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## Bald Eagle Nest Monitoring - Nebraska, 1997 Summary Report

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### BALD EAGLE NEST MONITORING-NEBRASKA, 1997 SUMMARY REPORT

John J. Dinan, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

In 1997, 38 Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) nests in 22 counties were surveyed for breeding activity. Eagles occupied territories at 10 of these sites. These same 10 territories were occupied in 1996. Two separate, mid-July sightings of Bald Eagles along the Niobrara River, one of an adult and three juveniles in Knox County and one of an adult and a juvenile in Holt County, suggests the presence of additional nesting territories. All nest attempts in 1997 were successful, producing a total of 16 fledged young. The Lake Alice nest on the North Platte National Wildlife Refuge fell during a storm in late May. The two eaglets survived the fall and were raised on the ground until they fledged. One eaglet at the Keya Paha site fell from the nest but was cared for on the ground, eventually making its way back into the nest.

The number of nests built, the number of occupied nests, and the number of young fledged have increased annually during the 1991 to 1997 period by an average of 48%, 58%, and 69% respectively (Figure 1). The percentage change from 1996 to 1997 for the number of nests

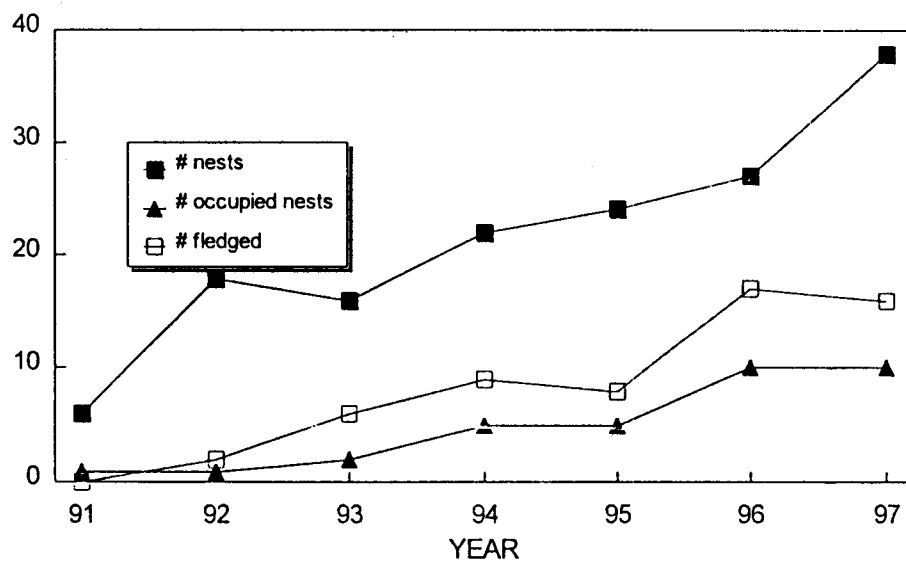


Figure 1. Bald Eagle Nesting Activity-Nebraska 1997

built, the number of occupied nests, and the number of young fledged was 41%, 0%, and -6%, respectively. From 1991 to 1997, 58 fledged eagles have been documented from 34 nesting attempts with known outcomes. The number of young fledged by year and site are listed in Table 1. The numbers of young fledged per occupied nest in 1997 and from 1991 to 1997 were 1.6 and 1.7, respectively. These reproductive rates are well above the 1.0 young fledged per occupied nest needed for recovery as identified in the Northern States Bald Eagle Recovery Plan. The increase in the number of nests built, the high reproductive rate being maintained, and the evidence of establishment of breeding territories in new areas (in Nebraska as well as the surrounding states) substantiates the continued expansion of Bald Eagle populations.

**Table 1. Number of Bald Eagle Young Fledged, Nebraska, 1991-1997**

Site Name	County	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Valley 1	Saunders	0						
Rockville	Sherman		2	3	3	0	2	1
Lake Alice	Scotts Bluff			3	2	2	2	2
Hackberry Lake	Garden				2	2	1	1
Homestead	Gage				1	0*	3	1
Valley 2	Saunders				1	2	0	2
Calamus Reservoir	Loup					2	2	2
Inman	Holt					0*	2	2
Brownville	Nemaha						1	2
Keya Paha	Boyd						3	2
Table Rock	Pawnee						1	1
<b>Total</b>		0	2	6	9	8	17	16

\*Unknown Outcome