

# Bald Eagle

Status: On July 12, 1995, the bald eagle was reclassified from endangered to threatened in the lower 48 states. It remains unlisted in Alaska.

Distribution: Bald Eagles that reside in the northern U. S. and Canada migrate to the warmer southern climates of the U. S. during the winter to obtain easier access to food, especially fish.

Field Marks: During their third and fourth years, Bald Eagles have mottled brown and white feathers under their wings and on their head, tail and breast. The distinctive white head and tail feathers do not appear until Bald Eagles are about 4 to 5 years old. Their beak and eyes turn yellow during the fourth and fifth year, and are dark brown prior to that time. Bald Eagles are about 29 to 42 inches long, can weigh 7 to 15 pounds, and have a wing span of 6 to 8 feet.

Voice: Shrill, high pitched, and twittering are common descriptions used for bald eagle vocalizations. Eagles do not have vocal cords.

Behavioral Clues: Eagles approach prey in a shallow glide and snatch the fish out of the water with a quick swipe of their talons. May be seen scavenging.

Nest: Bald eagles build their nests in large trees near rivers or coasts. A typical nest is around 5 feet in diameter. Eagles often use the same nest year after year. Over the years, some nests become enormous, as much as 9 feet in diameter, weighing two tons.



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Migrating from  
Washington  
State to  
Chilkat, Alaska

