

***The Bald Eagles of
Stony Creek Metropark, Inwood Trails
Joan Bonin, Eagle Observer, and Documentarian***



© Joan Z. Bonin

Initial Bald Eagle Observations

by Ruth Glass, 2010 through 2012

•Winter 2010-2011 *A pair of eagles new to the area is observed regularly by daily park visitor and veteran birder Jim Stevens (co-founder of Macomb Audubon Society). Red leg band is noted on one of them. They show interest in a White Pine in the Winter Cove picnic area and begin to build a nest there. There is no known record of Bald Eagles frequenting the area.*

•April 2011 *Male eagle hits power line near nest and dies*

•May 2011 *Female eagle leaves the Stony area*

•Winter 2011-2012 *Female returns to Winter Cove with another male*

•Spring 2012 *The pair start to build a nest in a different White Pine at Winter Cove. (This is why the young from this pair have the Oakland County designation, even though they are now nesting in Macomb County.)*

•Summer 2012 *The pair abandon the Winter Cove nest, presumably due to human encroachment, and are seen flying the Mt. Vernon corridor frequently*

•December 15, 2012 *The start of a new nest is discovered east of the mitigated wetland on the Inwood Trails property during the Christmas Bird Count; they are actively building at an intense rate; presumably started in November*



Photographs by Robin Haworth, November 2012



***Inwood Trails Male Bald Eagle
May 18, 2013***



Joan Z. Bonin

Inwood Trails Map and Aerial Photo

STONY CREEK METROPARK

Inwood Rustic Trails Map



- MAP KEY**
- Pink - 1 1/2 Miles
 - Sectional Closures
 - Blue - 2 1/4 Miles
 - Orange - 3 1/2 Miles
 - Shortcuts
 - Trail Intersection
- For more information visit, www.metroparks.com



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Fundraiser and Bald Eagle Signage

2015-2020 Interpretive signs put in place 2021

One sign paid for from profits of book and donation by Kristin McLaren

The Bald Eagles in Winter

A Photographic Journey into the Eagles' Lives at
Stony Creek Metropark, Inwood Trails,
Washington Township, Macomb County, Michigan



By: Joan Zeller Bonin

Robin Haworth and Mark Scarlett



BALD EAGLES: A SUCCESS STORY

Bald Eagles were an uncommon sight in Michigan in the 1960s due to pesticide-contaminated waterways and loss of suitable habitat. The federal government's ban on harmful pesticides like DDT put the brakes on the population's steady decline. Locally, the development of this 15-acre wetland at the Inwood Trails helped provide a good habitat for Bald Eagles and many other species of native flora and fauna. Once a sand and gravel mining site with little to no wildlife value, the establishment of this wetland was so successful that it drew a mated pair of Bald Eagles looking for a place to settle.



In 2012, the Stony Creek Bald Eagles began construction of their nest in a grove of white pines - the first Bald Eagle nest in this area in at least 100 years!

The nest can vary in size from 4 feet to approximately 14 feet deep or more. The pair adds more branches each year, and the whole structure could weigh up to one ton! A grass-lined hole roughly the size of a queen-sized mattress provides a cozy spot to raise young. Both eagles work together to refurbish the nest, incubate eggs, and care for eaglets. Typically, eggs are laid the first week of March, and you might spot eaglets in the nest by the end of April.

BALD EAGLES: CONTINUING EFFORT

The number of Bald Eagles continues to rise. More of these majestic birds means better chances to view them in the wild; however, it can present new challenges. Bald Eagles are mainly fish-eaters but will also scavenge roadkill. This can lead to some of the birds being struck by cars. Eaglets from around the state, including some here at Stony Creek Metropark, have been trained through the Michigan Bald Eagle Rereading Project to help manage for contaminants in the environment. Although they are no longer endangered, continuing to provide healthy habitat and protection for Bald Eagles will help ensure we can enjoy their unique beauty into the future.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- Clean up and dispose of fishing line properly.
- Use lead-free ammunition and tackle.
- Drag roadkill away from roadways.
- Respect and observe Bald Eagles from a distance.
- Do not fly drones near an eagle or a nest.
- Stay on trails and obey barriers.



Funding for the sign was provided by
Kristin-Bonin McLaren and Joan Zeller Bonin

Reverse Sexual Size Dimorphism 2015 Mated Bald Eagle Pair



© Jordan Z. Bonin

Dates Stony Creek Metropark Eagles Laid First Egg 2013-2023

- 2013: March 9, 2013 P85**
2014: March 13, 2014 P85
2015: March 9, 2015 P85
2016: March 3, 2016 P85
2017: February 25, 2017 P85
(per Robin Haworth)
2018: March 3, 2018 P85
2019: March 1, 2019 P85
(possible first egg on
February 25, 2019 and
destroyed by juvenile flying
into nest)
2020: No Eggs (multiple matings)
2021: February 23 New female eagle
2022: February 18-21 Same female
as 2021
2023: February 25, 2023 P85

35 (34-39) Day Incubation Until Pip



© Joan Z. Bonin

Stony Creek Metropark Eaglets per Year 2013-2023

2013	1 Eaglet	“Eydie”	Banded	P85
2014	3 Eaglets	“Prima”, “Donna”, “E4”	Banded	“E4” Died pre-fledge P85
2015	2 Eaglets	“Ruth”, “Kendall”	Banded	P85
2016	1 Eaglet	“Scarlett”	Banded	P85
2017	2 Eaglets	“Maverick”, “Goose”	Not Banded	P85
2018	2 Eaglets	“Minnie” “Amelia”	Banded	P85
2019	1 Eaglet	“Braveheart”	Not Banded	P85
2020	Failed Nesting, no Eaglets			
2021	2 Eaglets	“Jo”, “Bo”	Not Banded	New female BAEA
2022	1 Eaglet	No Name	Not Banded	Same female as 2021
2023	1 Eaglet	“Miracle”	Not Banded	P85



*Photograph by Mark Scarlett
July 9, 2014, Adults with Dead Eaglet in the Nest*



*Photograph by Joan Bonin
2018 Eaglets*

Stony Creek Metropark Juvenile Bald Eagle Fledge Dates, 2013-2023

- July 8, 2013** **Single juvenile fledges**
- July 7, 2014** **Two juveniles fledge same day, third dies in nest**
- July 2, 2015** **One of two in flight, unsure if this was fledging date, first time observed**
- July 5, 2015** **Two of two in flight, unsure if this was fledging date, first time observed**
- July 2, 2016** **Single juvenile fledges**
- June 24, 2017** **One of two juveniles (smaller) fledge**
- July 4, 2017** **Two of two juveniles in flight, unsure if this is fledging date, first time observed**
- July 2, 2018** **Two juveniles fledge same day**
- June 27, 2019** **Single juvenile fledges (first time observed)**
- June 14, 2021** **First juvenile fledges, second very soon after, probably same day.**
- June 29, 2022** **Juvenile Fledges This is approximate date.**
- July 1, 2023** **Single juvenile fledges. The night before fledging Metroparks had Fireworks. She was gone next morning but returned two weeks later.**



Nest Configuration 2013-2023



Journal of Wildlife Management, Dr. Kendall Simon, April, 2020

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Bald Eagles: An American Icon
Habitat and Bighorn Sheep Restoration
Featured Article: Caribou Habitat and
Energy Development



Sources of Mortality in Bald Eagles in Michigan, 1986–2017

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ABSTRACT As bald eagle populations recover, defining major sources of mortality provides managers important information to develop management plans and mitigation efforts. We obtained data from necropsies on 1,490 dead bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) collected in Michigan, USA, conducted from 1986 to 2017 to determine causes of death (COD). Trauma and poisoning were the most common primary COD categories, followed by disease. Within trauma and poisoning, vehicular trauma ($n = 532$) and lead poisoning ($n = 176$) were the leading COD subcategories, respectively. Females comprised a greater number of carcasses for most COD diagnoses. The proportion of trauma and poisoning CODs significantly increased in the last few years of the study in comparison to a select few years at the beginning. Trauma CODs were greater in autumn months during whitetail deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) breeding and hunting seasons and in February, when aquatic foraging is unavailable and eagles are likely forced to scavenge along roadsides. Poisoning CODs were greatest in late winter and early spring months, when deer carcasses containing lead ammunition, which are preserved by the cold weather, also become a supplemental food source. The major infectious disease CODs, West Nile virus and botulism (*Clostridium botulinum* type E), were more prevalent during summer months. We recommend moving road-killed carcasses, especially white-tailed deer, from the main thoroughfare to the back of the right-of-way, and the transition from lead ammunition and fishing tackle to non-toxic alternatives to decrease these main anthropogenic sources of mortality for bald eagles, and other scavenger species. © 2020 The Wildlife Society.

METHODS

The Michigan bald eagle population monitoring program (MBEPP) began in cooperation with the Continental Bald Eagle Project of the National Audubon Society in 1961 (Postupalsky 1985). The program monitored and assessed bald eagle populations through annual aerial surveys, and documented the population recovery from a low of 52 occupied breeding areas in 1961 to approximately 835 in 2017. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), through the National Wildlife Health Center as part of the MBEPP, attempted to determine the cause of death for all bald eagle carcasses collected across the continental United States (USFWS 1983). Upon cessation of this program in 1983, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), through its Wildlife Disease Laboratory, began conducting necropsies on all carcasses collected in Michigan. During this same period, MDNR in cooperation with the Veterinary Clinical Center at Michigan State University, also collected, treated, and if possible released grounded bald eagles.

The bald eagle recovery program, implemented by the MDNR, determined a cause of death (COD) for every eagle carcass collected in the state of Michigan from 1986 to 2017 using a generalized necropsy examination. The necropsy results determined a primary COD category and a COD subcategory for each eagle. We divided diagnoses into 8 primary COD categories: disease, electrocution, emaciation, gunshot or trap, other, poisoning, trauma, and no diagnosis. Causes of death designated as other included a variety of diagnosis but mainly drowning and defecity. Subcategories are reported for only 2 primary CODs, trauma and poisoning. The COD subcategories for trauma are airplane, predator aggression, fishing gear, golf ball, intraspecific aggression, powerline collision, tower collision, tree accident, undetermined, vehicular collision, and wind turbine collision. We diagnosed a COD as a tree accident when the eagle had been trapped in either a crack of a tree, or under a blown down nest, branch, or tree trunk. The COD subcategories for poisoning are lead toxicosis, barbiturates (pentobarbital and phebutol), and organochlorines. We also tallied months in which eagles were submitted for necropsy for those cases where the sex of the bird could be determined.

RESULTS

The bald eagle recovery program implemented by MDNR collected 1,490 bald eagles from 1986 to 2017. As expected in a recovering population, the number of eagle carcasses collected for necropsy increased proportionally with the number of occupied breeding areas (Fig. 1). The greatest number of eagles necropsied was in 2016, when 112 eagles were collected and evaluated for CODs. Females comprised the greatest number of carcasses in which sex could be determined ($n = 737$), almost double that of males ($n = 372$; Table 1). Trauma was the COD with the greatest number of definitive diagnoses (51.7%), followed by poisoning (12.4%), disease (6.2%), and emaciation (5.0%). Females again comprised the greatest number of trauma carcasses ($n = 435$), double that of males ($n = 199$; Table 2). Within the trauma category, vehicular collisions were the most common definitive COD subcategory (69%), followed by powerline collisions (5.5%), and tree accidents (2.2%).

Table 1. Causes of death for bald eagles collected in Michigan, USA, 1986–2017. Percentages indicate the percent of all mortalities attributed to the cause of death by sex and overall. Total counts include diagnoses where sex was not specified or could not be determined.

Cause of death	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Disease	29	7.8	55	7.5	92	6.2
Electrocution	13	3.5	31	4.2	42	2.8
Emaciation	23	6.2	35	4.8	75	5.0
Gunshot or trap	13	3.5	32	4.3	65	4.4
Other	13	3.5	31	4.2	51	3.4
Poisoning	70	18.8	96	13.0	185	12.4
Trauma	199	53.5	435	59.0	770	51.7
No diagnosis	12	3.2	22	3.0	190	12.7
Total	372		737		1,490	

The History of P85 and her Identification



The female Bald Eagle at Winter Cove dated 11/09/2012 by Robin Haworth

The Story of P85 Stony Creek Metropark's Female Bald Eagle



The female Bald Eagle flying to snag in nest area, P8* identified, Photograph dated 01/25/15 by Joan Bonin



The female Bald Eagle's auxiliary band (red on left leg) and federal band (silver on right leg) Photograph dated 01/25/15 by Joan Bonin



The female Bald Eagle landing on snag in nest area, P8* identified, Photograph dated 01/25/15 by Joan Bonin



The female Bald Eagle's auxiliary (red) and federal (silver) band
This photograph is intentionally upside down in order to read the federal band right side up showing 629
Photograph dated 02/25/18 by Joan Bonin



The female Bald Eagle perched on snag in nest area, The 2nd digit on the band identified as a 5 P8* identified previously, red band no. P85 Photograph dated 03/23/19 by Joan Bonin

The History of P85 and her Identification

The Story of P85 Stony Creek Metropark's Female Bald Eagle Background

After 10,000-20,000 photographs of the female Bald Eagle and six years of studying each one, with inquiries, errors, more errors and successes, we have our female Bald Eagle identified. Out of those photographs, we have only a handful that we were able to study for potential identification.

Eagle banding in Ohio (as confirmed in 2018)

Our female Bald Eagle has a federal band (silver metal) on her right leg and an auxiliary band (red metal) on her left leg. If the red band is placed on the left leg, the silver band on the right is placed upside down. This indicates the natal nest is inland such as on a reservoir or along a river.

If the bands are reversed, that is, the federal band (silver metal) on the left leg and the auxiliary (red metal) band on the right, it indicates that the eaglet's natal nest was along Lake Erie. In this case the federal band is placed right-side-up.

The auxiliary band for Ohio (red metal with silver characters) has three characters on it; a letter and two numbers. In the case of the Stony Creek Metropark, female Bald Eagle, the characters are P85.

There are other states that also band with red and include Ohio, Maine and Iowa. The color of the characters on the red band distinguishes which state the band is from.

The red band could possibly also have been a private organization, such as a university, but the bander, both state and private must have a permit from the U.S.G.S. Bird Banding Laboratory to put both the federal and colored auxiliary bands on Bald Eagles. This includes state affiliated biologists and most Bald Eagles are banded by the "states".

The federal band (silver metal) consists of eight numbers: It should look something like this: XXX-XXXXX.

We have been able to read the first three digits, 629, since September 2014. February 2017, we got another partial number, X152X. As of 2019, we haven't been able to obtain the remaining numbers from the federal band through photographs. Her federal band reads 629-X152X with "X" being unknown digits.

The federal band number was confirmed on the Certificate of Appreciation to be 629-41526.



The History of P85 and her Identification

The Story of P85 Stony Creek Metropark's Female Bald Eagle Identification

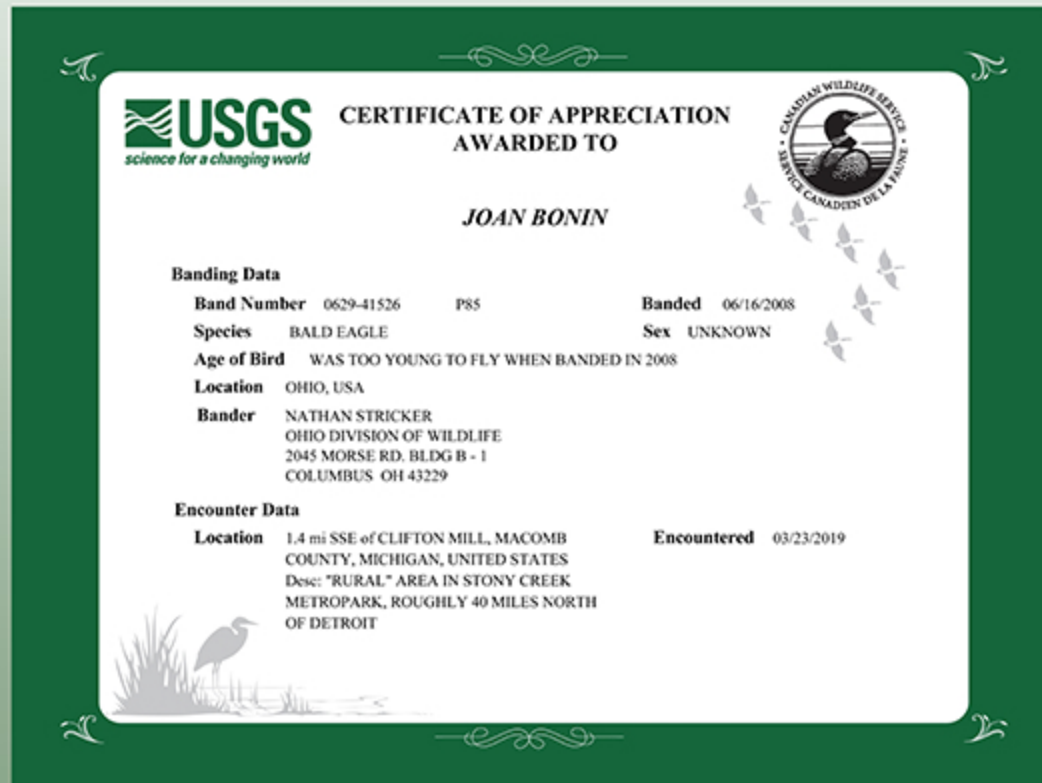
On March 23, 2019, I obtained a photo of her red auxiliary band, enough to put the letter/numbers together and send it in to the U.S.G.S. Bird Banding Laboratory for verification. I also submitted four photos of the bands, which I've been collecting since 2013 and asked to review them for confirmation.

On April 5, 2019, I received the Certificate of Appreciation from the U.S.G.S., with her federal band number.

I discovered on Google Earth that Ohio Bird Sanctuary is located just to the north of Clearfork Reservoir. I contacted them regarding the natal nest to find out if it was still active.

Did they have a story for me.

They knew P85 and her brother P86. They knew them very well.



The specific location of the nest was investigated further and contact was made with the U.S.G.S. Bird Banding Laboratory multiple times. It was disclosed that her natal nest was located in the State of Ohio, Richland County, west of the City of Mansfield. Upon further inquiry I learned the nest was near Clearfork Reservoir.



Google Earth image of the Clearfork Reservoir showing the location of Ohio Bird Sanctuary. This is the general location of the natal nest of the Stony Creek Metropark female Bald Eagle.

State of Ohio, Richland County, west of the City of Mansfield

April 13, 2019
Celebratory toast by the Stony Creek birding group on the identification of P85, the contributors to her identification and to her amazing story.



The History of P85 and her Identification

The Story of P85 Stony Creek Metropark's Female Bald Eagle Introducing Jan Ferrell and Sonn Hupp

In 2008, the year our female Bald Eagle hatched, the nest failed and went crashing to the ground taking the juveniles along with it.

Ohio Bird Sanctuary built a nesting platform in order to get the eaglets off the ground. The parents continued feeding them; they fledged and eventually left the area.

We all have a vested interest in this Bald Eagle: Ohio Bird Sanctuary, the beginning of life and Stony Creek Metropark, and those that follow her, the rest of her life thus far.

Because of the efforts to save those eaglets, they've provided so much happiness and enjoyment for so many people here, and nationwide. They've contributed to bringing back the population of the Bald Eagles in Michigan. This nest was the only nest in the Clinton River Watershed in 2013, and the first nest in over a hundred years in this area.

Soon after Jan Ferrell got in contact with me. Jan directed the eaglet rescue and filled me in even further on the event that took place on May 24, 2008. She and Sonn Hupp are here today to tell you the rest of the story.

About Jan Ferrell

During her time at Ohio Bird Sanctuary (OBS) Jan innovated and directed the OBS Junior Naturalists, a group of 13-18 year olds who served their mother organization, learned leadership and had a great deal of fun on many various environmental field trips. She has always been an animal lover, rescuing birds (who didn't particularly need rescue!) from childhood. She has spent most of her adult life teaching folks to make sure that the animal truly needs human intervention.

Jan has 4 adult children, 7 grand-children and will become a great-grandmother for the first time in October.

She considers the rescue of the eaglets in 2008 to be one of the highlights of her life and hopes you will find the story of P85 to be as inspiring as she does.

About Sonn Hupp

Sondra Hupp worked at the Ohio Bird Sanctuary for 15 years. The majority of her time spent there was as the Youth Program Coordinator. She directed the Sanctuary's Summer Camps and the Homeschool program. She also assisted Jan Ferrell with the Junior Naturalist program for several years.

Sondra is currently the Trails Naturalist at Mohican State Park in Loudonville, Ohio.



© Joan Z. Bonin



The History of P85 and her Identification

The Story of P85 Stony Creek Metropark's Female Bald Eagle Our Beautiful Female



© Joan Z. Bonin



The History of P85 and her Identification

The Story of P85 Stony Creek Metropark's Female Bald Eagle Our Beautiful Female



Mansfield News Journal Articles

2008 and 2019

Nest falls, eaglets seem OK

BY LOU WISNIEWSKI
News Journal

LEXINGTON — Two baby eagles are doing well after surviving a 90-foot fall when their nest crumbled from a maple tree along the Clear Fork Reservoir.

Local naturalist Jan Ferrell said Sunday the nest crashed to the ground Saturday at 11:45 a.m.

Saturday night, Richland County Wildlife Officer Greg Wasilewski and Ohio Division of Wildlife volunteers, including Ferrell, erected a fake nest at the Clear Fork to allow the adult eagles to care for the babies, over about two weeks old.

"I was so thankful when we found the babies alive with no visible injuries. But they are extremely stressed," Ferrell said.

Amateur photographer Jeff Hammer, of Westerville, had set up his tripod when he witnessed the incident.

"I came up last year to photograph the eagle nest," he said by telephone Sunday. "I happened to be there when it fell and called the Ohio Bird Sanctuary."

Ferrell, who coordinates the nest as a volunteer for the Ohio Division of Wildlife, said, "It's more important to see them than ever for people to



Photographer 'shoots' eagle chicks



Photographer Jeff Hammer, of Westerville, witnessed the nest collapse and shot two photos of a young male eagle. Hammer has posted several eagle photos on the News Journal Web site.

Photo Gallery on the Web
For more photos, go to
Mansfield NewsJournal.com

Westerville resident Jeffrey Hammer, who works in Mount Gilead, submitted this photo of bald eagle chicks on the forest floor after their nest crashed to the ground near Clear Fork Reservoir Saturday morning. According to Hammer, who witnessed the fall, wildlife officials erected a makeshift nest near the base of the tree the original nest sat in. He added the parents, one of whom is shown inset, appeared to continue to care for the chicks.

may be behind the yellow rope — including "plunge poles," she said. "We got them off the ground and as we left, we saw a parent bringing a fish," she said. "We're hopeful the parents will continue to feed them."

Ferrell said the nest makeshift fake nest is no longer visible to the public. "Because of the situation, the young will be monitored by the Division of Wildlife and volunteers. We're asking people to respect the nest as a volunteer for the Ohio Division of Wildlife, said, "It's more important to see them than ever for people to

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Eagles

From page 1A

harmful to them," she said. Ferrell said if the babies had been much younger, they might not have survived the fall. They don't yet know how to fly.

Last year, Ferrell told the News Journal during an elementary school

clean field strip at the site there were three eagle nests in Richland County — at Clear Fork Reservoir, Pleasant Hill and Charles Mill.

She said the nest at Clear Fork fell last year on Memorial Day.

"I was very, very relieved when I got home Saturday night that they were OK," she said.

According to the state wildlife Web site, bald eagle nests are large, usually measuring three to five feet across

and three to six feet deep (about the size of a bathtub).

The largest eagle nest recorded was near Vermilion. It was located on the "Crown Hill" and measured eight and a half feet across and 12 feet deep.

Different pairs of eagles used the nest for more than 20 years. While it took down to a storm in 1953, it reportedly weighed two tons.

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'Miracle bird': Eaglet rescued at Clear Fork reservoir in '08 now flying high in Michigan

Lexington, Mansfield News Journal Published 1:54 p.m. ET July 29, 2019



As is the Clear Fork female eagle that fell with her brother eaglet and their nest in 2008 soaring high in Michigan. Photo provided by nature photographer Joan Zeller Bonin. (Photo: Joan Zeller Bonin)

MANSFIELD — One of two eaglets rescued after falling 60 feet from their nest at the Clear Fork Reservoir more than a decade ago has recently been identified by a nature photographer as a full-grown eagle living in a Detroit-area metropark.

The photographer, Joan Zeller Bonin, had been taking photos of the eagle at Stony Creek Metropark since 2013 and in March, using a long lens, was able to read the identification number that had been banded on the eagle.

That eagle, the photographer soon learned, had been hatched at the Clear Fork Reservoir in 2008.

The heartwarming story began when the two eaglets and their nest fell 60 feet to the ground on Memorial Day weekend 2008 at the Clear Fork Reservoir. Their nest had been built in two damaged maple trees.

"They were on their way to a tree that had broken down, another tree," Mansfield naturalist Jan Ferrell said on Monday. "Eagle nests can weigh up to 2,000 pounds."

She and others helped build a fake nest after the nest collapsed, building a wooden platform by bolting two 2-by-10 boards to the same two trees.

Banded P85, the eagle left the area in 2009, as adult eagles send their offspring on their way when they are about a year old, Ferrell said. It is not known where the brother eagle, banded as P86, traveled to.

"Clear Fork will probably never have more than one nest because the eagles defend their territories," said Ferrell.

"The parent eagles are still there," she said this week of Clear Fork Reservoir. "That will be their nest. If the male dies, then the female will find another mate. If the female dies, he will get another female but she usually does not like to live in someone else's house. They will build a new nest."

Ferrell traveled to Stony Creek Metropark this past weekend in hopes of seeing P85.



Reservoir in 2008 and now the eagle in the foreground, banded P85, has been photographed and banded. From the tree she got there they could see the babies in the nest. Not only did we save one generation of eagles to date. Those volunteers I took out there are responsible for saving 13 lives," she said.

Ferrell, who had trained as an eagle watcher with the Richland County Wildlife Office, called Officer Greg Wasilewski and others the day the nest fell. With the Ohio Division of Wildlife volunteers, everyone erected a fake nest at the Clear Fork Reservoir to allow the adult eagles to care for the babies, then about two months old.

BY CHARLES SCHMIDT
https://eb2.3ifm.com/post?i_clickthrough=true&redir=https://3A32F%2Fbtrock.com%2Fclick%2FNotwe%2Fdata%3D0u%2FVEX2qW3Ht%67NW7Pq5kZ2m8D07Zbghu5Mh4oXkXl0
ArQwJ07w4m3jP7xkZm0vDUNVGR7WypE2T9RUMyBQujgkixdyndf5boag_eR8pU50p0h4gNcCOpux4A_BI
2ELrC6EJouuM1047D3dAkxWYDvRhrUoRgUvDzLwqDc5pG88byKfG1DZGGQoT0m7mGcWY0YURP65pG,
You
Should
Ask
Yourself
See more --

The call came in on a Saturday night, she recalled. "We ended up with a dozen people," Ferrell said.

Amateur photographer Jeff Hammer, of Westerville, witnessed the incident.

Sanctuary," Hammer said.

Ferrell said she called Mark Swickcastle of the Ohio Division of Wildlife who guided everyone in how to make an eagles nest that day. Wasilewski carried P85 up to the platform and released her.



Nature photographer Joan Zeller Bonin, a Defiance, Ohio native now living in Michigan, identified this eagle who hatched in a nest at Clear Fork Reservoir in 2008 by her ID band in March. The eagle was one of two eaglets who with their nest fell 60 feet to the ground and survived. (Photo: Photo by Joan Zeller Bonin)

"You should've seen her face," she said of the eagle. "It was like she was saying, 'If you were any closer.'"

Ferrell said she has always loved birds and animals.

"I've always been an animal lover and I have always 'rescued' baby birds," she said, robins, house finches and song birds.

"I had an idea of what I wanted to do when I was young. In 1981 I got the opportunity to be a volunteer at the Gorman Nature Center.

Ferrell said when she worked with kids she always told them it's important to be a learner and a reader. She was only able to go to college for a year.

She said she "dogged" Merrill Tewease and Steve McKee, both retired from the Gorman Nature Center, to allow her to help them with school groups.

"Then Gail Laux (current director of the Ohio Bird Sanctuary) came to Mansfield in 1988 and in 1991 I became a volunteer at the Ohio Bird Sanctuary," she said. In 1995, Ferrell went on staff at the bird sanctuary.

"I was trained by the best," she said.



This is the makeshift platform local Mansfield area volunteers made in 2008 when the eagles and their nest fell 60 feet to the ground at the Clear Fork Reservoir. One of the eagles has been banded and photographed at Stony Creek Metropark in Michigan. (Photo: Submitted photo)

The past Saturday, Ferrell and local naturalist Sonn Hupp drove to Michigan to Stony Creek to learn more about P85 but they did not see P85 nor her eaglet.

"Although they had been seen that morning by photographers," she said.

She said she really likes knowing that P85 is OK after all these years.

"It was astounding to me in April when the photographer Joan Zeller Bonin finally got the notification of where the bird came from so she looked on Google Map and she saw the Ohio Bird Sanctuary was near the Clear Fork Reservoir so she contacted them and (director) Gail (Laux) knew me and she said, I can put you in touch with the person who helped saved the eagle," Ferrell said.

Ferrell said in 2009 she made a PowerPoint called the Eagles of Richland County.

"My PowerPoint ended with the two babies back on their platform. Now I've changed the ending with P85 flying in Michigan," she said. Ferrell said she's since renamed the presentation: "The History of P85: A Miracle Bird with a Past."

She said it's funny that Zeller Bonin, a Defiance, Ohio transplant, was able to identify an Ohio transplant, (P85), she said.

Zeller Bonin also has a book, "The Bald Eagles in Winter," about P85. Zeller Bonin's husband Bob is a Bucyrus native.

Ferrell said she is looking forward to going out and telling this story to local groups. Anyone wishing to contact her may do so by email.

"I don't think I could ever have had a bigger rush of adrenaline," she said when she learned the Clear Fork eaglet was found at Stony Creek Metropark, about 30 miles north of Detroit.



Jan Ferrell, local naturalist, helps cover an eagle in 2008 as Richland County Wildlife Officer Greg Wasilewski takes the bird up to the makeshift nest. Volunteers made after the nest and two eaglets fell 60 feet to the ground. (Photo: Submitted photo)

"I was coming out of therapy from my knee and air down and started looking through my emails. And I got one from Gail (Laux). It said remember those eagles you rescued. One of them is in a nest at Stony Creek, Michigan. I was flabbergasted. I was blown away," she said. "It was something I never expected. I never thought I would hear about the bird let alone see pictures of her," Ferrell said.

Ferrell said she is glad the story turned out so well. "It's like what Paul Harvey used to say on the radio. 'This is the rest of the story.'"

Natal Nest of P85 & P86, 2008, Richland County, Ohio
Photos by Jeff Hammer



Natal Nest of P85 & P86, 2008, Richland County, Ohio

Photos by Jeff Hammer



Natal Nest of P85 & P86, 2008, Richland County, Ohio
Photos by Jeff Hammer



Natal Nest of P85 & P86, 2008, Richland County, Ohio

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Natal Nest of P85 & P86, 2008, Richland County, Ohio
Photos by Jeff Hammer



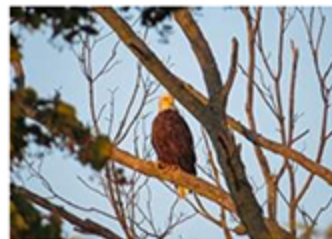
The Macomb Daily Publications: P85 caught in Fishing Line

September 2013

Stony Creek bald eagle caught in fishing line

By Don Gardner, The Macomb Daily

Friday, September 13, 2013



It's been a very exciting spring and summer in Stony Creek Metropark with the first bald eagle ever born in the history of the park. But an incident this week is a reminder why bald eagles and close proximity to people normally doesn't work. On Wednesday, Sept. 11, the female adult bald eagle became entangled in fishing line while hunting for food on the north side of an island in Stony Creek Lake.

A kayaker observed the mother bald eagle struggling in some line that was attached to a low bush at the water's edge of the island located south of the boat rental area and east of Winter Cove. The area is very close to where the female tried unsuccessfully to raise a family in 2011 and 2012. As the kayaker moved in for a closer look, the eagle became more panicked and freed itself. Park employees who were called to the scene to assist discovered the female perched in a nearby tree. While they could identify the bird based upon the red band on one of its legs, they could not determine if the bird was injured or whether it still had monofilament line wrapped around its body, or if it had snagged a fish hook. The eagle flew away a short time later.

Adding to the concern is the fact that as of Friday afternoon, no one had seen the female since the fishing line incident, according to Stony Creek volunteer bird expert Ruth Glass. Daily observers to the nest site have not seen the female bald eagle since Wednesday, which is slightly unusual. During that same time period, the male adult eagle has been seen several times. If the bird's legs or talons were injured in the incident, it could restrict her ability to hunt and feed herself.

"Fishing line is always a concern regarding wildlife at the park. It has been for years," said Gary Hopp, park operations manager for Stony Creek and Wolcott Mill metroparks. "We offer trash cans, we pick up the fishing line ourselves. Ultimately, the onus is back on fishermen to dispose of the line properly."

Unfortunately, when encountering a snag, many fishermen simply cut their line rather than trying to work the hook or hooks out of the snag. And, of course, some lines break accidentally while the fisherman tries to get free of the snag or haul in a fish. Sometimes, fishermen simply throw excess line into the water or on the ground. With so many fishermen using Stony Creek Lake, it's not surprising that waste monofilament line is a danger to wildlife. Just recently, a blue heron was found in Dearborn with several inches of line wrapped around its feet. Because the line is made from synthetic materials, it doesn't decompose. It remains a danger to wildlife for many years.

Hopp said the metropark is discussing a couple of different strategies to deal with the fishing line problem. Potential plans include a public awareness campaign to make fishermen aware of the eagles and a reminder to dispose of the fishing line properly. And secondly, the park will consider placing PVC pipe disposal tubes around the park near popular fishing areas to dispose of line. The Lake St. Clair Metropark has similar tubes throughout its fishing grounds.

Stony Creek is currently in the early stages of its annual lake water reduction action that takes place every fall. Typically the park lowers the water levels approximately 2-1/2 feet every year, which is a precautionary measure taken to protect not only structures in the lake but also private property southwest of the lake. This year, the park is repairing portions of the South Dam, which will require dropping water levels six feet. The dramatic water reduction will also allow park employees to have more access to bottom land during the annual shoreline cleanup. In theory, in addition to removing garbage, picnic tables, garbage cans and other items dumped into the lake, the reduced water levels could mean additional removal of fishing line. Once the South Dam is repaired, the water levels will be restored to their normal winter levels.

Park birders discovered the early framework of an eagle's nest in the northern section of the park in December 2012. It is from that location that the eaglet was born.

In 2011, the female eagle that was caught in the fishing line attempted to establish a nest in the Winter Cove, just west of the island. But due to a high level of human activity in the area, the pair never seemed comfortable, and the male member of the pair hit a power line and was killed. Last year, the same red-banded female returned to Winter Cove and began building a new nest a few trees away from the original nest with a new mate. But again, most likely the proximity of human activity discouraged the birds and the nest was abandoned.

Stony Creek female bald eagle identified, but looks injured from fishing line incident

By Don Gardner, The Macomb Daily

Friday, September 27, 2013



After being missing for about two weeks, one of Stony Creek Metropark's resident bald eagles that was caught up in fishing line has been confirmed to be alive.

Alive and well is another story.

On Sept. 23, park birders positively identified the female, perched near her nest tree in the Inwood Trails, by the red banding tag on one of her legs. It was the first time she has been seen, and positively ID'd, since she was caught up in some fishing line on the shoreline of the island in Stony Creek Lake on Sept. 11.

Joan Zeller Bonin, an amateur photographer who is a frequent visitor to the nesting area, snapped several photos of the female, who gave birth to the first eaglet born in the history of the park and the first on what is now park property in at least 100 years this spring. Bonin's photos show there appears to be damage to the female's lower mandible or beak, where it connects to the face. A piece of the beak appears to be missing. In addition, the female's left foot appears to be discolored. The foot appears to be reddish-brown. A normal healthy bald eagle foot is yellow. But the photo was shot from some distance away, and the foot is in shadow. No fishing line is visible in the photos, but that doesn't mean some line may still be wrapped around a leg or a wing. According to Ruth Glass, Stony Creek's volunteer bird expert, Bonin's photos were sent to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for evaluation.

In an email reply to Glass from Chris Mensing, a fish and wildlife biologist from the USFWS office in East Lansing, Mensing said the photos were "inconclusive" as to whether the bald eagle was injured. He went on to say that unless the bald eagle was on the ground and showing obvious injuries, it is best to have a "hands-off" approach. He said to try and capture an adult bald eagle that can fly would be very difficult and could cause greater injury to the bird. He added that the USFWS typically does not get involved with rehabilitating injured bald eagles.

"We're just trying to understand the nature of the injuries," Glass said. "It's very clear that she's injured. A chunk of the beak is missing where the mandible connects to the neck.

"Her foot looks like it's badly bruised, or maybe there is a sprain or a break. But she can use it and stand on it."

Since the bald eagle was at rest, it was difficult to see if any feathers were missing or her wings were damaged. There were earlier reports that an eagle, which was probably the female, but not positively identified, was missing some secondary feathers. Glass said the bird, which hasn't been seen since Sept. 23, looked like it had just eaten, and there was nothing unusual about her behavior.

According to baldeagleinfo.com, the hook at the tip of the beak is used for tearing. Behind the hook, the upper mandible, has an edge sharp enough to slice tough skin. It overlaps the lower, creating a

scissors effect. The beak of a female eagle is deeper (distance from top to chin) than the beak of a male. The beak and talons grow continuously, because they are made of keratin, the same substance that comprises human hair and fingernails. The feet are cold-resistant and are mostly composed of tendon.

The juvenile bald eagle, which hadn't been seen for a couple of weeks, was seen for the first time over the weekend. There was some concern that neither the female nor her juvenile had been seen. But it is not uncommon for bald eagles to extend their feeding range this time of year. Nonetheless, the first year of life is the most fragile for bald eagles. On average, about 70 percent of juveniles survive their first year.

The concern over the fishing line incident has prompted Stony Creek Nature Center, in conjunction with the Clinton River Watershed Council, to set up a comprehensive shoreline cleanup Oct. 12 from noon to 3 p.m. No signup is necessary, and questions about the cleanup can be addressed to the nature center at 586-781-9113.

“Teenage Angst” Raising of a Juvenile Bald Eagle

September 2, 2014



P85 Laid First Egg of 2015

March 8, 2015



P85 Laid First Egg of 2015

March 8, 2015



A View from the Nest

Photographs taken by Kendall Simon and Mark Scarlett, May 26, 2015

Stony Creek Metropark Eaglets were Banded 2013-2016 and 2018



***Male Bald Eagle with Fishing Line in Mouth
P85 Provides Assistance, February 5, 2016***



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



A Nesting Year 2018



Eaglet Testing and Banding

Photographs taken May 13, 2018, Banders Rachel Eberius and Shannon Healy
Stony Creek Metropark Eaglets were Banded 2013-2016 and 2018



Mating (Copulation)

February 26, 2018



Winter Visitors - Eagle Play with a Purpose

December 16, 2019



P85 Injury Description

Ruth Glass and Joan Bonin, The End of January/February 2020

Email from Ruth Glass, February 6, 2020

"Dear Stony Birders,

It appears the park's resident female Bald Eagle has a serious injury to her right foot and possibly leg. So much so, that it is doubtful she can catch prey or eat. She is not able to perch either, causing all those beautiful flight feathers to become completely tattered in the last few days. I have included two of Joan Bonin's photos to show you what we are seeing. Note the right foot in both photos appears non-functional.

We ask if any of you see the female flying with tattered feathers, or an adult attempting but failing to perch, please report your sighting to Joan Bonin at: jzbonin@comcast.net.

Feel free to copy me if you like, but Joan is the observer and monitor, in need of sightings, if you have them, going forward.

Also know that we do have an emergency plan in place, if she is down, and it comes to that. If she is down (unable to fly) notify Joan regardless of her location. If she is down inside the park, notify park management and the nature center staff in addition to Joan.

If you are so inclined, please pray for her well-being."

Ruth Glass

Stony Creek Nature Center Volunteer

Email from Ruth Glass, February 11, 2020

"Stony Birders:

This update is for the benefit of those who are not engaged in social media such as Facebook, and may be wondering about any progress since my email of February 6, asking for any observations of an injured eagle, or eagle not behaving normally. Stony Creek Park Manager Gary Hopp did observe a potentially injured eagle, presumed to be P85 with her mate, on Friday February 7, but that is the last sighting of her. Since then, the male has been paired with a younger larger female, and the two have been copulating at the nest site. This leads us to believe P85's injuries may have been the result of an altercation between the two female eagles. This is becoming a more common occurrence as Bald Eagle populations climb, and females (the dominant gender in raptors), in particular, are fighting for prime nesting territories. With the abundance of eagles visiting the park starting last fall, we anticipated this may be the year P85 and her mate get challenged. An almost ten year run of the same pair on one territory is very good, statistically speaking. But I am afraid we are at the end of an era – the P85 era – and on to a new era of nesting eagles.

I want to thank everyone who helped in the ground searches and air observations over the past few days – and I understand a few volunteers are still at it. Continue to keep your eyes to the skies and binoculars in hand, and report any eagles that appear injured. We had the nearly impossible task of checking around the actual nest site for P85, and the nagging thought that she could be expired in the nest. Washington Township Fire Department came to our rescue today with their high-tech drone, and as soon as the new pair left the nest area for a break, WTFD took a quick peek into the nest and surrounding area to confirm P85 was not present. A special thanks to Chief Brian Tyrell, Gary Wehrwein, and Pete Doyle for their responsiveness and support.

With that, it is time for me to move on, and get back to work, literally – before my employer thinks I have vanished too.

Please connect with Joan Bonin for any further updates."

Ruth Glass

Stony Creek Nature Center Volunteer

"Hearts of Many Focused on One Goal"

(Deb Geno)

Thank you to all of you. This was a community effort of caring people. Thank you to P85 for your Strength and Courage to Survive Today we celebrate her life. May it be long and healthy for years to come. Synopsis of the last few days: February 19, 2020: I checked the east trail and walked the lower path heading north. The new female and the male circled overhead a few times. I have a few photographs for documentation. The new female was low enough that I was able to photograph her pretty closely for confirmation. A third adult eagle flew into the mix, then proceeded south across the gravel quarry and out of sight. There were no territorial issues that I could see. I took a few photographs of it but could not confirm whether it was P85 or not. I continued looking for her. I had heard a report there were feathers on the ground out in the area. Having not found them at that point, I was on east trail looking for them this time, instead of along the road right of way. The feathers were found on February 22, 2020 and turned out to be 4 or 5 Canada Geese and not Bald Eagle feathers. February 21, 2020: I walked to the bench to view the nest. While there I photographed a pair of adult Bald Eagles and a sub-adult, which flew around the nest area. While the three were flying about, I photographed one of the individuals. It appeared that it had a silver band on the right leg. I could not confirm a red band on the left leg. She appeared to have injured talons off her right leg. The two adult Bald Eagles mated in the tree to the south of the nest. They perched on the east side of the branches, which in this case obstructed the view to be able to identify the female. February 22, 2020: Ruth Glass and I found the feathers of the 4-5 Canada Geese as a tip came to our attention about potential eagle feathers in the area. I had walked the road every day this week looking for them and had not been successful. When I downloaded the photos from February 21, 2020, I was surprised to see what I thought might be P85. February 23, 2020: I went to the bench to observe the Bald Eagles and attempt to confirm that the adult female Bald Eagle was indeed banded. The pair flew in at approximately noon the male flew in with prey, followed closely by the female Bald Eagle. She ate the meal he brought in without any hesitation. He stood back and let her feed. She went down low in the nest and stayed there, presumably resting for a long time. Throughout the day she rested often followed by her and the male circling around the nest area. Toward the end of our stay, they attempted to mate. Though she seemed off balance she did stay perched on the branch. She went to the nest after flying around a bit, settled low and rested. The following is what we observed: - This female Bald Eagle is banded with a red band on the left leg and a silver band on the right. This should be sufficient information to confirm that she is P85 since the banding is unique. - This female Bald Eagle has injured right talons. The left talons are contracted in flight, the right, she holds extended. - Her primary and secondary feathers on her wings look good! She is able to preen and oil her wings. - She flies well. - Her tail feathers are a bit of a mess, at least at this point in time. - She has something black on her face, between the cere and her eyes. I do not know if this is from a subsequent injury or if she hasn't or is not able to clean head up after eating. She possible had just eaten a particularly messy meal. - The male Bald Eagle appears to have hunted prey for P85. - She can balance on a limb for short periods. They attempted to mate on both 2/21/2020 and 2/23/2020. - She takes long rests in the nest. The male Bald Eagle was with her most of the time she was in the nest. - The new female Bald Eagle is nowhere in sight. No one has reported an altercation to me nor have I seen one. - She is able to land both in the nest and on a branch. All the photographs in this album were taken on February 23, 2020 when we confirmed her identification. May P85 rest and rehabilitate. It is so good to have you home.

Joan Bonin

After the March 5, 2020 sighting, she was gone.

She was not again observed until September 12, 2020 by Dennis LaVergne in the poplar tree at Shore Fishing.

P85 remained at the lake or environs until December 12, 2022, when she was documented once again by Dennis LaVergne. She returned to the nest. The other female was no longer in the area.

P85 Injury Photographs

The End of January/February 2020



P85 Injury Photographs

Joan and Bob Bonin, February 2020

February 23, 2020



© Joan Z. Bonin

February 23, 2020



Bob Bonin 2020

March 1, 2020



© Joan Z. Bonin

March 1, 2020



© Joan Z. Bonin

Battle for the Nest

7 Female Bald Eagles and Sub-adults Fought for control at Inwood Trails March 21, 2020

Note: None of these Bald Eagles are the Inwood mated pair



© Joan Z. Bonin



© Joan Z. Bonin



© Joan Z. Bonin



© Joan Z. Bonin

Battle for the Nest

7 Female Bald Eagles and Sub-adults Fought for control at Inwood Trails March 21, 2020

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© Joan Z. Bonin



© Joan Z. Bonin



© Joan Z. Bonin



© Joan Z. Bonin

P85 Returned to Stony Creek Metropark

March 5, 2020 was the Last Date P85 was seen at the Nest, She was Observed in the Poplar Tree at Stony Creek Lake by Dennis LaVergne on September 12, 2020. Photos taken September 29, 2020



New Female Bald Eagle 2021 Nesting Season



New Female Bald Eagle 2021 Nesting Season

Photographs by Joan and Bob Bonin



P85 Returned to the Nest

Photographs taken December 12, 2022 and January 9, 2023



© Joan Z. Bonin



© Joan Z. Bonin

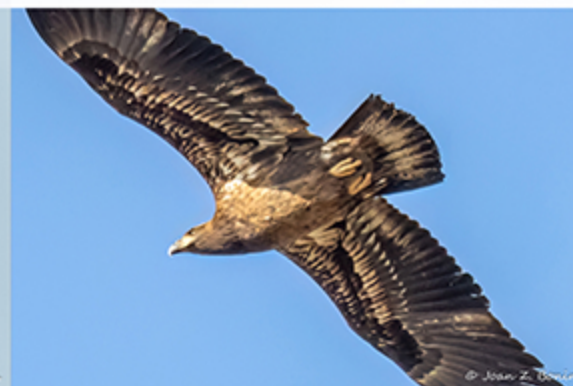
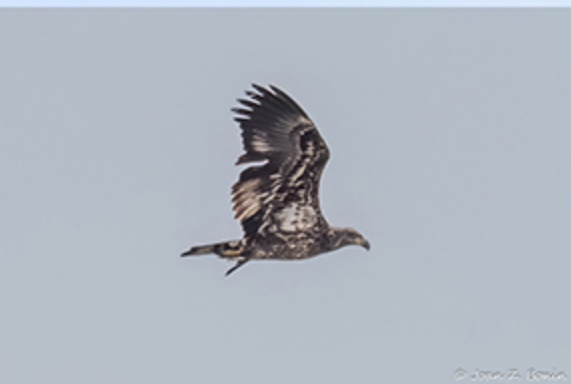
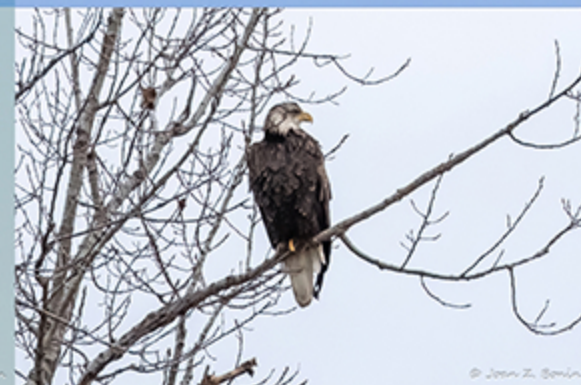


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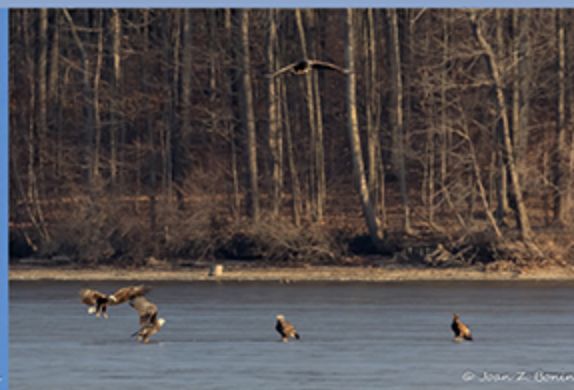
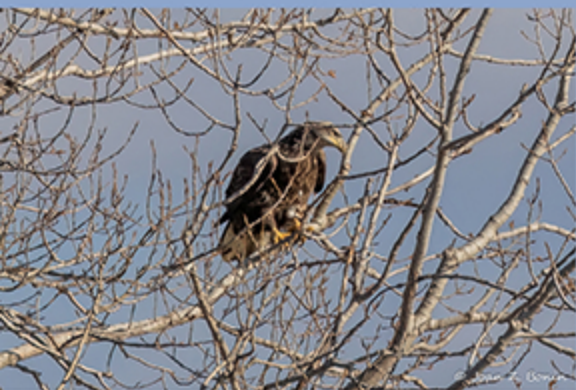


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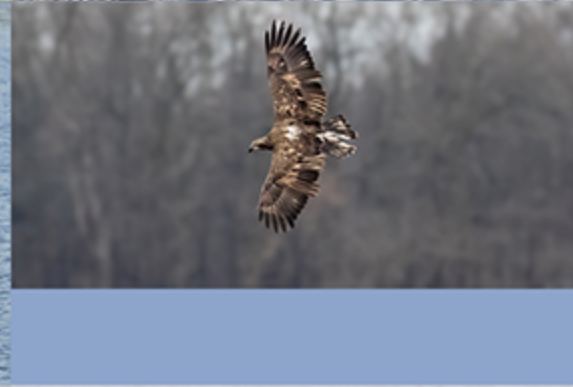
Winter Visitors 2023-2024



Winter Visitors 2023-2024



Winter Visitors - One Foot 2023-2024



Sometimes "Miracles" Happen

Photographs from July 17, 2023 and December 14, 2023



July 17, 2023, "Miracle" in flight at nest. Note the pattern of feathers



December 14, 2023, Possibly "Miracle" in flight at Baypoint Beach.



© Joan Z. Bonin



© Joan Z. Bonin

Golden Eagle flew over Nest at Inwood Trails November 11, 2017



© Joan Z. Bonin



© Joan Z. Bonin

