

# Bald Eagles Soaring After Recovery

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Bald eagle pairs have increased by a stunning 50 percent in the last ten years --from about 10,000 to 15,000 pairs in the lower 48 states. Photo by Derek Brusse.

This Fourth of July marks one decade since the bald eagle glided off the endangered species list. Today, eagles soar in ever higher numbers and across all states, except Hawaii. We salute our state fish and wildlife agencies for their pivotal roles in America's wildlife success story.

Bald eagle pairs have increased by a stunning 50 percent in the last ten years –from about 10,000 to 15,000 pairs in the lower 48 states, where Florida and Minnesota harbor the largest populations. Alaska continues to be a stronghold for eagles with some 30,000 birds.

States took the lead as managers after 2007 and every American continues to play a stewardship role. We protect their majestic nest trees. We support the clean, fish-filled waters that bald eagles and people alike need to thrive. We honor the freedom eagles require to live.

### **Wildlife Recovery Can't be Assumed**

Just as freedom can never be taken for granted, so the return of the bald eagle cannot be simply assumed. We'd come perilously close to losing our national emblem and longtime spiritual symbol for tribal peoples.

In 1963, bald eagle numbers had plummeted from historic levels of more than 100,000 to only 417 pairs in the lower 48 states. The banning of DDT in the U.S. in 1972 and protection under the Endangered Species Act since 1973 made recovery possible. State biologists took heroic steps—like taking wild birds from Alaska for breeding and hand-rearing young to be independent enough to release in the wild.

Our state fish and wildlife agencies remain vigilant on behalf of bald eagles that still face threats from lead poisoning, illegal shooting, habitat loss, and disturbance. Their work to conserve, protect, and monitor the birds goes hand in hand with terrific education programs—from releasing birds into the wild to citizen science counts and eagle viewing tours.

***This 4<sup>th</sup> of July, you might show your patriotism this way. Hold up the bald eagle emblem. Be proud that our bird flies free again and pledge to help bald eagles and all America's wildlife facing declines and hardship.***

Take inspiration from the bald eagle success story. We've done it once, we can do it again. Together, we can be active stewards of wildlife and

prevent species from ever needing to be listed under the Endangered Species Act. Please act today!

**Take Action** >

**Urge Congress to save America's vulnerable wildlife by supporting bills like the Recovering America's Wildlife Act.**