

Bald Eagle: *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*



The Bald Eagle is unique to North America and is found throughout most of the continent, from Alaska and Canada to northern Mexico. They migrate south to Louisiana in the fall and stay all winter to breed, although some are suspected to remain as year-round residents. In 1967, Bald Eagles were officially declared an endangered species in all areas of the United States south of the 40th parallel and that status remained until 1995, when the US Fish and Wildlife Service upgraded their status in the lower 48 states to “threatened.” As with other birds, the pesticide DDT was a major problem for this species before it was banned.

Bald Eagles mate for life and communicate with each other by loud, high-pitched, screeching calls. A bird of prey, the Bald Eagle lives near large bodies of water where food is abundant and there are plenty of old trees for building large nests as wide as nine feet in diameter. Bald Eagles usually live to be around twenty years old, though sometimes as long as thirty. The adult species, both male and female, has a brown body, with a white head and tail. The Bald Eagle’s diet consists mostly fish, but can also include small mammals, birds, reptiles and crustaceans (especially crabs).



Young, immature eagle