

Exercise 5

Read the following article about a bird called Lady.

On the opposite page, write a summary about what makes Lady special.

Your summary should be about 100 words long (and no more than 120 words long). You should use your own words as far as possible. You will receive up to 6 marks for the content of your summary, and up to 5 marks for the style and accuracy of your language.

LADY

Inside a wooden hut at the edge of a lake in Scotland there is much excitement. People are looking through their binoculars and whispering to one another. The object of all the attention is Lady, a huge bird of prey called an osprey, who is standing in her giant nest and is looking out to the blue sky.



This bird has puzzled the experts by living to the age of 26, because ospreys usually live for only 8 years. Equally amazing is the fact that she has produced 48 baby birds. She is now waiting for the return of the 10-year-old male who she mated with last year. He is due to land any day after a 3,000-mile migration back from west Africa. Ospreys mate for life, so, if he has survived, he should be on his way. But if he doesn't get here within the next few days, Lady will probably assume that he has died and move on to another male. In her lifetime, she has already outlived two mates, a fact that has astounded experts.

"The interest is huge," said Trevor Smith, from the Scottish Nature Reserve. "Lady is a star attraction and very important. Incredibly, she has been coming back to her nest here for 19 years. Last year she was very ill and we all thought she was going to die, so no one imagined she'd be back this year."

Lady survived and recently arrived back from her African winter. She has no identification rings or markers, so it wasn't until later, when bird-watchers focused their cameras on her eyes, that her identity could be confirmed. "She has a unique defect in the iris of her right eye – it looks like a lightning bolt," said Smith. "It was amazing to see her come back; she is astonishing everyone and her remarkable life is challenging everything we thought was true about ospreys."

Since her return, Lady has been helping herself to the lake's supplies of fish, even catching herself a large salmon. Meanwhile, she is being closely watched by experts and fans. On the branches around her are two discreet cameras, one for day and one for night, pointing at the nest. There are also two microphones that pick up every ruffle of her feathers and her occasional, piercing cry. Enthusiasts around the world are eagerly watching her movements as they happen. It could be argued that no other osprey in history has been observed by so many people worldwide. Last year 33,000 people viewed the webcam online, and this year 120,000 have already watched Lady. Being able to see her so close up is especially exciting.

Smaller than an eagle, but larger than a hawk, the osprey disappeared as a species from the UK in 1916. The last pair was killed by egg and bird hunters such as the Victorian collector, William Dunbar, who guiltily wrote to a friend that their obsessions "had finally destroyed the osprey". Even when the ospreys returned in the 1950s, their small numbers remained under threat, especially from the use of pesticides. All of this sad history makes Lady even more remarkable. She alone has helped to encourage a new interest in the survival of the osprey.

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