

# Family Learning Activity: Bald, Beautiful, and Back!



The bald eagle is a recovery success story because of the Endangered Species Act and citizen action. **Learn about the bald eagle and “adopt” one threatened or endangered species in your own community!**

## Background

When the United States adopted the bald eagle as the nation’s symbol in 1782, as many as 100,000 nested in the continental United States, excluding Alaska. By 1963, only 417 nesting pairs were found in the lower 48 states. (FWS) In 1967, the bald eagle was designated Endangered in the lower 48 states. After years of habitat protection, management actions under ESA, hand rearing and release, and the banning of pesticides like DDT, its status was changed to Threatened in 1995. On July 6, 1999, it was proposed for de-listing for protection in the lower 48 states. See the PBS *Nature Series*, *The Bald Eagle Returns*, for a chronology of its recovery. <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/eagles/index.html>

## What You Will Need:

- Print and Internet resources (see below)
- Paper, pencils, pens, crayons (for drawing and writing); scissors, paper hole punch, yarn

## What To Do:

1. Check out the resources below to learn more about bald eagles and ESA.
2. Learn about ESA-listed endangered species native to where you live.
3. Choose one threatened or endangered species to “adopt.” Learn as much about it as you can and take steps to protect it. Here are some things you can do:

**Get hip to habitats.** Species will always be endangered in the wild if they don’t have places to live—their habitats. Is development in your area threatening the habitat of this species? Visit a site where you might find this species.

**Conduct a community awareness survey on your species and give to family and friends.**

**Make a *Species Spotlight* Book and loan it to your school or local library.** Children can make drawings, collages, and write facts about the species they choose. Compile their drawings and writing in book form. Encourage them to add new pages as they learn about other endangered species native to your area.

**Inform your community!** Share what you’ve learned by writing a letter to your local newspaper, by making a video for a local cable program, or by making a family website.

## Internet Resources:

- Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) - <http://endangered.fws.gov/i/b0h.html>
- Species Account - <http://endangered.fws.gov/i/b/msab0h.html>
- About the Endangered Species Act - <http://endangered.fws.gov/whatwedo.html>
- Kid’s Corner: Endangered Species - <http://endangered.fws.gov/kids/index.html>



## Green Tip: Bee a Pollinator Protector!

About 30 percent of the food we eat is the *direct result* of a visit by a pollinating insect to a flowering fruit tree or vegetable plant. Help provide bee habitat in your yard. Avoid using pesticides because they kill bees and poison our air, water, and food. Plant native flowers with different blooming times, and create hiding places and nesting sites such as dead tree branches full of beetle holes. That’s the buzz! Visit <http://nationalzoo.si.edu/Animals/BackyardBiology/WildlifeGardening/ButterflyGardening.cfm> for tips on butterfly and bee gardening.