

## SCR 18 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

### Senate Committee On Rules

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**Meeting Dates:** 3/20

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#### **WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Designates Osprey as official state bird.

#### **ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

#### **EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

#### **BACKGROUND:**

The Osprey is a diurnal, fish-eating bird of prey that has a population range spanning the United States and other various locations around the World. According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), the Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) was first documented in Oregon in 1855. Historically, Ospreys populations were reported as robust, nesting in forested areas near water because they favored dead trees or trees with flat or dead tops. Ospreys populations increasingly declined through the mid-1970's as a result of certain pesticide use. However, the Ospreys have rebounded and become a common nesting species along the lower Columbia and Willamette Rivers. Recently, Ospreys have adapted to depend on power poles, cellular towers, channel markers, and similar structures for nesting sites. The USGS determined that the number of pairs nesting along the Willamette River between Eugene and Portland increased from 13 pairs in 1976 to 78 pairs in 1993, and increased again to 234 pairs in 2001. Ospreys are uniquely tolerant of human activities and build nests on suitable structures near water with an abundant supply of fish. Ospreys can commonly be observed soaring over shorelines, patrolling waterways and perched on their large stick nests.

Currently, the Oregon state bird is the Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*). The Western Meadowlark was chosen as the state bird in 1927 by school children across the state in a poll sponsored by the Oregon Audubon Society. The Western Meadowlark is also the state bird of Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, Montana, and North Dakota.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 18 would designate the Osprey as the official state bird of Oregon.