



Dear Osprey friends:

We have watched with growing concern as the younger of the two Osprey offspring, Molate (band WM), shows signs that they might not be thriving. We are keeping our fingers crossed that they will survive to fledge in the next week.

Like many wildlife species, Ospreys live vulnerable lives. Typically 10-20% of nestlings don't survive to fledge, with the majority of deaths caused by lack of adequate food (Poole, 1984). Their highest risk of death is around 4-5 weeks after hatching, and it is unusual for nestlings older than that not to survive through fledging (Hagan, 1986). But even once they've fledged, they face steep challenges. Research suggests that fewer than 50% of young Osprey fledglings survive their first year.

We can't know whether Molate's apparent decline is related to a lack of food resources or some other illness or injury. We do know that both chicks appeared healthy when they were banded last month.

It is Golden Gate Audubon's policy to minimize human intervention in the lives of wild birds. That includes reducing risks to birds from buildings and glass, pesticides and herbicides, and badly sited energy projects. Despite our deep personal connections to Rosie and Richmond and their offspring, they are not pets. We will not impose upon their wildness, nor will we make efforts that may inadvertently harm otherwise healthy and productive individuals.

That does not mean we will stand by idly. We will maintain vigilant observation of the nest, and should Molate end up somewhere in trouble, outside of the nest, we will make every effort to get them to care at one of our trusted partners, WildCare or Lindsay Wildlife, as only a California Department of Fish & Wildlife permittee is legally allowed to handle wild Ospreys.

We share your concern for Molate, and hope our fears don't come to pass. Moments like this remind us how precious and fragile life is – both human life and wildlife. Getting to know individual birds like Molate and Brooks (band XA) makes us more committed than ever to protecting our local birds, everything from magnificent raptors like this Osprey family to the towhees and finches in our backyards.

With our thoughts on Molate and their family,

Glenn Phillips  
Executive Director

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Hagan, John M. "Temporal patterns in pre-fledgling survival and brood reduction in an osprey colony." *The Condor* 88.2 (1986): 200-205.

Poole AF. 1984. Reproductive limitation in coastal ospreys (*Pandion haliaetus*): an ecological and an evolutionary perspective. Ph.D thesis, Boston University. 157 pp.