine, that has not always been the case. In the 1960s and 70s, Osprey populations plummeted and the species was threatened with extinction when the pesticide DDT made Osprey egg shells so thin that they broke during incubation.

It was thanks to the federal government's ban on DDT that Ospreys were able to resume hatching young successfully. And it's thanks to government clean water regulations and continuing Bay restoration work by many agencies and nonprofits that San Francisco Bay today supports the fish populations that Ospreys need to survive.

"Bay Area Ospreys are an inspiring example of an environmental success story," Margulis said. "Instead of vanishing, they've actually expanded their nesting range to San Francisco Bay. They started nesting along the Bay for the very first time in the early 2000s, and last year we had 42 nesting pairs that produced 51 new fledglings. Rosie and Richmond's chicks are part of this Osprey baby boom!"

Since Golden Gate Audubon launched the live video feed in late March, more than 24,000 people have visited <http://sfbayospreys.org>. The live chat section of the web site has become a friendly and busy online community with participants sharing Osprey observations, screen shots, and humor, and answering questions from newcomers to the site. Golden Gate Audubon held a contest to guess the date the first egg would hatch, and will hold another contest in several weeks to choose names for the chicks.

Watch the live nest feed at <http://sfbayospreys.org>. Or keep up with highlights from the nest on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/bayospreys/> .

NOTE: Media can download photos of the hatch in a Dropbox folder at <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/7w418vr9yskh1fl/AABgvcsTYqBznhRASyHVVKG9a?dl=0>. We will add video footage to this folder as soon as we have it available. This is a private Dropbox for media use ONLY.

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