

3-1996

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Dinan, John, "1996 Survey of Bald and Golden Eagles in Nebraska" (1996). *Nebraska Bird Review*. 862.
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1996 SURVEY OF BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLES IN NEBRASKA

John Dinan, Nongame Bird Program Manager, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, 2200 N. 33rd St., Lincoln, NE 68503-0370 (phone: 402/471-0641; Fax: 402/471-5528), supplied the results of the 1996 (January 3-15) Bald and Golden Eagle surveys. Nine organizations and twenty-one individuals participated in the survey.

Conditions for 1996 survey: Temperatures 10 to 50° F. The Niobrara River had 70 to 100% ice cover, while the unchannelized portion of the Missouri River was mostly open. The channelized portion of the Missouri was open but had floating ice. The Platte River had 50 to 90 % ice cover; the South Platte, 30 to 80 %; and the North Platte was only 10 % ice-covered west of the Bridgeport area, but 50 to 90 % ice-covered east of there. The Loup River was 50 to 90 % ice-covered. Most lakes and reservoirs were 95 to 100 % ice-covered except for Lake McConaughy, which had 30% ice cover.

Golden Eagles: There were 28 Golden Eagle sightings in Nebraska during the 1996 survey. They were distributed in the following areas: North Platte River: Lisco-Lewellen (2), Lewellen-Keystone (Area Lakes) (1); Platte River: North Platte-Gothenberg (lake, canal) (1); unidentified area (1); Beaver Creek (4); Valentine NWR (1); and in the following counties: Cherry (3); Dawes (2); Dundy (1); Knox (1); Morrill (1); Sheridan (7); Sioux (1); and Wheeler (2).

Bald Eagles: The 1996 survey included 535 adults, 181 immatures, and 3 of unknown age. The total of 719 Bald Eagles is a 4% decrease from the 1995 count of 749, a 3% decrease from the 1980-96 statewide average of 743, and a 21% decrease from the previous five-year average of 909 Bald Eagles. The frequency of immature individuals among those identified as adults vs. immatures in 1996 was 25%, representing a 3% decrease from the previous ten-year average.

Compared to the 1980-1996 average, there were the following decreases in Bald Eagle use of the following areas: 9% for the Platte River Darr-Elm Creek area including Johnson and Elwood Reservoirs; 21% for the North and South Platte Rivers from Maxwell to the Lincoln/Keith County line including Sutherland Reservoir; 48% for the North Platte River from Keystone to Lewellen including Lake McConaughy and Ogallala; and 40% for the Republican River from Alma to Naponee including the Harlan County Reservoir.

Bald Eagle data are given in the following tables.

Imm. = immature, NWR=National Wildlife Refuge; WMA = Wildlife Management Area.

	Adults	Imm.	Total
North Platte River, Totals	67	27	94
Wyoming Line-Bayard (Area Lakes)	16	5	21
Bayard-Lisco	8	1	9
Lisco-Lewellen	14	15	29
Lewellen-Keystone (Area Lakes)	20	3	23
Keystone-Paxton	3	1	4
Paxton-North Platte	6	2	8

	Adults	Imm.	Total
South Platte River, Totals	6	1	7
Colorado Line-Big Springs	1	0	1
Big Springs-Paxton	2	1	3
Paxton-North Platte, Tri-Co. Div.	3	0	3

	Adults	Imm.	Total
Platte River, Totals	138	37	176*
North Platte-Gothenberg (Lake, Canal)	22	12	34
Gothenberg-Darr	7	0	7
Darr-Elm Creek (Lakes, Canal)	57	7	64
Elm Creek-Kearney	7	6	13
Kearney-Shelton	7	1	8
Shelton-Grand Island	2	1	3
Grand Island-Silver Creek	2	3	5
Silver Creek-Columbus	3	1	4
Columbus-North Bend	13	2	15
North Bend-Fremont	3	1	5*
Fremont-Linoma	5	2	7
Linoma-Plattsmouth	10	1	11

* Includes 1 of unknown age in North Bend - Fremont region.

	Adults	Imm.	Total
North Loup River, Middle Loup River, & Loup River, Totals	27	2	29
Brewster-Burwell (North Loup)	1	0	1
Burwell-mouth (North Loup)	7	1	8
Arcadia-mouth (Sherman Reserv.) (Middle Loup)	3	0	3
North Loup River-Genoa (Loup R.)	5	1	6
Genoa-mouth (Loup River)	11	0	11

	Adults	Imm.	Total
Niobrara River, Totals	26	1	27
Snake River-Cornell	9	0	9
Cornell-Cherry Co. Line	3	0	3
Cherry Co. Line-Cuba	1	1	2
Cuba-Newport	3	0	3
Newport-Redbird/Lynch	3	0	3
Redbird/Lynch-Missouri River	7	0	7
Snake River, Totals (Hwy 97 bridge-mouth (Merritt Res.))	1	0	1
Republican River, Totals	25	14	39
Alma-Naponee (Harlan Res.)	13	11	24
Naponee-Riverton	3	0	3
Riverton-Guide Rock	9	3	12
Missouri River, Totals	156	31	188*
Missouri River	1	0	1
NE Line-Monowi	3	2	5
Monowi-Gavins Pt., Lewis & Clark Lake	13	4	17
Gavins Pt.-Goat Island	19	7	26
Goat Island.-Ponca St. Park	8	2	11*
Ponca St. Park-Homer	3	0	3
Homer-Decatur	7	0	7
Decatur-Tekamah	7	1	8
Tek.-Mormon Bridge (DeSoto NWR)	14	1	15
Hwy 275-Plattsmouth	9	0	9
Plattsmouth-Union	2	1	3
Union-Peru	26	7	33
Peru-Indian State Park	28	3	31
Indian Cave St. Park-Kansas Line	16	3	19

* Includes 1 of unknown age in Goat Island-Ponca St. Park area.

No Bald eagles seen from Mormon Bridge-Hwy 275.

Reservoirs and Lakes, Totals	Adults	Imm.	Total
Reservoirs and Lakes, Totals	22	35	57
Sutherland Reservoir	9	8	17
Lake Maloney	1	0	1
Enders Reservoir	0	5	5
Swanson Reservoir	11	22	33
Calamus Reservoir	1	0	1

No Bald Eagles seen at Red Willow Reservoir, Medicine Creek Reservoir, Lake Babcock, or Salt Valley Lakes.

Other Areas, Totals	14	3	18*
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Area not identified	3	0	4*
Beaver Creek	8	3	11
Valentine NWR	2	0	2
Maloney Canal	1	0	1

* Includes 1 of unknown age in an undesignated area.
No Bald Eagles seen at Sidney, Mahon Ranch, Cody Park, Sac-Wilcox WMA, Schilling WMA, Sandy Creek NRD, Frenchman, Turkey Creek, Funk WMA, or Twin Lakes.

Counties, Totals	53	30	83
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Blaine	4	1	5
Chase	3	0	3
Cherry	0	2	2
Cuming	2	0	2
Dawes	1	0	1
Dundy	1	0	1
Franklin	0	11	11
Furnas	15	9	24
Garfield	1	0	1
Harlan	5	1	6
Loup	2	1	3
Red Willow	5	2	7
Sheridan	2	1	3
Sioux	2	0	2
Stanton	4	1	5
Thayer	1	0	1
Thomas	2	0	2
Wheeler	3	1	4

No Bald Eagles observed in Knox or Morrill Counties.