



# CHAMBORD LAUNCHES BIODIVERSITY REALITY TV TO TRACK THE OSPREYS' ADVENTURES



Arrival of the ospreys, 10 March 2024 at 3:10 P.M.

Chambord is currently the second French site for osprey reproduction; every year, from March through September/October, seven to nine couples nest in the estate.

In 2024, for the first time, a camera was set up, close to a nest, in the National Estate of Chambord. It allows the viewer to watch live or recorded episodes in the raptors' lives during the mating season. "Biodiversity reality TV" constitutes an essential resource for the tracking, study and preservation of the species.

Since 10 March 2024, the public can enjoy a first-hand view of the osprey couple in their *revenant nest*:

<https://www.chambord.org/en/ospreys-at-chambord/>

## Scientific monitoring

Chambord is replete with remarkable settings, a safe haven for fauna and flora requiring protection. As one of the emblematic species, ospreys are afforded special attention. For nearly 30 years they have been nesting in Chambord, enjoying exceptional peace and quiet. As a migratory raptor, the osprey exhibits philopatric inclinations, which is to say that it seasonally returns to nest in its region of birth, where it first spread its wings, prior to migration. The couples subsequently separate, and the birds sojourn for several months in countries such as Senegal, Gambia, Spain or Portugal. In danger of extinction, at the outset of the 20th century the species had disappeared from continental France. By dint of protective measures implemented in the 1970s, the species was newly observed in the state forest of Orléans in 1984, and in the forest of Chambord in 1995.

Since that time, numerous measures have been taken in view of preserving these populations and their habitat, with scientific guidance being provided by several partners: the Bird Protection League (LPO), the Centre-Val de Loire directorate for environment, development and housing (DREAL), the bird biology research center (CRBPO), the Institute of Applied Ecology, and the National Forestry Office (ONF):

- **Quiet zone around the nests** pendant during the mating season (vehicle circulation ban, forestry work suspension...) and **protection of nest trees**
- **Banding of young ospreys** prior to migration (since 1997).

In 2024, the National Estate of Chambord is initiating several scientific monitoring operations designed to enhance knowledge of the species: behavior during the mating season, fishing grounds, monitoring of births, migratory paths and staging areas, wintering areas, etc.

- Installation of an **overview camera** close to a regularly frequented osprey nest, with scientific guidance provided by the Applied Ecology Institute (IEA). The images are broadcast live on the Chambord internet site: <https://www.chambord.org/en/ospreys-at-chambord/>.
- Continued **banding of young ospreys** and, if the necessary conditions are met, **implantation of Orni Track GPS transmitters** on some of the birds.

On a parallel track, the National Estate of Chambord is working in close concert with the IAE (agro-ecological infrastructure), animator of the Natura 2000 Sologne network, the objective being to monitor other species emblematic of the park and of community interest: the black stork and the Dartford warbler. Situational analysis of the populations will be carried out in view of formulating recommendations for territorial management to foster their development.

## Pedagogy and sensitization

Chambord is also planning to put into place a number of awareness-raising measures aimed at preservation of the osprey species:

- **Publication of an illustrated children's album** *Ninon et les Balbuzards*, 3<sup>rd</sup> volume of the *Les Contes de Chambord* collection, partnership with *Faton éditions*. Publication in June 2024;
- **New nature activity notebook** for the château visit. Proposed to families, the booklet was conceived as an investigation, a survey of the animals of Chambord;
- Animation of an **artistic and cultural education project [PEAC]** with a CM1 (4<sup>th</sup>-grade) class bringing together heritage awareness, protection of nature, artistic practice, and encounters with artists and book industry professionals.

### Observation report

On Sunday 10 March 2024 at 3 :10 P.M. and 31 seconds, a revenant nest couple set up its quarters in the nest adjacent to a camera, on Sunday 10 March 2024 at 3 :10 P.M. and 31 seconds. The female is banded, with the identification number "5.V". She was born in 2012 in the state-owned forest of Orléans, migrates to La Somone (Senegal) in the winter, and returns during the mating season to nest in Chambord. She was espied in Senegal in December 2023.

On 14 March, new twist: « 5.V » lands in the nest and flies away a minute later. She has not been seen there since. She has been replaced by a new not banded female recognisable by its thick dark band around the eyes. It is possible that «5.V» tried to move into another female's nest, but was unsuccessful.



### As regards the *Domaine national de Chambord*

For over 500 years, Chambord has aroused admiration and fascination throughout the world. Since 1821, the monument has been open to the public. Placed as early as 1840 in the initial list of historic monuments in France, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1981, Chambord is one of the most breathtaking Renaissance constructions. Bounded by a 32km (20-mile) wall, the château is located in an estate containing no less than 5440 hectares (13440 acres) of forests, ponds, moors and prairies. Far from serving as a residential palace or a luxurious hunting lodge, Chambord stands out as an exceptional architectural creation and as the reference alliance of natural and cultural heritage.

Property of the French state since 1930, the *Domaine national de Chambord* is an industrial and commercial public establishment placed under the high protection of the President of the Republic and under the joint authority of the French ministries of agriculture, culture and the environment. By dint of a state council degree dated 1 June 2018, the establishment has joined forces with the Grand Parc de Rambouillet. The Board of Directors is chaired by Mr. Philippe Donnet. Since January 2023, the public establishment has been directed by Mr. Pierre Dubreuil.

### As regards the nature reserve

The château of Chambord and its park were envisioned by François I as an estate. As early as 1523, four years before construction of the monument began, the French monarch acquired farmland bordering the forest massif of Boulogne located north of the Cosson river. In 1645, Gaston, Duke of Orleans completed the building of the boundary wall and increased the acreage of the estate to its present-day area of 5440 hectares; it is now the largest enclosed park on the European continent.

Since 1947, the park has been classified as a national wildlife reserve. The “ecoregion” status of most of the territory has enabled nature to tranquilly thrive (72% of the territory, encompassing more than 4000 hectares, has been access-controlled since 1974, the objectives being to ensure peace and quiet for biodiversity). In 1997, the estate was classified for protection as historic monument (as was the château, in 1840), and in 2006-2007, it was registered in the European Natura 2000 protected areas network under the 1979 Birds Directive and the fauna-flora Habitats Directive. It is also inventoried as a natural area of ecological, faunistic or floristic interest (ZNIEFF).

### As regards artistic and cultural education projects

As a national public body implanted in the heart of a largely rural department (Loir-et-Cher), for many years Chambord has been committed to disseminating culture in nearby villages by means of “beyond the walls” cultural programming, territory-based cultural projects, and artistic and cultural education projects (EAC). Conducted in coordination with schools, associations and local rural retirement homes (EHPAD), the different projects encourage artistic practices, appropriation of cultural and natural heritage, encounters with artists, and intergenerational exchanges.

To fund these actions, the National Estate of Chambord benefits from the support of the Centre-Val de Loire regional cultural directorate (DRAC) and the Grand Chambord community of communes in the framework of a PACT (territory-based cultural and artistic project) backed by the Centre-Val de Loire region. The *Quartiers d’été* (summer quarters) operation is supported by the CIPDR (interministerial committee for the prevention of delinquency and radicalization).

Domaine national de Chambord

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