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BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE SIGHTINGS IN NEBRASKA

Big Bend Audubon Society and others, Kearney: Bald Eagles.

The observations were made on January 4, 1992, and there were 19 observers, 11 for Kearney to Lexington and return, and 8 for Harlan Reservoir and the Republican River. George Brown was the recorder. The following data were obtained:

	Adult	Immature	Unclassified	Total
Harlan Reservoir and Republican River	70	68	4	142
Kearney to Lexington and return	93	7	4	104
Totals	163	75	8	246

Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District: Bald Eagles.

The report, submitted by Mark Peyton, Roger Knaggs, and Rita Robinson, includes data from eagle viewing centers at the J-2 Hydropower plant south of Lexington, and on Lake Ogallala below Kingsley Dam. Daily counts were made at the J-2 Center at 8:00 a.m. CST, and at the Kingsley Dam at 7:00 a.m. MST during January and February, 1992. These centers are open from mid-December to March 1, and photography blinds are available upon request. A total of 3,622 people came to the two centers during the 1991-1992 viewing season. For reservations, which are required, contact Jay Maher, Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District, Holdrege, NE 68949.

The daily average of 8 bald eagles (based on a total of 291 birds over a 38-day period) at the J-2 Center compares with 11 per day in 1991. The 1992 numbers were more consistent on a day-to-day basis, and the eagles stayed in the area about two weeks longer. The daily average of 21 birds at Kingsley Dam (based on a total of 938 birds over 44 days) was markedly less than the average of 42 eagles per day in 1991. However, during February, 1992, use of the area for feeding and roosting was 161% greater than in 1991.

The data are given in the table on page 53.

National Wildlife Federation: Bald and Golden Eagles.

The 1992 Midwinter Eagle Survey (Jan. 1-15) in Nebraska, coordinated and submitted by John Dinan, produced a total of 1292 bald eagles, including 339 observed along the Missouri River, and 15 golden eagles. The bald eagle count is 176 birds above the previously recorded high of 1116 eagles in 1989, and 416 more than the past five-year average of 876 eagles. Eagle use of the Harlan County Reservoir area was well above average, but uses of the Sutherland Reservoir area, Lake McConaughy, and the Platte Valley from Darr to Elm Creek were all below normal during the survey period. The Missouri River showed a 93% increase over the past five-year average.

Eagles were in good numbers across the state because of the open conditions and the large numbers of overwintering waterfowl.

(continued on page 54)

Numbers of bald eagles at two viewing sites in 1992. Data supplied by Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District.

	J-2 Hydropower Plant near Lexington		Lake Ogallala below Kingsley Dam	
Date	Jan 1992	Feb 1992	Jan 1992	Feb 1992
1	NA*	NA	3	NA
2	20	NA	4	NA
3	NA	NA	5	9
4	8	NA	13	14
5	11	NA	9	16
6	5	NA	11	19
7	6	4	4	NA
8	6	2	2	NA
9	NA	1	8	NA
10	NA	1	12	22
11	8	6	7	8
12	14	2	9	43
13	16	NA	15	53
14	12	NA	14	NA
15	14	1	25	NA
16	6	1	24	NA
17	15	2	NA	19
18	13	2	NA	33
19	10	NA	NA	17
20	12	NA	17	19
21	12	NA	12	75
22	NA	0	12	NA
23	9	1	13	62
24	12	2	19	86
25	17	1	NA	43
26	16	2	NA	38
27	14	NA	14	12
28	7	NA	17	17
29	NA	NA	30	NA
30	NA	--	34	--
31	NA	--	NA	--

* = not available.

TOTALS	**263**	**28**	**333**	**605**
DAILY AVG.	11	2	13	32

National Wildlife Federation: Bald and Golden Eagles (cont'd from p. 52).

Fish die-offs (primarily shad or alewife) at several reservoirs concentrated large numbers of eagles during (at Harlan County Reservoir) and after (at Lake McConaughy, Lake Ogallala, and Branched Oak Lake) the survey period.

Table 1. Golden eagle numbers in Nebraska, January, 1992. National Wildlife Federation survey.

Location	Adults	Immatures	Total
North Platte River, Bayard-Lisco	1	0	1
Middle Loup River, Thedford-Milburn	1	0	1
North Loup River, Brewster-Burwell	0	1	1
Missouri River, Gavins Point-Goat Island	2	0	2
Beaver Creek	1	0	1
Niobrara River, South of Hays Springs	1	0	1
18 mi.south of Rushville	1	0	1
3 mi. south, 2 mi. west of Rushville	1	0	1
5 mi. south, 1 mi. east of Hays Springs	1	1	2
13 mi. north, 3 mi. west of Chadron	0	1	1
9.5 mi. south of Lamar	1	0	1
Cedar River-Ericson	2	0	2
Totals	**12**	**3**	**15**

The bald eagle data are given in Table 2 on pages 55 - 59.

Table 2. Bald eagle numbers in Nebraska, January, 1992 (National Wildlife Federation survey). Imm. = immature, Unkn. = unknown.

	Adults	Imm.	Unkn.	Total
NORTH PLATTE RIVER TOTALS	**29**	**12**	**8**	**49**
Wyoming Line-Bayard (and area lakes)	3	0	8	11
Bayard-Lisco	3	0	0	3
Lisco-Lewellen	13	7	0	20
Lewellen-Keystone (L. Mac, Ogallala, Clear Cr.)	7	4	0	11
Keystone-Paxton	1	1	0	2
Paxton-North Platte (to CNPPID diversion)	2	0	0	2
SOUTH PLATTE RIVER TOTALS	**7**	**0**	**0**	**7**
Colorado Line-Big Springs	0	0	0	0
Big Springs-Paxton	1	0	0	1
Paxton-North Platte (to CNPPID Diversion)	6	0	0	6
PLATTE RIVER TOTALS	**122**	**66**	**3**	**191**
North Platte-Gothenburg (Jeffrey Reserv., canal	8	5	0	13
Gothenburg-Darr	3	0	0	3
Darr-Elm Creek (Johnson, Elwood, canal)	27	22	0	49
Elm Creek-Kearney	1	0	0	1
Kearney-Shelton	6	1	0	7
Shelton-Grand Isl.(Hwy 2)	8	7	0	15
Grand Island-Silver Creek	15	8	1	24
Silver Creek-Columbus	6	0	0	6
Columbus-North Bend	24	10	2	36
North Bend-Fremont	5	3	0	8
Fremont-Linoma (Rt. 6)	8	4	0	12
Linoma(Rt. 6)-Plattsmouth	11	6	0	17

Table 2 (continued)

	Adults	Imm.	Unkn.	Total
REPUBLICAN RIVER TOTALS	**171**	**117**	**0**	**288**
Alma-Naponee (+ Harlan Co. Reservoir)	159	113	0	272
Naponee-Riverton	9	3	0	12
Riverton-Guide Rock	3	1	0	4
Guide Rock-Superior	0	0	0	0
MIDDLE LOUP RIVER TOTALS	**34**	**6**	**0**	**40**
Thedford-Milburn	3	0	0	3
Milburn-Co. Line Bridge	1	0	0	1
Co. Line Bridge-Arcadia	0	0	0	0
Arcadia-Boelus (includes Sherman Reserv.)	10	3	0	13
Boelus-Mouth of River	20	3	0	23
NORTH LOUP RIVER TOTALS	**8**	**0**	**0**	**8**
Brewster-Burwell	3	0	0	3
Burwell-North Loup	5	0	0	5
North Loup-Cotesfield	0	0	0	0
Cotesfield-Mouth of River	0	0	0	0
LOUP RIVER TOTALS	**31**	**6**	**0**	**37**
North Loup River-Palmer	5	1	0	6
Palmer-Genoa	22	3	0	25
Genoa-Mouth of River	4	2	0	6
SNAKE RIVER TOTALS	**27**	**14**	**0**	**41**
Highway 97-Mouth of River (includes Merritt Res.)	27	14	0	41

Table 2 (continued)

	Adults	Imm.	Unkn.	Total
NIOBRARA RIVER TOTALS	**120**	**24**	**0**	**144**
Snake River-Cornell	7	5	0	12
Cornell-Cherry Co. Line	4	1	0	5
Cherry Co.-Cuba (pilings)	24	4	0	28
Cuba-Newport (Hwy. 137)	28	3	0	31
Newport-Redbird/Lynch	34	5	0	39
Redbird/Lynch-River Mouth	23	6	0	29
MISSOURI RIVER TOTALS	**181**	**18**	**140**	**339**
NE/SD Line-Monowi	4	0	0	4
Monowi-Gavins Point Dam (includes Lewis & Clark)	7	0	0	7
Gavins Point-Goat Island	29	4	0	33
Goat Isl.-Ponca St. Park	25	0	0	25
Ponca St. Park-Homer	5	0	0	5
Homer-Decatur	8	1	0	9
Decatur-Tekamah	33	1	0	34
Tekamah-Mormon Bridge (includes Desoto Bend)	16	2	0	18
Mormon Bridge-Hwy. 275	1	0	0	1
Hwy. 275-Plattsmouth	8	1	0	9
Plattsmouth-Union	4	1	0	5
Union-Peru	14	0	0	14
Peru-Indian State Park	15	8	140	163
Indian Cave-Kansas Line	12	0	0	12

Table 2 (continued)

	Adults	Imm.	Unkn.	Total
OTHER LAKES, RIVERS, RESERVOIRS, ETC. TOTALS	**71**	**31**	**8**	**110**
Sutherland Reservoir	7	2	0	9
Lake Maloney	1	1	0	2
Enders Reservoir	2	7	0	9
Swanson Reservoir	14	6	8	28
Medicine Creek Reservoir	2	0	0	2
Calamus Reservoir	7	1	0	8
Lake Babcock	25	12	0	37
Walgren Lake	2	0	0	2
Beaver Creek	2	0	0	2
Valentine NW Refuge	2	0	0	2
Frenchman River	3	1	0	4
Blue Creek	4	1	0	5

Note: No bald eagles were seen at Red Willow Reservoir, Salt Valley Lakes, Lincoln City Lakes, Grove lake, Cottonwood Lake, Sidney, Mahon Ranch, Cody Park, Sac/Wilcox WMA, Schilling WMA, Sandy Creek NRD Lake, Crescent Lake NWR, Turkey Creek, Funk WPA, Twin Lakes, Maloney Canal.

	Adults	Imm.	Total
MISC. COUNTY OBSERVATIONS TOTALS (ADAMS THROUGH YORK)	**33**	**5**	**38**
Niobrara River. - SW Merriman	1	0	1
Niobrara R. - S. Cody	1	0	1
Niobrara R. - 14 mi.W, 2 S Merriman	0	3	3
Niobrara R. - S. Kilgore	1	0	1
Niobrara R. - 14 S, 5 E Hay Springs	1	0	1
Calamus R. - 25 mi.S Ainsworth	2	0	2
Calamus R. 16 mi. NW Almeria	1	0	1
.5 W Ainsworth	1	0	1
North Loup R. - 3 mi. W Burwell	1	1	2
Spring Cr. - 6 W mi. Scottsbluff	1	0	1

Table 2 (continued)

MISC. COUNTY OBSERVATIONS (ADAMS THROUGH YORK) (continued from page 58)	Adults	Imm.	Totals
Buffalo Cr. - 8 W mi. Haigler	1	0	1
Republican R. - Stratton	1	0	1
Republican: Holbrook - Oxford	7	0	7
Republican: Oxford - Orleans	5	0	5
14 N, 6 E Stuart	1	0	1
Verdigree Cr. 13 NW mi. Verdigree	1	0	1
Prairie Lake - Adams County	1	0	1
Harvard Marsh - Clay County	1	0	1
Hastings Ind. Park - Adams County	1	0	1
Elkorn R. Bridge - Stanton County	2	0	2
Cedar R. - Ericson	2	1	3

Note: No eagles were observed in the following locations: Niobrara River-S Hay Springs; 18 mi. S Rushville; 3 mi. S, 2 W Rushville; 5 mi. S, 1 E Hay Springs; 13 mi. N, 3 W Chadron; 9.5 mi. S Lamar.

Table 2 summary of numbers of bald eagles in Nebraska, 1992.

Location	Adults	Imm.	Unkn.	Totals
Nebraska (except Missouri River)	653	281	19	**953**
Missouri River only	181	18	140	**339**
Grand totals	**834**	**299**	**159**	**1292**

BALD EAGLES HATCHED IN NEBRASKA

The Nebraska Bird Review Vol. 59 (2), 1991, page 50, had a note on the hatching of a Bald Eagle in a nest along the Platte River in May, 1991. Unfortunately, the eaglet died in the summer of 1991, but two Bald Eagles were hatched in the spring of 1992 along the Loup River northwest of Grand Island. According to John Dinan and Ross Lock, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, these three birds are the first known to be hatched in Nebraska during this century. The two 1992 eaglets fledged and would be difficult to trace once they had dispersed. It was not possible to band them because of the inaccessibility of the nest.

Table 3. NWF bald eagle surveys, 1980-1992 (data compiled by Greg Wingfield). Ad = adults, Imm = immatures, Unkn = unknown.

Year	Nebraska (excluding Missouri River)				Missouri River				Grand Total			
	Ad	Imm	Unkn	Total	Ad	Imm	Unkn	Total	Ad	Imm	Unkn	Total
1980	279	149	0	428	9	5	0	14	288	154	0	442
1981	299	140	0	439	7	7	0	14	306	147	0	453
1982	204	120	1	325	95	29	0	124	299	149	1	449
1983	279	145	13	437	154	18	0	172	433	163	13	609
1984	271	83	6	360	44	5	0	49	315	88	6	409
1985	414	225	33	672	110	23	0	133	524	248	33	805
1986	279	127	15	421	37	4	0	41	316	131	15	462
1987	586	227	19	832	238	43	1	282	824	270	20	1114
1988	322	178	0	500	122	28	0	150	444	206	0	650
1989	607	293	7	907	139	58	12	209	746	351	19	1116
1990	416	223	7	646	157	53	1	211	573	276	8	857
1991	311	145	10	466	155	21	0	176	466	166	10	642
1992	653	281	19	953	181	18	140	339	834	299	159	1292
Avg. 1980-92	378	180	10	568	111	24	12	147	490	204	22	715
Avg. 1987-91	448	213	9	670	162	41	3	206	611	254	11	876
Avg. 1988-92	462	224	9	694	151	36	31	217	613	260	39	911