



# Reporting Bald Eagles: Nesting in Iowa



In 1996 Iowa possessed only 54 active nests in 20 counties. However, over the last decade those numbers have increased substantially, as new nests are being reported every year. In 2008, 83 out of the 99 Iowa counties possess bald eagle nests. Conservative estimates indicate Iowa possesses 200 active bald eagle nests.

Only conservative estimates are available, because the Iowa DNR staff no longer has the resources to monitor many of the Iowa nests, nor to adequately search for new nests. Monitoring of nests is left mostly up to volunteers and concerned citizens. Therefore, the discovery of new nests, which is often by chance, is primarily by volunteers, other citizens, and agency staff. As a result many nests go unnoticed and unreported.

If you or anyone you know locates a bald eagle nest, please report your findings to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Diversity Program, 1436 255<sup>th</sup> Street, Boone, IA 50036.

### Observing Eagle Nests:

- ✎ Realize that nesting eagles are protected by law, please do not disturb them. A distance of ¼ mile is recommended particularly during the months of Jan-March.
- ✎ Recommended timing for observations:
  - 1) March for Adult activity
  - 2) Late April to try to count young (in nest unable to fly)
- 3) Mid-June – Mid-July to count fledged young (bird almost as large as adult, standing on edge or near nest or seen flying near nest.)
- ✎ Realize that nests are typically on private land, so please do not trespass unless permission from the landowner has been granted

### Reporting Instructions:

#### *Observer Information:*

- ✎ Please fill out the date, your name, address, and contact information

#### *Nest Location Information:*

- ✎ Nest location is necessary to identify the nest or to consider it a new discovery –Please be as specific as possible!
- ✎ County is required
- ✎ Township or Tier and Range and Section and quarter section based off the Public Land Survey System (or PLSS) or UTM's are required

- County
- Township or Tier and Range
- Section
- Quarter Section

- ✎ Physical descriptions (roads, mile marker, river mile, bridges, islands, landmarks, etc.) can be useful in helping us locate the nest

#### *Nest Site Landowner Information:*

- ✎ If you know the landowner where the nest is located, please provide their contact information

#### *Nest Information:*

- ✎ History of the nest, if known, can be useful in identifying the nest, such as year established or other nearby nests
- ✎ Tree species if known
- ✎ Is the tree living or dead – Circle one.
- ✎ Estimate the nest's height from the ground in feet
- ✎ Water body utilized is the body of water that the nest is closest to, or which the eagles most likely utilize for fishing

#### *Observation:*

- ☞ Please give the date of the observations
- ☞ Please list the number of adults, young, or fledged young seen at each visit.
- ☞ Please check that which best defines the overall status of the nest for the year of observation from the following choices:

- ☞ Active with adults incubating eggs
- ☞ If the eagle nest is used by another bird, please tell us what species of bird is utilizing the nest
- ☞ Eagle present with no nest maintenance or construction
- ☞ Nest Inactive
- ☞ Nest gone, blew down, or nest tree is gone

**Comments:**

- ☞ Please list any addition comments you would like to share

**Thank You:**

- ☞ Please double check that everything is filled out as accurately as possible

- ☞ Please mail the completed form to the provided Wildlife Diversity Program address, or please e-mail the information to [Stephanie.Shepherd@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Stephanie.Shepherd@dnr.iowa.gov)
- ☞ Thank you for aiding eagle conservation efforts!

|                          |
|--------------------------|
| <b>Office Use Only</b>   |
| Territory-Nest ID: _____ |

**Observer Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Nest Location Information**

County: \_\_\_\_\_ UTM: X: \_\_\_\_\_ Y: \_\_\_\_\_

Tier/Township: \_\_\_\_\_ Range: \_\_\_\_\_ Section: \_\_\_\_\_ Quarter: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Description: \_\_\_\_\_

**Nest Site Landowner Information**

Name or Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Nest Information**

History: \_\_\_\_\_

Tree Species: \_\_\_\_\_  Alive  Dead

Estimated Nest Height in Feet: \_\_\_\_\_ Water Body Utilized: \_\_\_\_\_

**Observation**

|               |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Date 1: _____ | Date 2: _____ | Date 3: _____ |
| Adults: _____ | Adults: _____ | Adults: _____ |
| Young: _____  | Young: _____  | Young: _____  |
| Fledge: _____ | Fledge: _____ | Fledge: _____ |

Nest Status:  Active and Incubating  Nest used by other bird \_\_\_\_\_

Eagle or eagles present with no nest maintenance/construction  Nest Inactive

Nest Gone  Nest Blew Down  Nest Tree Gone

**Comments or Other Notes:**