

EagleFest

The Delaware Valley Eagle Alliance

Volume 5, Issue 1

Newsletter

Winter 2007

A Special Thank You

by John A. DiGiorgio

The bald eagle is the symbol of freedom, strength, mobility of our nation and its many cultures. Back from the near brink of its extinction, this majestic bird can be seen once again soaring over rivers and valleys. The near extinction of this species signaled a turning point in our views of wildlife conservation, and the environment in which we live in.

The successful recovery is documented by, the increase in nesting pairs, and daily observation of eagles soaring over our skies and fishing in the clear waters of the Delaware River and near by lakes and reservoirs.

This wildlife photographer would like to thank the many biologists, researchers, wildlife conservation officials, and the caring volunteers which I have met in my travels for their tireless effort and dedication to the reintroduction and preservation of the American bald eagle to our tri-state area. Without them, this species could not have survived.

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The Delaware Valley
Eagle Alliance
welcomes you to....



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EAGLEFEST
NARROWSBURG, NEW YORK

Saturday, January 13, 2007

9:30AM – 4:30PM

Live bird demonstrations, observation sites, guest lectures, films, poster auction, eagle art (snow or shine)

Choosing Binoculars to Observe Wildlife

By Robert Dugan

Binoculars come in a wide variety of sizes and types. Unlike spotting scopes or telescopes, binoculars are very personal. Like finding the right pair of shoes, you have to feel comfortable with the one you select.

How will you use your binocular?

There is no perfect binocular that will fit every application. When contemplating a purchase, it is helpful to think about what is the intended use.

Are you sweeping the horizon for eagles or studying them in a nest? In general, higher magnifications present closer views but provide a narrower field of view. In what type of weather will the binoculars be used? Is waterproofing necessary, or will water resistant binoculars be adequate? If you will be hiking, you may want to consider compact binoculars instead of full size. How well do you care for your equipment? If your camera, cell phone etc experience rough handling you may want to consider binoculars that include a "no-fault" warranty.

Try to envision the way your binoculars will be used and your selection process will be much easier.

What magnification is best?

Binocular descriptions are often stated with two numbers. For example, 7x 50 binoculars provide magnification (power) of 7 and have 50 mm diameter front objectives. Higher magnification will make objects appear closer while larger diameter objectives gather more light. The most common magnification for hand held binoculars are 7, 8 or 10. Binoculars with 10x magnification will be about the upper limit for handholding since higher magnifications also magnify



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any hand movements or "shakes". Common objective sizes run from 32mm to 50mm. A very popular size of binocular for bird watching is 8 x 42.

What affects the price of binoculars?

In general, price is an indication of quality and durability but there are exceptions to this rule. Waterproofing, type of warranty, coatings and glass quality all contributes to increasing the price of binoculars. However, improvements in manufacturing, plus advances in optical coatings have provided today's consumer with a vast array of quality binoculars that are very reasonably priced.

Acquiring binoculars that provide many years of enjoyment is well within the reach of all nature enthusiasts.

**Robert Dugan is the owner of High Point Scientific, Inc. (Retailers of high quality Astronomical Telescopes, Binoculars and Spotting Scopes).
Montague, NJ 07827
www.highpointscientific.com**

EAGLE EYES:

Did you know that a bald eagle can spot a fish up to three miles away, or that it can spot another eagle in flight more than 4 miles away?

Eagles are gifted with superior eyesight, among the best in the world. The eyes of a bald eagle may be as much as eight times sharper than a human's. This gives them a most important advantage over their prey.

The eyes of a bald eagle consume most of the space their head and are almost as large as human eyes. Their eyes face forward, giving them binocular vision similar to humans. Binocular vision allows for precise depth of field. This is important for humans when manipulating small objects with our hands, or for eagles, that must snatch prey with their talons while diving from the sky.

Bald eagles also have color vision, unlike many mammals.

The bald eagle's eyes are protected and cleaned by a secondary eyelid, called the nictitating membrane. In addition, two sets of eyebrows shield its eyes from intense sun glare. This makes it possible for the eagle to stare directly toward the sun in its mid-morning hunts without danger of damage.

As bald eagles age, the color of their eyes change. Young eagles have dark eyes, which become yellow with maturity, and silver blue in later years.

Mid-Winter New York State Bald Eagle Survey

Every year for the past 27 years New York's DEC participates in the national mid-winter bald eagle survey, coordinated nationally by the Biological Resources Division of the U.S. Geological Survey. The survey, which occurs the first half of January, is conducted via several aerial surveys over major portions of the state.

In 2006, a record total of 442 bald eagles were tallied - 252 adults and 190 immatures. The continued increases most likely reflect the on-going increase in the resident population and their young.

DEC continues to pursue research and monitoring of several major populations of wintering eagles in New York, including capture, banding and satellite tracking. The focus for wintering eagle research has now shifted to the Upper Delaware River, where a multi-year study has been launched in partnership with the National Park Service. This study will also include breeding eagles in this area and their young, basically to define essential habitats used by eagles along the Upper Delaware. For more information go to www.dec.state.ny.us.

NYS continues to provide consistent over-wintering habitat for one of the largest bald eagle populations in the northeast US.

Bald eagles observed within major NYS wintering areas for the past four years include:

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>
Upper Delaware River	41	28	114	93
Mongaup River	109	86	75	25
Hudson River	44	16	21	32
St. Lawrence River	17	45	31	41
All other areas	103	181	200	251

Observations continue to confirm the importance of the wintering areas, not only to resident New York State bald eagles, but to numerous eagles from eastern Canada (as confirmed by DEC's extensive migration tracking studies). These studies have not only documented the migratory timing and pathways of these eagles, but perhaps most importantly, they have demonstrated the long-term fidelity of these eagles to these particular wintering grounds.

These critical wintering habitats are highly specialized and few, requiring concerted attention and conservation by landowners and resource managers in order to ensure their availability into the future.

* Information & statistics provided by Peter Nye, NYS DEC



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EAGLE FACTS:

- Height: 30-31", Wing Span: 6'-7'6", Weight: to 14 lbs, Life Span: 25 – 30 years.
- Mated bald eagles are monogamous.
- Female bald eagles are larger than the males.
- 2 or 3 white eggs in a massive nest of sticks usually in a tall tree.
- Can fly 36 – 44 miles per hour.
- Juvenile bald eagles resemble Golden Eagles, require 4 – 5 years to reach full adulthood, have a longer tail and wider wings than adults.
- Snatch fish from the surface with their talons.
- Have special pads on the soles of their feet, especially designed to firmly grip a slippery wriggling fish.
- Each foot has four toes, three pointing to the front and one to the rear, ending with razor sharp black talons up to two inches long.

The Delaware Valley Eagle Alliance

welcomes you to the 6th annual EagleFest

According to festival organizer, Yoke Bauer DiGiorgio, EagleFest 2007 will continue in its mission to combine a day of entertainment and education for young and old.

Returning this year, is **Bill Streeter** Director of the Delaware Valley Raptor Center with two live birds of prey demonstrations and **Lauren Butcher**, full-time educator, from the Raptor Trust in NJ with a live owl program.

Don Hamilton, NPS, will host presentations by **John Brennan**, NY DEC, **Dr. Lawrence J. Niles**, Conserve Wildlife Ftn of NJ, and **Douglas Gross**, PA Game Commission on the status of eagles in the region.

Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper will be discussing habitat preservation along the Delaware River Valley.

Teaching children about the environment, wildlife, and family values, **John and Teresa Crerand** are returning with all new stories about Christopher, a river otter and his discoveries about his world and other wildlife. New this year "Eagle Storytelling and Crafts" by **Mary Paige Lang-Clouse**, of the Western Sullivan Public Library

There will be activities and exhibits throughout town including:

- Featured artist is **Wanda Gangel**
- Mixed Media - Eagle Photography and Sculptures by **John A DiGiorgio** and **George E. Boudman**
- Eagle art posters by local artists for auction
- **NEW THIS YEAR a Nature and Wildlife Art Show**
- Telescope demos by High Point Scientific
- Exhibits by regional conservation groups
- Eagle viewing assisted by Eagle Institute Volunteers
- Ice Sculptures by Ice Works



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The Delaware Valley Eagle Alliance

a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization

dedicated to increasing awareness, understanding and promoting
conservation of our wildlife and natural environment.

For more information about the Delaware Valley Eagle Alliance:

E-mail: yjd630@aol.com or Visit our Website: www.naturesartllc.com

If you would like to make a donation, please send your "tax deductible" check,
payable to the Delaware Valley Eagle Alliance to:
PO Box 498, Narrowsburg, NY 12764

Editor-in-chief Yoke Bauer DiGiorgio, Nature's Art LLC

