

FAMINE AND FEAST

👤 Rosieshields 🕒 June 30, 2023 🏷️ Uncategorized

I promised you an update on the sibling rivalry between chick 2 and 3 and the fish deliveries.

Fishing continues to be challenging for Samson in poor weather and he has struggled to bring in decent sized fish. As a result, chick 2 has continued to attack chick 3, preventing it from having access to what supplies have been delivered. Usually, the two larger chicks are sufficiently full by the late afternoon so that chick 2 then is less inclined to bully chick 3 and the latter usually manages to have a good feed at that stage. One good feed every 24 hours is not ideal but chick 3 is continuing to develop and I am hopeful will survive the present onslaught by its older sibling. It is learning how to position itself so as to minimise the attacks and to be ready to take advantage of any opportunities to feed, but it is nevertheless hard to watch when it food begs from its mother when the fish has already been consumed.



Chick 3 being submissive and missing out on another feed

Today, however has been different. Samson brought in the remnants of a fish shortly after 0500 and, when he hadn't reappeared within the next 2 hours, JW6 (Juno) clearly decided that she was going to have take matters into her own talons and disappeared off camera, appearing 12 minutes later with a fish. This is most unusual for a female to a) fish before the chicks fledge and b) leave the chicks, probably out of her sight, for any length of time. The brood didn't notice at first when she landed that she had a fish and, as usual, it was 3 who reacted quickest and had several mouthfuls before its siblings cottoned on to what had happened. Within 30 minutes of bringing that one in, she disappeared again and, 20 minutes later, brought a second fish, no 3 managing a good dozen mouthfuls before greedy no 2 pushed it aside.



JW6 supplementing fish deliveries

Samson brought in the next fish and throughout the afternoon proceeded to bring in several more, all fairly small, trout and the family fed well before JW6 brought in the eighth fish of the day. The two eldest chicks finally bulked out after that and the **ninth** fish (Samson) was eaten solely by no 3. I wasn't able to download the last couple of hours of camera footage today but JW6 was spotted bringing in at least the **tenth** fish, the largest seen of the day, at about 2015.

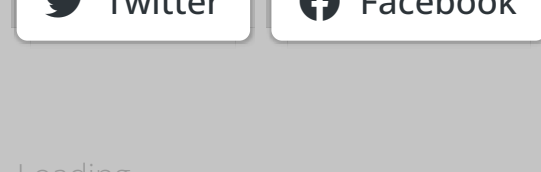
So, tomorrow will be interesting. I don't know whether JW6 will continue to supplement Samson's efforts (I noticed the female at Loch of the Lowes also went fishing for her family today) or whether she will leave it all to him. I don't know where the sudden supply of fish came from (Samson was fishing downstream and JW6 concentrated on upstream) and whether there will be a similar glut tomorrow. No 3 will no doubt hope that the generous supply will continue. Thankfully, the weather will be better tomorrow so monitoring will be a more pleasant experience than today in almost constant rain and I'll keep you informed of developments.

As a complete aside, I was sitting watching the nest yesterday from my car and had the car door open. It has been encouraging to see far more swallows and both types of martin darting around the field, picking up insects, than we've seen for a couple of years and the sky seems full of youngsters. One obviously tried a low flypast by the car and then ran out of steam and landed on the rubber sill at the base of the door. He hung there for a couple of minutes, not entirely sure of what he'd got himself onto, so I gently picked him up (there was nothing wrong with his lungs!) and released him in the open and he flew away, glad to escape from this monster who was obviously going to eat him. I have to say that they are remarkably cute at close quarters. You never know what's going to happen when you're down there minding your ospreys' business.



My wee temporary hitchhiker

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