

American Bald Eagle Foundation

President's Message

We at the American Bald Eagle Foundation have been spending a lot of energy over the last several months in an effort to educate the people on the importance of the American Bald Eagle and it's environment. I would like to take this time to thank all of you who have come here to Haines and have gone through the American Bald Eagle Foundation. Without all of the individual support and letters of encouragement, we have received from all of you our task would be even harder.

I would also like to take this time to thank the Alaska Raptor Rehabilitation Center in Sitka and it's staff for all it's help along with the Bird Treatment and Learning Center in Anchorage. I feel that these two organizations are definitely one reason why the American Bald Eagle numbers remain healthy in the state of Alaska.

It is not often that as individuals we have a chance to make a difference not only on our own environment, but on the environment of another species. In the coming year we at the American Bald Eagle Foundation will be touching the minds of even more individuals. We will hope they feel as we do that the American Bald Eagle represents more than just a symbol of our nation.

Once again thank you very much,

Richard Kaloostian
President - Haines Chapter
American Bald Eagle Foundation

Spring Feeding Frenzy

With my camera, I negotiated the rocky beach and watched a large humpback whale cruising. Then as I rounded the corner, I saw 30 to 40 eagles perched upon rocks and in trees. They were intent upon the activity in the ocean and they were feeding on herring. The sea lions were there also.

Eagles, whales, porpoises, sea lions and other wildlife anxiously await the last two weeks of April. For this is the time that the herring spawn on a short 2 1/2 mile stretch of beach near Haines. Not the greatest spawning area for herring in Southeast Alaska, but none the less an important one for our territory.

There is a turmoil and splashing as predators churn the water. In the midst of all this commotion, you might even spot a brave soul sinking his long-handled net into the swirling masses and scooping fish out by the "buckets full" even as a whale or group of sea lions crowd the herring towards the shore, filling their gaping mouths with each advance. This is the first "feeding frenzy" of spring.

The Tlingit natives will tell you they have become real keen on watching areas where the eagles congregate, for they have learned that wherever the eagles are, that is where they will find food also.

The female herring come into the shore, before the males, flooding the entire area. Depositing their tiny eggs onto the rocks just about mid-tide line. Then the males arrive turning the water milky white with their sperm. When the tide goes out, these eggs lie exposed on the rocks where they survive uncovered through the fluctuation of the tide.

I thought if I went back in 18-21 days as the eggs began to hatch, the fishing would be really good. Sure enough, just about every cast brought back a Dolly Varden or a greenling. It was excellent fishing. The eagles also came back, this time they focused on the "Dollies" that were feeding on herring as they hatched.

This episode signals the end of winter and "lean" times; for the first herring run is soon followed by the hooligan (a smelt) to begin what is commonly known here, as May's "wildlife extravaganza" when the oceans and skies fill with creatures following the hooligan migration. And it all begins again... -Dan Hyde Haines, Alaska

(ABEF would like to hear from you. If you would like to share an eagle story, observation, or poem please write to us.)

Eagle News Notes

School Kids benefit from Eagle...Every week throughout the winter months ABEF receives letters from students ranging from 6th to the 8th grade, asking for information about the Bald Eagle. These kids are excited about the eagle and often ask questions such as: What do you do to prevent habitat loss?

Why are eagle feathers so important to Native Americans? Now that eagles are no longer on the endangered species list what can people do to help them?

A whole new generation has been smitten by the majestic beauty and significance of the eagle as a symbol of their lives. ABEF provides each request with a packet that includes information on the Alaskan Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve, and Audubon reports as well as personal answers to their questions.

Membership drive...ABEF's Spring Membership drive is under way, we will be concentrating efforts on May 12th through May 25th. We are dedicated to the education, promotion, protecting and preserving of eagle habitat by sponsoring and facilitating research activities. ABEF relies solely on memberships and donations. Your support is essential.

With caring people like you, the research can be made available to everyone who wishes to live in greater harmony with the eagle in its environment. We are a private non-profit organization whose mission is to share that knowledge. Please support ABEF. We would love to hear from you.

Eagle Dinner....Friday, May 24th is the first Annual American Bald Eagle Foundation Banquet of the Haines Chapter. Come dine with us and enjoy a variety of beautiful eagle art items to be auctioned during the evening. We're proud to work with Williams, Inc. Alaskan & Proud Stores who have come forward in support of our mission and who have offered to help us develop a relationship with the business community. This will be the first of many dinners to be held statewide this year. Mark your calendars for this spring social.

*A Special Sincere Thanks to :
Ed Shirley, National ABEF Director - a man with a heart!*

