



Audubon

ADVENTURES[®]

BALDY'S BACK!

Something amazing happened early in 2007— bald eagles came off the Endangered Species List. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officially declared the bald eagle a recovered species. (The bird will still be protected from illegal hunting under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.) Bald eagles in the “lower 48” states were first listed as endangered in 1967. Forty years of work by wildlife officials and environmentalists have paid off. Our soaring national symbol can once again be seen in every state except Hawaii, where they have never lived.

As if on cue, this past spring a bald eagle pair started nesting in the original capitol city of the United States—Philadelphia. The pair is the first to nest in Philadelphia in more than 200 years. It's the very city where the bald eagle was declared the national symbol in 1782.



AN
ALL-AMERICAN
BIRD



Today bald eagles live, breed, or migrate through every state in the continental United States. That means every state except Hawaii. They're the only species of eagle that lives only in North America.



Conservation's Great

REMARKABLE RECOVERY

When the bald eagle was adopted as our national symbol in 1782, there were likely around **100,000** breeding pairs in the continental United States. Settlers, poisonous DDT pesticide, water pollution, and habitat loss reduced that number to only **400** pairs by the early 1960s. But thanks to the Endangered Species Act and other actions, there are more than **7,000** pairs today.

Ask your parents or grandparents if they ever saw a bald eagle at your age. "No" will probably be their answer. Thirty years ago, bald eagles were very nearly extinct in the United States except for Alaska. Now they are becoming common in many places.

How have bald eagles made such an amazing comeback? The U.S. Endangered Species Act of 1973 has played a big part. This federal law lists many of the species of plants and animals that are in danger of becoming extinct. The law makes it illegal for anyone to kill or harm plants and animals on the list. The law also requires that the U.S. government do certain things to preserve the plants' and animals' habitats and to restore their populations.

Other laws helped the bald eagle recover by banning certain dangerous pesticides and by forcing people to begin cleaning up our nation's waters. As a result, the return of the magnificent bald eagle is one of our biggest success stories.

Bald eagles still face problems, though. For example, eagles build their nests, called aeries (AIR-eez), in tall trees near lakes, rivers, or other bodies of water where they can catch fish for themselves and their young. But people also like to live in such places. When people build homes there, they may destroy the eagles' nesting trees or frighten the eagles away.





How Can You Help Eagles?

Best Success Story

Bald eagles may no longer be endangered, but they still deserve our respect and protection. Here's some ways you can help bald eagles and the habitat they share with other important wildlife.

- **Don't Pollute:** Many of the things we do every day add pollution to air and water. You can help cut down on the amount of pollution you and your family produce. Go to www.audubon.org/audubonadventures to learn how you can help make the Earth a healthier place for people, eagles, and all other living things.
- **Adopt An Eagle:** Student groups across the country are adopting injured or orphaned eagles through their local zoo, department of natural resources, or raptor rehabilitation center. The money they donate helps feed, house, and treat injured and orphaned eagles.
- **Be an Eagle Expert:** We protect what we care about, and we care about what we know. Learning about bald eagles and telling others helps protect our national symbol. The birds now soar through every state except Hawaii. Find out from local birdwatchers when and where to check them out near you.

Pollution is another problem for eagles. Poisonous chemicals from factories, coal-burning power plants, and farms get into streams, rivers, lakes, and wetlands. The chemicals get into the bodies of fish and other creatures that live there. When eagles catch and eat these fish, the poisons get into their bodies as well.

Some people are working hard to solve these and other problems, not only for the sake of our magnificent national bird, but for all living things that share the Earth—including ourselves. And you can do your share! To find out more, just go to the website listed in “How You Can Help Eagles” to the right.

RAPTOR RADAR

All eagles are birds of prey, or raptors. What three characteristics do eagles share with their fellow raptors—hawks, falcons, and owls? (Hint: One helps them hunt prey, one helps them catch prey, and one helps them eat prey.)

List them here:

-
-
-

Answers: great eyesight, powerful talons, sharp beak



HEROES OF THE PLANET

Audubon of Florida Center for Birds of Prey

When tornadoes swept across Florida in the winter of 2007 humans weren't the only ones left hurt and homeless. The storms knocked down a number of bald eagle nests. One nest crashed to the ground with an eaglet and its father still in it! The birds were quickly rescued and rushed to Audubon of Florida Center for Birds of Prey. There a crack team of raptor vets and wildlife workers treated the bald eagles. The eaglet healed in about ten days, while the father needed five weeks of care for his injuries. Both are now back living in the wild.

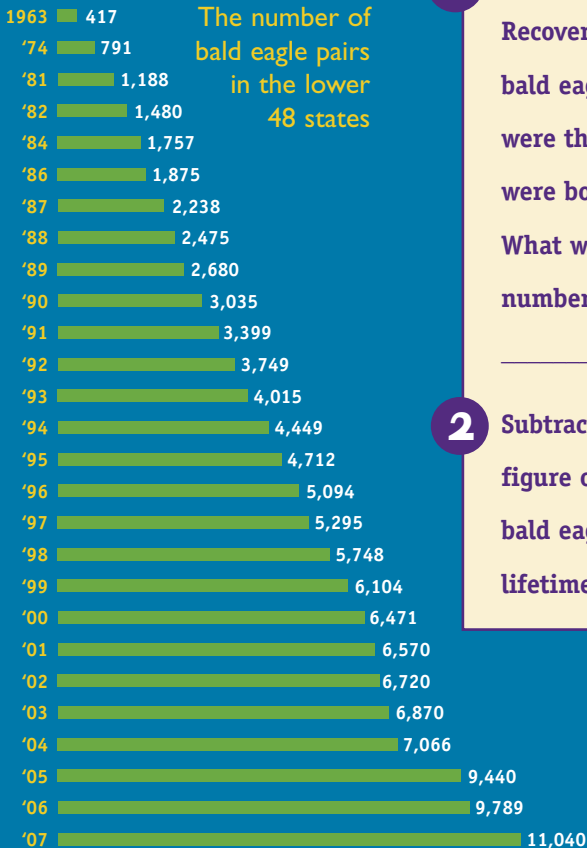
It's all in a day's work for these raptor rescuers. About 60 or so bald eagles are brought to the Center for Birds of Prey each year. Some are adults injured in accidents or fights over territory. Others are orphaned eaglets that the Center places with foster bald eagle families. So far these heroes have rehabilitated and released more than 320 bald eagles.



A LIFETIME OF IMPROVEMENT

What's a lifetime worth—in bald eagles? Do the math to find out!

America's Eagles



The number of bald eagle pairs in the lower 48 states

1

Look at the Remarkable Recovery graph. How many bald eagle breeding pairs were there in the year you were born? _____

What was the estimated number of pairs in 2007? _____

2

Subtract the numbers to figure out the increase in bald eagle pairs during your lifetime. _____

Bonus:
How many breeding pairs do you think there will be in 2008?



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