

First 2009 Eaglet Born  
**NewsDepth**, March 26, 2009  
Classroom Activities and Lesson Plans  
Additional Resources



### **Overview:**

The first eaglet of two thousand nine has hatched in Ashtabula County. Volunteers for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources have been observing a nest since early February, and reported that at least one eaglet hatched earlier this month. It will be several weeks before they can determine the total number of eagles in the nest. The incubation period for bald eagle eggs is 35 days. Young eagles fledge 72 to 75 days after hatching and leave their home nesting territory by the time they are 18 to 20 weeks old.

A record 206 active eagle territories have been identified in the state so far this year. Thirty years ago, there were only four nesting pairs of bald eagles in the state, mostly along the Lake Erie shore. In 2008, 184 eagle pairs produced over 222 young. Students will be able to learn more about the Bald Eagle, our national bird, through various activities and lessons.

Source for photo: <http://www.steelvalleyoutdoors.info/first-ohio-eaglet-born-in-ashtabula-county>

**Grade Level: 5**

**Subjects: Science and Social Studies**

### **Standards: Included in lessons**

Demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental concepts of science inquiry.

Use telecommunications efficiently and effectively to access remote information, communicate with others in support of direct and independent learning.



Michael Witt, Bald Eagle Photo Publishing

### **Classroom Activities:**

- 1. Activity #1 What Kind of a Bird Am I?** (An activity to discover more about the bald eagle.)
  - Questions for Discussion
    - Refer to overview for opening information
    - Have any of you ever seen a live bald eagle? Was it in a zoo or an aviary?
    - Measure out seven feet across the front of the classroom. Tell students that this is how wide a bald eagle's wing span is.

- How would you describe the nest of a bald eagle?
- Is a bald eagle really bald? **No, it isn't. It actually has up to 7,000 feathers.**
- Have a web scavenger hunt and see if students can find the answers to the questions on the handout.
- Use these websites as references:
  - <http://sciencespot.net/Pages/kdzeagles.html>  
This is the Science Spot Kidzone that has numerous links to bald eagles including games and quizzes.
  - <http://www.baldeagleinfo.com/>  
This is a very comprehensive site with extensive information on everything you would need to know about the bald eagle.
  - <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/birds/info/Eagle.shtml>  
This site has curriculum materials that can be used in a classroom situation including a diagram of bird anatomy that can be downloaded and printed out as a worksheet or assessment.
  - <http://www.usflag.org/baldeagle.html>

## 2. Activity #2 The Bald Eagle: Our National Symbol

- What is the United States National Symbol...National Bird? **The Bald Eagle**
- The bald eagle was made the national bird of the United States in 1782. The image of the bald eagle can be found in many places. Can you name any of them? **The Great Seal, Federal agency seals, the President's flag, and on the one-dollar bill, coins.**
- Why was the bald eagle chosen as our national symbol? **The Founding Fathers wanted to choose an animal that was unique to the United States. For six years, the members of Congress engaged in a dispute over what the national emblem should be. As a result of the debate, the bald eagle was chosen because it symbolized strength, courage, freedom, and immortality and that it would look much better as our national symbol.**
- The American bald eagle was named as our national symbol over 225 years ago. Since that was such a long time ago, can you think of anything that we could rename as our national symbol to “keep up with the times?” What are some of our nation’s other symbols?
  - <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/history/us/symbols/>
- Let’s look at the great seal and explore its significance:
  - <http://bensguide.gpo.gov/3-5/symbols/eagle.html> This site explores why the bald eagle was chosen as our national symbol.
  - <http://www.usflag.org/baldeagle.html> This site is about our American flag, but it has an informative page dedicated to the bald eagle.
  - <http://www.greatseal.com/>
    - Write one paragraph explaining the importance of having a great seal. Students then draw their own version of the great seal and designate to what in our current government could their seals be affixed? Display in the classroom.
    - <http://www.usflag.org/baldeagle.html> This site is about our American flag, but it has an informative page dedicated to the bald eagle.

### 3. Activity #3: The Bald Eagle is Back From the Brink

- Exploration into the recovery of the bald eagle from the endangered species list.
  - In 1967, the bald eagle was included on the Endangered Species List. Federal laws, such as the *Bald Eagle Protection Act*, protect the bald eagle and have led to the recovery of bald eagle populations. In 2007, populations have improved and the bald eagle was removed from the list.
  - Visit this site to learn more about the return of the bald eagle through an excellent video produced by National Geographic entitled “Bald Eagle Comes Back from Brink”. There is also a lesson to accompany the video. It includes several other good sites.  
[http://www.create.cett.msstate.edu/create/classroom/lplan\\_view.asp?articleID=193](http://www.create.cett.msstate.edu/create/classroom/lplan_view.asp?articleID=193)
  - This site includes several documents that help explain when and how the bald eagle was added and then removed from the endangered species list. It also has a document explaining laws that now protect the bald eagle.  
<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/3-5/symbols/eagle.html>
  - Further reference sites on bald eagle preservation:  
<http://baldeagles.org/> Dedicated to the preservation of our national symbol  
<http://www.nwf.org/baldeagle/>

#### Additional Resources

<http://baldeagles.org/links.html>

A very comprehensive site which provides information on everything you would need to know about the bald eagle.

<http://sciencespot.net/Pages/eagledays.html>

Want to explore the world of bald eagles with your students? Lesson ideas and a list of a science teacher’s favorite resources.

[http://www.asher.k12.ok.us/bald\\_eagle.htm](http://www.asher.k12.ok.us/bald_eagle.htm)

A lesson plan for younger students about the bald eagle provided by an Enhancing Education through Technology grant.

<http://baldeagles.org/links.html>

Links to bald eagle sites.



## American Bald Eagle Quiz

Handout

How much do you know about our national symbol? Find out by taking this quiz in which every question has a number as the correct answer.

1. The male bald eagle weighs \_\_\_\_\_ pounds and has a wingspan of \_\_\_\_\_ feet.
  - a. 7 to 10; more than six
  - b. 25 to 30; more than 15
  - c. 1 to 2; just about 3
  - d. 45 to 50; more than 100
2. The female bald eagle weighs \_\_\_\_\_ pounds and has a wingspan of \_\_\_\_\_ feet.
  - a. 7 to 10; more than six
  - b. 25 to 30; more than 15
  - c. 13 to 14; more than 8
  - d. 45 to 50; more than 100
3. In \_\_\_\_\_, George Washington became America's first president and the American bald eagle became the nation's official symbol.
  - a. 1662
  - b. 1789
  - c. 1865
  - d. 1972
4. In \_\_\_\_\_, the eagle first became protected under the National Emblem Act.
  - a. 1662
  - b. 2007
  - c. 1995
  - d. 1940
5. Each year, female bald eagles lay \_\_\_\_\_ eggs.
  - a. 7 to 10
  - b. One dozen
  - c. Just 1
  - d. 2 or 3
6. Eagle eggs hatch after an incubation period of about \_\_\_\_\_ days.
  - a. 3
  - b. 11
  - c. 21
  - d. 35

7. In 1967, conservationists estimated there were only \_\_\_\_\_ breeding pairs of bald eagles in the continental United States
  - a. 77
  - b. 111
  - c. 417
  - d. 555
  
8. The bald eagle was first declared “endangered” in \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. 1722
  - b. 1822
  - c. 1922
  - d. 1967
  
9. The white crown that makes the bald eagle so quickly recognizable, along with its white tail feathers, do not appear until the eagles reach \_\_\_\_\_ years of age.
  - a. 4 to 5
  - b. 10
  - c. 12
  - d. 18
  
10. Bald eagles normally live to about \_\_\_\_\_ years of age.
  - a. 4 to 5
  - b. 16
  - c. 21
  - d. 30
  
11. It is common for bird-watchers to view eagle nests that are as wide as \_\_\_\_\_ feet.
  - a. 10
  - b. 20
  - c. 30
  - d. 40
  
12. The pesticide DDT, an enemy of bald eagles because it causes their eggs to be soft and weak, was banned in \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. 1822
  - b. 1922
  - c. 1972
  - d. 2002
  
13. The Endangered Species Act was created just one year after the banning of DDT, in \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. 1823
  - b. 1923
  - c. 1973
  - d. 2003

14. The bald eagle is a high profile creature and is lucky to have rebounded from extinction. There still are about \_\_\_\_\_ animals and plants on the endangered list and another \_\_\_\_\_ are listed as threatened.
- a. 100; 25
  - b. 250; 75
  - c. 500; 225
  - d. 1,000; 300

### Answers

- 1. a
- 2. c
- 3. b
- 4. d
- 5. d
- 6. d
- 7. c
- 8. d
- 9. a
- 10. d
- 11. a
- 12. c
- 13. c
- 14. d

If you correctly answered 11 or more, you are soaring with the eagles, but if you correctly answered fewer than six, look out. You might be headed for extinction.