

Osprey

Large, Eagle-sized raptor that often holds its long, slender wings in a crooked "M" shape



I am an adult **Osprey**.

My scientific name is *Pandion haliaetus*.

Field Marks

I am a large, eagle-sized raptor. My wings are long and thin, and I often hold them in an "M" shape. I have a wingspan of about 6 feet. My back is dark brown and most of my underparts are white. My head is white with a dark brown eye stripe that continues down my neck.

Habitat

I am found on every continent except Antarctica. I always live near water.

Food

Some raptors eat many different kinds of food, but I almost always eat fish. Usually I search for fish while in flight. Once I see a fish, I dive into the water and try to grab it with my talons. The bottoms of my feet have spiky scales for holding onto slippery prey.

Migration

Osprey that breed near the equator usually do not migrate, but those who live in other parts of the world usually do. I often follow coastlines or mountain ridges when I migrate. I often travel alone, and I flap, glide, and soar as I fly. Many raptors do not fly over large bodies of water, but I regularly make such water crossings. On my way south from North America, I sometimes fly across the Caribbean Sea. At Hawk Mountain, about 600 of us are seen each autumn, mainly in September.

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