

# EAGLE FACTS

## How big is a Bald Eagle?

Bald Eagle females, are larger than the males and have a 7+ wingspan (2.44m). They weigh almost 12.8 lbs (5.8 kg) and may live upwards of 30 years.

## How many Bald Eagles live in the Campbell River area?

The number of Bald Eagles varies considerably depending on the season. Numbers are highest in the winter with the influx of migratory eagles to the open waters of the coast. In recent years, late winter counts (end of February) have ranged from 106-184 eagles. In summer, Campbell River supports a few non-breeding adults, an assortment of young birds and ~25 nesting pairs. Nesters are called the resident breeding population and they remain here for 10 to 11 months of the year. Each pair is strongly focused on their nest tree and favoured perches within the centre of their breeding territory.

## How big is a Bald Eagle nest? Big birds, big nests, big trees!

Eagle nests can be as large as any bird nests in the world with weights of a tonne or more and reaching the size of a small car. Not surprisingly it takes big trees to support these massive nests and usually the most dominant trees in the area are chosen. These veteran trees often provide a tall look-out from which the birds watch for threats (intruders) and look for foraging opportunities.

## Just how big are eagle trees?

In Campbell River, the preferred nest tree species are veteran Douglas-firs. The median diameter at breast height measures 1.73 metres - these trees are truly huge. Other trees used in the Campbell River area include mature black cottonwood, grand fir, and veteran Sitka Spruce.

Photo Credits:

Jim Dubois

Ron Odowichuk

Gary Brettbacher

Oyster River Enhancement Society

## Eagle Nest Protection in Campbell River



All Bald Eagle nest trees in B.C. are protected by Section 34 of the Wildlife Act. In Campbell River, eagle trees receive additional protection through a 60 meter radius no disturbance buffer zone as established in the Official Community Plan Bylaw.



Buffer zones protect nest tree health and help to reduce risks to people and property as trees age and deteriorate. Ideally, a number of trees can be retained in the buffer area. These trees provide additional protection to the nest tree from the elements, screen some human disturbance, and provide perch trees and recruitment nest tree sites.

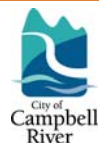


The City of Campbell River supports the Wildlife Tree Stewardship Program (WiTS).

WiTS is an environmental stewardship initiative of BC Nature (formerly the Federation of BC Naturalists). Through this program, over 200 volunteer wildlife tree stewards work with land owners and government agencies to protect wildlife habitat.

New volunteers are welcomed. For more information about WiTS or eagles, please visit:

<http://www.wildlifetree.org/>



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# EAGLES

*in our Backyard*

## The Bald Eagles of Campbell River



# The Breeding Cycle of the Bald Eagle

## RETURN FROM MIGRATION

October 2, give or take 3 days.



## NEST BUILDING TIME

Mid October to mid November. Bringing branches to nest, large ones around the outside and fine twigs on the inside.



## WINTER SURVIVAL TIME

November 15 to January 31. With shorter and colder days, nest-building stops. Much of their time is spent getting food, mostly fish but also winter-weakened birds and ducks.

## MATING



February all month, with much mating occurring around Valentine's Day. Eagles are also seen mating in the first half of March, about a week or two before the eggs are laid in the nest.

## FINAL NEST PREPARATION

A second flurry of nest-preparation takes place from mid-February to mid-March - adding more branches, followed by soft materials like moss.

## EGG LAYING

March 25, plus or minus one week. A second egg 2 or 3 days later.



## BROODING

The male and female take turns sitting on the eggs for approximately 35 days - from March 25 to May 1, plus or minus one week. One could consider the month of April as the "brooding" month.

## CHICKS HATCH

May 1, plus or minus one week.



Dates vary from southern Vancouver Island to northern Vancouver Island.

## CHICK DEVELOPMENT

Peeps can be heard by June 10  
Sitting on edge of nest by June 20  
Flapping wings by June 25  
Flapping and jumping by July 10



## FIRST FLIGHT

July 25, plus or minus one week. (85 days after hatching)

## MIGRATION OFF ISLAND

Mid-August to September. This migration includes adults, new eaglets and any other non-breeding eagles.



## ADULT EAGLES RETURN TO ISLAND FIRST

October 2, plus or minus one week

## IMMATURES STRAGGLE BACK TO ISLAND THEREAFTER

One or two arrive back in November, a few in December and increasing numbers in the next few months.

*Eagle dates compiled by Doug Carrick*