

Everything you need to know about

# BALD EAGLES



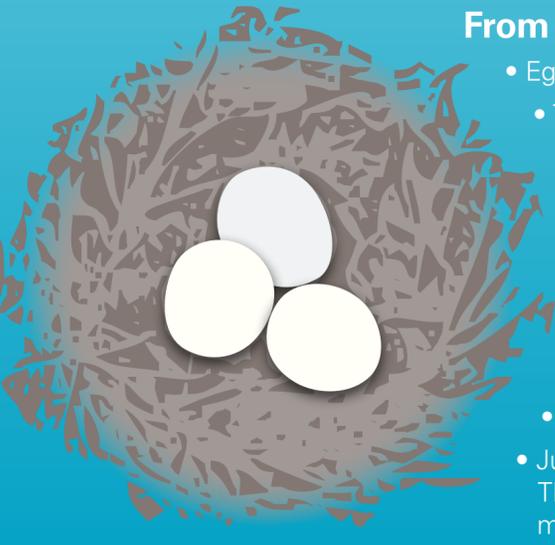
## Fort St. Vrain Eagles

- The 6-foot-wide by 5-foot-deep nest sits in a cottonwood tree near Xcel Energy's Fort St. Vrain Generation Station in Platteville, Colorado.
- The eagles return to the nest in the fall and conduct nesting activities from about January to July.
- The nest, which has been active for years, officially went online in 2003.



## From eggs to adulthood

- Eggs are off-white in color.
- The average egg is about 3 inches long by 2 inches wide and weighs about 4 ounces.
- A group of eggs is called a clutch. The average clutch is one to three eggs.
- Eggs are laid one at a time with a separation of one to two days between each egg. Incubation is about 35 days. They hatch in the order they are laid.
- Babies, called eaglets, hatch light gray then turn brown.
- Bald eagles fledge at about 10 to 14 weeks.
- Juvenile eagles are a mixture of brown and white feathering. Their heads and tails do not turn all white until they reach full maturity between 4 to 5 years old.



## One big home

- Eagle nests are called aeries (AIR-ees).
- Due to strong nest fidelity and their territorial nature, eagles often return to the same nest territory and refurbish their nests each year.
- On average, bald eagle nests are 2 to 4 feet deep and 4 to 5 feet wide.
- One nest near St. Petersburg, Florida earned the Guinness World Record for largest bird's nest: 20 feet deep and 9 1/2 feet wide. It weighed more than two tons.

## True partners

- Bald eagles usually mate for life.
- The male and female take turns incubating eggs.
- The male and female build the nest together.
- Bald eagles can live to be 35 years or older; the oldest one reported died at the age of 38 in Henrietta, New York in 2015.

## Females rule the roost

- Female bald eagles are about 25 to 33% larger than the males.
- The average female is about 3 feet tall.
- A female's average wingspan is 6 to 7 feet across.

## Super powers

- Bald eagles can see ultraviolet light.
- They have a translucent eyelid called a nictitating membrane, which they close to protect their eyes while keeping their main eyelids open.
- They can soar over 10,000 feet high.
- They can see fish 18 inches below the water from 200 feet above.
- They can fly up to 50 miles per hour and dive at 100 miles per hour.
- Bald eagles do not have vocal cords; the high-pitched sound they make is from air passing through the bones in their neck.



## An emblem of North America

- The bald eagle is one of three eagles found in North America.
- They range across the U.S. and Canada as well as northern parts of Mexico.
- The bald eagle is the only eagle unique to North America.
- They've been the national symbol of the United States since 1782.

