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LOCAL NEWS

Osprey family settling in at Old Bridge

Naturalists patiently waiting for web cam start-up WENDY FRASER

Almost like family members awaiting the arrival of a newborn, members of the Lillooet Naturalist Society anxiously awaited the return of ospreys to their nest on the Old Bridge.

Society members, who led the campaign to purchase and install an osprey web cam on the bridge, are monitoring the nest regularly. They report mom, dad and one egg have settled in at the site. The egg was laid sometime after May 4 and there is a 34-40 day incubation period for the baby bird.

There have been technical delays in getting the new web cam fully operational at the Old Bridge location.

May 27 is a likely date for refitting and testing the camera and aiming the signal to the Fraser Cove campground and then bouncing it on to Lillooet Secondary School where a server is located. Volunteers Mark Watson and Ken Wright hope to climb the bridge this week to refit the camera; they will have to be outfitted with decoy gear to protect them from any aggressive displays by the birds.

Once the web cam is up and running, live streaming video of the nest will then be linked to the websites of the Lillooet Naturalist Society, the District of Lillooet and B.C. Naturalists.

Another delay was prompted by the local society's decision to stay away from the nest and not disturb it in any way during the critical nesting period.

The first osprey to arrive at the Old Bridge nest was a male who flew in on Apr. 26. He soon displayed typical territorial behaviour, "sky dancing" around the nest. Once the female bird arrived, the male assumed the role of bringing all of her food to her, providing her with fish from the Fraser River.

Ospreys build their large, bulky nests at sites near water, with clear visibility and an abundant food supply.

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