

NORTHERN REACH

Showcase of the *Greater* Inland Northwest

SCENIC PASSAGE
Over the Byway

Plus
Arts & Culture
Touring the Reach
Shore Enough
and More

Summer 2010

Contents

NORTHERN REACH

Volume III, Issue 3

publisher/executive editor

Wayne Gorst

associate editor

Carol Cowan

contributing editor

Maggie Ulmer

photography

Jenny King

Wayne Gorst

advertising sales

Laurie Gorst

509.690.1873

For subscription
information call

509.690.1873/509.690.1874

Northern Reach Magazine

is published four times a year by
Northern Reach Media, LLC

879 Mahoney Rd.

Colville, WA 99114

© Copyright 2010

No part of this publication may be
reproduced in whole or in part without
the express written permission of
the publisher.

Cover:
Singer's Bay on Lake Roosevelt

Wayne Gorst Photo

- 7 Coming Soon to a Country Near You
Christina Lake Arts & Artisans



- 9 American Graffiti
Father/Daughter Style

- 12 Hot Neon Nights
Cruisin' with the Asphalt Angels



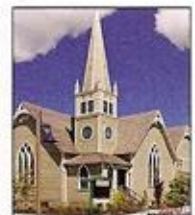
- 15 Aces High
Over the Northern Reach



- 16 Scenic Passage

- 23 Osprey Water Wings

- 25 Jacklin Arts and Cultural Center
Fulfilling the Vision



- 29 View from the Sidecar

- 32 Shore Enough



Osprey Water Wings

by
Nancy Owens Barnes

Some alone, I am walking down our sloped driveway when I hear something behind me.

WHOP!

I whip around, expecting to dodge some creature or person racing out of the woods after me.

No creature. No person. Only a large fish. It had hit the asphalt and slid several feet down the driveway, leaving a trail of sticky skin and slime.

Seeing no one around, I quickly discover one of Idaho's largest raptors, an Osprey, circling above, eyeing me and—I'm guessing—wanting its lunch back. I assume the fish had wiggled free from the Osprey's talons, only to find death on earth.

Our house sits across Dufort Road from the Pend Oreille River, so I often see Ospreys cruising the area, circling and perching on tree branches near the river's edge, or in manmade nesting platforms. Employees of Idaho's Department of Fish and Game construct the platforms in coordination with utility companies, hoping to deter the birds from nesting atop utility poles. They once used owl decoys to deter Ospreys, but the method proved ineffective.

Although the Osprey population experienced a decline between 1950 and 1970, it bounced back after the government banned the use of DDT in 1972. Today, according to experts, north Idaho contains the largest nesting osprey population west of the Rocky Mountains, which is why it currently serves as a collection area in a 4-year conservation program called "Wings Over Water," designed to reintroduce Ospreys along the Missouri National Recreation River in South Dakota and Nebraska.

Now in its third year, the project is led by Dr. Wayne Melquist, a biologist with the University of Idaho's

Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit and Birds of Prey Northwest. Dr. Melquist describes how he works in coordination with utility companies such as Northern Lights and Avista, collecting young Ospreys from north Idaho, always leaving at least one chick in the nest. The Birds of

Prey Northwest organization in Coeur d'Alene then cares for the collected birds until they are transported to South Dakota and other areas.

After spending winters along the western coasts of Central and South America, Ospreys return to the Pacific Northwest each April to build their nests of sticks. The nests can measure 3 feet in diameter and up to 2 feet deep. An acquaintance told me he has seen an Osprey whoosh across the top of a dead tree, grab and snap off the tip as it goes, and take it straight to its nest—a behavior Melquist confirms. And although Ospreys add grasses and algae mats to line their nests, biologists have discovered a variety of odd objects in nests, including shoes, oars, brooms, boat pieces, rakes, and even a Barbie doll.

Experts say that both male and female Ospreys participate in constructing the nest. Afterwards, the female lays up to four eggs, and the male provides food and assists with incubation until hatching occurs 5 to 6 weeks later. Young Ospreys leave the nest approximately 8 weeks after hatching. Ospreys are monogamous, reestablishing their bond each year.

I enjoy the Ospreys that nest near our house, always watching the nest and looking for the telltale white head with the brown, raccoon-like mask. Sometimes one lifts from its nest as I pass, spreading its wings into a 6-foot span as it glides toward the river. Other times, I watch them circle above the hills beside us, the slight bend at the elbow making it easily distinguishable from other large birds in the area.

With flexible shoulder joints and excellent underwater vision, Ospreys make feet-first, high-speed dives into the water to catch fish. Once an Osprey has a grip on the fish, it rearranges the fish so the head faces forward to reduce wind resistance. Though the birds possess collapsible nostrils, some have drowned trying to take a fish too large to carry.

And although reversible toes and special barbed footpads help Ospreys hold their slippery prey, I know of at least one fish that escaped the great predator's grasp—one that now boosts the blooms of my daisies. **NR**