

# Raptor Persecution UK

## Osprey cruises run by Birds of Poole Harbour charity win gold in Dorset Tourism Awards

RaptorPersecutionUK  
February 9, 2025  
News  
osprey, white-tailed eagle



The Birds of Poole Harbour team collecting their gold award earlier this week. Photo by Ian Plessey, IPVisuals, Dorset Tourism Awards 2024/25

If ever there was a well-deserved award, this is it, because the work of this small, passionate and knowledgeable team expands far, far beyond the popular Osprey Cruise boat trips that they run every summer.

In the world of UK raptor conservation, the charity is probably best known for successfully bringing back Ospreys to the south coast of England, working in close partnership with the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation. Ospreys were translocated from Scotland over a number of years, starting in 2017, and are now regularly breeding in Poole Harbour, with the first chicks hatching in southern England in almost 200 years.

The Osprey project is just one of several high impact conservation projects this team is involved with and they are currently working towards a Chough reintroduction on the Purbeck Coast. They are also heavily involved in various annual bird surveys and bird ringing projects around this important wetland site.

Public engagement and education has always been one of the core objectives of the Birds of Poole Harbour charity, and boy, do they deliver on that front!

They run a School Bird Boat Project during the winter and spring, offering local primary schools free two-hour harbour boat trips, including free coach travel to and from Poole Quay. There are free binoculars for the pupils to use and they're encouraged to participate in identifying and recording different species whilst on board, as well as learning about natural history, conservation and their local environment. Imagine the impact those boat trips have on those kids.

In addition to the school boats, the charity delivers an extraordinary events calendar throughout the year which members of the public can pay to attend. They do guided walks and ID courses, talks and free pop-up events, but probably the most popular events are the various boat cruises which attract thousands of visitors a year, many of them selling out quickly and attracting visitors from far beyond Dorset.

I'm one of those visitors and I've been making the trip down to join these boat trips since 2017. Initially it was to see the Ospreys, but more recently the big draw for me is the resident pair of White-tailed Eagles that have set up home in Poole Harbour. There are plenty of other raptor species too, notably Marsh Harriers and Peregrines, and because of the diversity of habitats around the harbour there are many, many more bird species to see.

These boat trips usually last for three hours and members of the BOPH team are always on board to provide a running commentary (and they also know where the eagles like to hang out). The trips are hugely enjoyable and massively informative. You don't need to be an expert birder to attend – the passengers are often an eclectic mix of backgrounds and experience, ranging from the expert to the novice and everything inbetween. If you want a brilliant, fun and engaging day out, look out for this year's boat trip dates on the BOPH website (being announced shortly). You can also organise a private, bespoke boat trip, e.g. as a corporate event or as an event for supporters as Wild Justice did in 2023.



BOPH boat trips – photos by Ruth Tingay

For those who can't visit the harbour in person, Birds of Poole Harbour provide a daily blog of bird sightings, a regularly-updated website with news from their various projects, and they provide live-streaming webcams so people from around the world can follow the fortunes of the Ospreys' breeding seasons.

Another winner at the 2024/25 Dorset Tourism Awards was Careys Secret Garden, based on the western side of the harbour, who won GOLD in the Ethical, Responsible & Sustainable Tourism category, SILVER in the Small Visitor Attraction category, and took home the WINNER OF WINNERS award, too! Careys Secret Garden works in partnership with Birds of Poole Harbour and offers a wide range of events, courses and activities from March to October, including the Careys Osprey Tours where small groups can book to visit a viewing platform to watch the famous nest belonging to Ospreys CJ7 & Q22. If you're in the area, BOPH boat trips are highly recommended to visit this special, secluded location.

Congratulations again to both organisations on winning the richly-deserved recognition on these awards. I wonder if former Conservative MP Chris Loder was at the awards ceremony?

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5 thoughts on "Osprey cruises run by Birds of Poole Harbour charity win gold in Dorset Tourism Awards"

**valerie webber** February 9, 2025 at 3:26 pm

So nice to get good news, I too have been on the cruises a few times.

[Reply](#)

**Tim Wood**

February 9, 2025 at 5:59 pm

Do you get to see the Ospreys + White-tailed Eagles every time you go out on the boat Ruth, or most times? (I know you said the organisers know where the Eagles like to hang out) Can you see where the Ospreys nest from the water? (without disturbing them) Have you ever got to see the Peregrines and Marsh Harriers whilst you were there?

p.s Sorry for so many questions, I won't take offence if you don't want to or don't have time to reply.

[Reply](#)

**saxonjohn24**

February 9, 2025 at 6:55 pm

Good to hear that the awards are still being given out. Good old Chris Loder, these cruises are excellent and there is a place for eagles in Dorset.

[Reply](#)

**maryannstegges**

February 9, 2025 at 9:52 pm

Oh, that is wonderful news.

[Reply](#)

**John Turner**

February 9, 2025 at 10:06 pm

Well done BOPH for promoting another wonderful bird of prey. John Turner – Shropshire Peregrine Group

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