



A Powerful Symbol



Mini Fact: Eagles are diurnal (die-URN-ul). They hunt during the day and sleep during the night.

Our country has a special bird as its national symbol. The bald eagle is so powerful and so strong, and soars so high in the sky, that it is a symbol of freedom to many.

Types of eagles can be found on every continent except Antarctica. The bald eagle is one of two species found in North America. (The other is the golden eagle.) The bald eagle is found only in North America.

An icon

The bald eagle was selected to be placed on the design of the Great Seal approved by Congress in 1782. The Great Seal is the official stamp, or mark, of the United States.



You can find the great seal and eagles on several of our coins and bills, including the quarter.



Raptors

Bald eagles are raptors. Raptors are birds of prey. This means that they prey upon, or hunt and eat, other animals.

Raptors also:

- Grab their prey with their powerful feet and carry it away.
- Have very good eyesight.
- Have hooked beaks.

Other raptors include owls, ospreys, hawks, vultures and falcons.

These birds are important to the balance of nature. They control the population of rodents and other prey species. Since raptors eat dead animals, they help clean up the environment.

Meet an eagle

An eagle's eyesight is possibly as much as eight times sharper than a human's with perfect vision. From about 1,000 feet high, an eagle might see prey over a three-mile area.



Bald eagles have as many as 7,000 feathers. They molt, or gradually lose and grow new feathers, once a year. When they lose one feather on one wing, they lose a matching one on the other. In this way, they don't lose their balance.

Their feathers are used for:

- Insulation in all kinds of weather.
- Protecting the skin.
- Camouflage to make the eagle harder to see.

Eagles use their talons for grabbing, squeezing and piercing their prey, then holding onto their catch while eating.

Bald eagles can lift only half their weight into the air. They don't weigh much, so they can't lift much.



A bald eagle feeds on a lake trout.

Eagle homes

Bald eagles live near lakes, rivers, marshes and sea coasts. Alaska is the state with the most eagles. Other states with many eagles include Florida, Wisconsin, Washington, Minnesota, Oregon and Michigan.

Some bald eagles migrate. Others who have a good food source year-round do not.

Nesting

Most eagle pairs mate for life. If one is killed, the other might take a new mate.

Pairs return to the same nest every year, so they build their nest bigger and bigger. Nest-building is a part of courtship. They build their nests in trees or on the ground if there are no trees.

Parents take turns sitting on the nest 24 hours a day for about 35 days while incubating one to three eggs. Babies are called eaglets.

Threats to eagles

Eagles were once on the endangered species list, but conservation efforts helped them recover. They are threatened by:

- Being hit by cars, trains and planes.
- Running into power lines.
- Poisoning and pesticides.
- Being shot.
- Drowning.
- Eating a dead animal that was shot with lead bullets.

Resources



On the Web:

- bit.ly/MPEagles

At the library:

- "The Great Seal of the United States" by Norman Pearl
- "The Bald Eagle" by Lisa M. Herrington

Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of eagles are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:



BALANCE, BALD, BIRD, EAGLE, EYESIGHT, FEATHERS, FLY, ICON, LAKE, MOLT, NATIONAL, NEST, POWERFUL, PREY, QUARTER, RAPTOR, RIVER, SEAL, SPECIES, STAMP, SYMBOL, TALONS, THREAT.

I C O N P L A N O I T A N R R
 S B S R E H T A E F R P E I E
 S D E B Y P O W E R F U L V T
 E Y T I E R T U S E A L G E R
 I W H R S O T A L O N S A R A
 C M R D I T S Y M B O L E J U
 E B E E G P B A L A N C E T Q
 P A A K H A N E S T C K L Q Y
 S L T A T R X F L Y G O L X X
 K D Y L L C W S E P M A T S G

Cook's Corner

Pear & Cherry Cobbler

You'll need:

- 3 (14-ounce) cans pear halves in 100 percent juice, drained and diced
- 1 cup sweetened dried cherries
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 (12-ounce) can refrigerated buttermilk biscuits (10 biscuits)

- cooking spray (preferably butter-flavored)
- 1 tablespoon sugar



What to do:

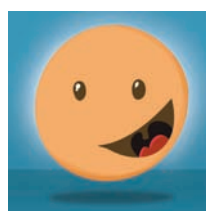
1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In a large bowl, combine pears, cherries and cornstarch. Mix well. Spoon mixtures into a shallow 11-by-7-inch baking dish.
2. Remove biscuit dough from can, separate into 20 small pieces and arrange pieces on top of pear mixture. Spray surface of biscuits with cooking spray and sprinkle sugar on top.
3. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes until biscuit topping is golden brown. Serves 10.

Adapted from "The Robin Takes 5 Cookbook for Busy Families" with permission from Andrews McMeel Publishing (andrewsmcmeel.com).

* You'll need an adult's help with this recipe.

7 Little Words for Kids

Use the letters in the boxes to make a word with the same meaning as the clue. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in the solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.



1. listened (5) _____
2. our planet (5) _____
3. why you do something (6) _____
4. spot (8) _____
5. you can whip it for dessert (5) _____
6. first in time (8) _____
7. opposite of remember (6) _____

ARD	IT	SON	EAR
GET	EAR	CRE	FOR
REA	AM	LI	POS
HE	ION	EST	TH

Answers: heard, Earth, reason, position, cream, earliest, forget.

Mini Jokes



Eva: Which bird can fly in outer space?

Earl: The Millennium Falcon!

Eco Note



Across the world, many plants and animals are now rare because of the activities of people. Habitat loss, hunting and climate change put many species at risk. The dodo, a flightless bird from the island of Mauritius, was wiped out by hungry sailors in the 1600s. Other extinctions include that of a large marine mammal called Steller's sea cow in the 1700s and the American passenger pigeon in the 1900s. Both were wiped out by hunters.

adapted with permission from "50 Things You Should Know About the Environment" by Jen Green, © QEB Publishing Inc.

For later:

Look for Fourth of July items in your newspaper that have an American eagle on them.

Teachers: For standards-based activities to accompany this feature, visit: bit.ly/MPstandards. And follow The Mini Page on Facebook!



Books from The Mini Page are wonderful resources and make great gifts! See all of our Mini Page products at MiniPageBooks.com, or call 800-642-6480 for more information. Mail payment to: Andrews McMeel Universal, Mini Page Books, 1130 Walnut, Kansas City, MO 64106. Include \$4.00 shipping and handling per order.

