

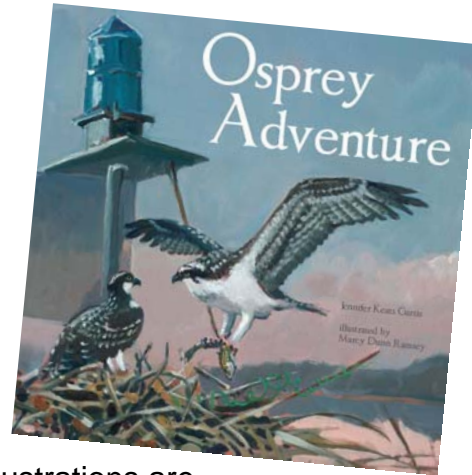
Fun with Ospreys

Using *Osprey Adventure*

By Jennifer Keats Curtis

Illustrated by Marcy Dunn Ramsey

Grades: K—5



“If you’re looking for an interesting tale with a life lesson attached, then I highly recommend *Osprey Adventure* by Jennifer Keats Curtis. This story would work wonderfully in classrooms across the country. Marcy Dunn Ramsey’s illustrations are beautiful and work well with Curtis’ story.”—Jennifer Leese, *Picket News*

“*Osprey Adventure* is a wonderful introduction to the life and work of field biologists. It fosters an appreciation of nature and shows young readers how their actions can help wildlife. A few may even be inspired to pursue careers in wildlife management and conservation!”—Barnett Rattner, Ph.D, USGS-Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Beltsville Laboratory.

Summary

Osprey Adventure describes the heroics of a boy and his biologist father who save a young osprey from certain death.

Young Pete is concerned when he spies a trash bag in an osprey nest. He and his dad boat around the bird’s channel marker and learn that, not only does the raptor’s home contain trash, but one of the fish hawks has become tangled in fishing line and is gravely ill.

This story is based on the work of a real hero, Pete McGowan, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Chesapeake Bay Field Office biologist, who has studied osprey for years. He believes that half or more of all osprey nests on the bay and surrounding rivers contain fishing lines, or similar cordage material. This story describes a big problem among these well-known birds of prey. Happily, ospreys are making a comeback after being nearly eradicated by pesticides in the 1970s, but fishing line and balloon ribbon have become serious threats to the well-being of chicks and adults.

Award-winning author Jennifer Keats Curtis strives to bring children closer to the animals in their own backyards through her writing. By combining language arts with science in stories she teaches young children about important ecological issues and what they can do to help.

Before reading



Ask your students if they have heard of an osprey and what they know about them—did you know that they are birds of prey? What does that mean?



Explain to your students what the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is and how they help protect animals all over America, even here in the Chesapeake Bay.



Create a list of all the birds that are found around the Chesapeake Bay—ospreys, eagles, orioles, etc.

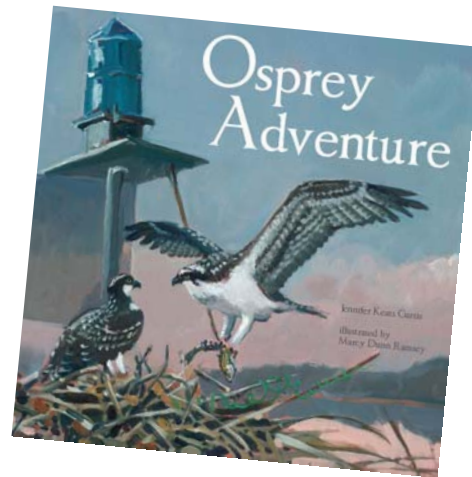
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After reading the book



Ask your students if they have seen trash and if they have participated in a cleanup of a road, beach, etc. in their neighborhood.



Research where the ospreys migrate during the winter.



Review the letter written from the author to the readers in the back of the book. What other things can students do to protect the wildlife in their backyard?

Fun Activities



Osprey Nests: Travel with your students to your local zoo or wildlife refuge to learn more about ospreys and their habitats.



Playground Cleanup: With your students organize a cleanup of your school's playground and grounds. Discuss with them the importance of keeping a clean environment and how the ospreys in the story were affected by littering.



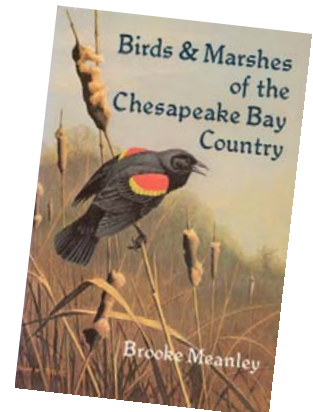
Chesapeake Bay Birds: You can learn more about birds found in the Chesapeake Bay by going online to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Web site: <http://www.fws.gov/chesapeakebay/osprey.htm>. You can also use the book *Birds & Marshes of the Chesapeake Bay Country* by Brooke Meanley to find out more about the birds in the area.



Just Like Pete: Under the direction of his father, Pete helps save a young osprey from death. Have your students write about how they have helped an animal in real life. Have them describe how they think they impacted that animal.



Bird Watching: For a homework assignment your students can grab their binoculars and identify the birds in their backyards. What birds did they see? Did they find any nests? Have your students look up the Maryland Ornithological Society meetings and learn about bird watching in your area.

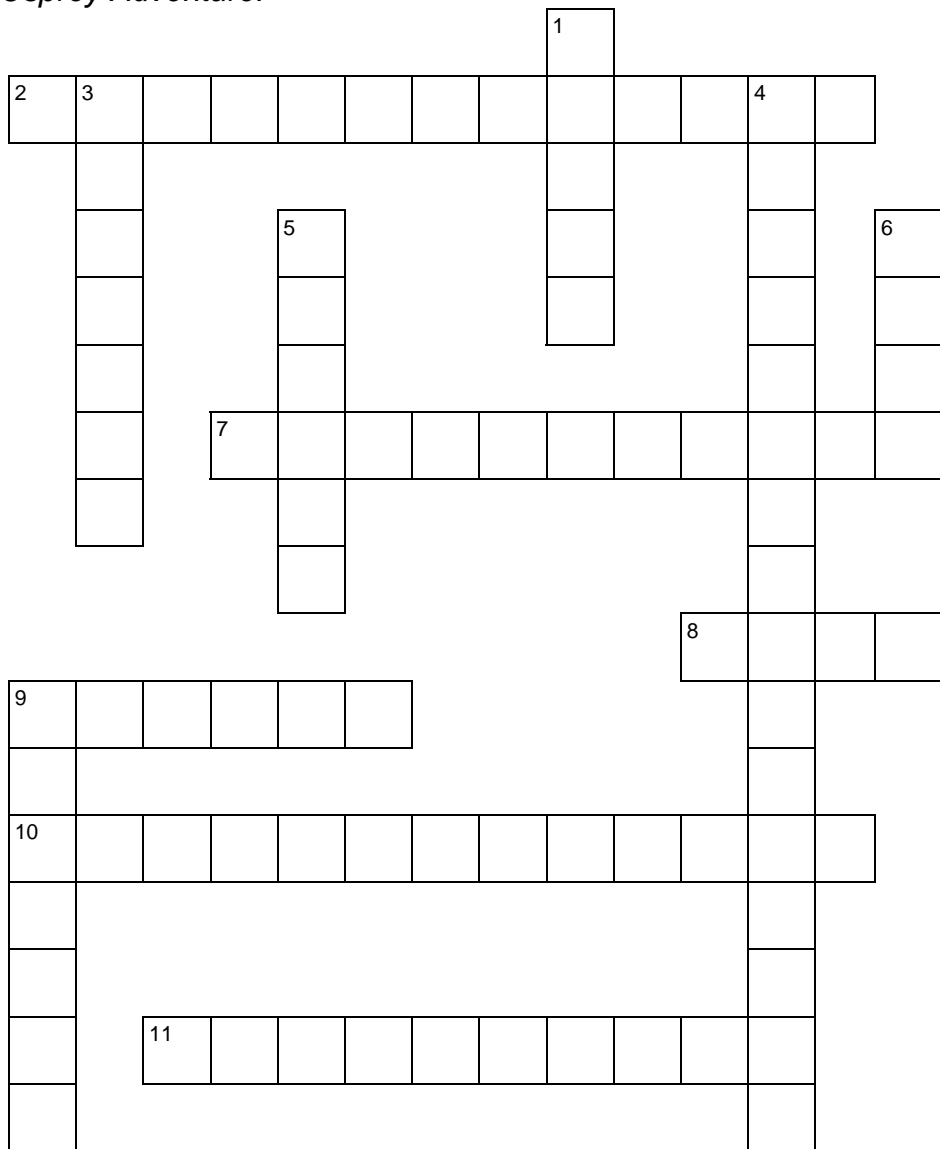


Name: _____

Date: _____

Fun with Ospreys

Directions: Solve the crossword puzzle using terms you learned from *Osprey Adventure*!



ACROSS

- 2 A buoy or other mark used to mark a navigable path through a waterway
- 7 A branch of zoology that studies birds
- 8 A bed made by birds for their eggs and young
- 9 A baby osprey
- 10 A large inlet of the Atlantic Ocean between Maryland and Virginia
- 11 A handheld instrument used to see far distances

DOWN

- 1 The claw of a bird of prey
- 3 The place where a plant or animal lives and grows
- 4 A person concerned about pollution and how it affects people and animals
- 5 A large hawk found throughout the world, especially in the Chesapeake Bay
- 6 An animal that taken and used as food for another animal
- 9 The process of changing something to regain material for human use

