

Return of osprey blessed event in England

July 4 2006

A young osprey has returned to its birthplace in a wildlife sanctuary, raising hopes that the bird can be re-established in Britain.

The male, named R5, was born near Rutland Water, a reservoir in the English Midlands, in 2004. It migrated to Africa and is the first of 12 chicks born in the area since 2001 to return home, The Telegraph reported.

Tim Mackrill, the head of the Rutland Osprey Project, said the goal has always been to establish a natural osprey colony at Rutland Water, the country's largest manmade lake.

"It was a fantastic moment," Mackrill said of the bird's return. "He flew back to the nest where he was hatched, although I don't think his parents were as pleased to see him as they were in 2004."

Ospreys, large fish-eating birds, became extinct in most of the British Isles in the 19th century because of the Victorian passion for collections of eggs and stuffed birds. The first attempts to re-establish them were thwarted by DDT and other pesticides in the food chain, which resulted in thin egg shells.

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