

"It's a classic case that tells us we better keep monitoring these birds," said Lauzon. At Western Illinois University, Dunstan and students continue to study the biology and habits of Bald Eagles, keeping close watch at protected sites. "We need to watch the quality of river waters," said Dunstan. "Dying fish attract eagles, but dying fish could also mean chemicals and pollutants."

Protecting the large old trees of the riverine forest is also paramount. In spring, barges begin their rush upstream and are tied up to the shore line to the biggest trees. That destroys protective bark, uproots the trees, weakens the root structure, and causes erosion. "We need to continue to manage perch habitat at these sites and think not just one or two years in the future, but manage the areas for the next 100 or more years," said Dunstan.

Meanwhile, the Bald Eagle Appreciation Days just over the Iowa border in Keokuk attracts thousands of visitors who observe Bald Eagles and learn about their habits. "Educating the public is important," said Dunstan. "From the development of an appreciation comes the development of an ethic," he said. "And it is the ethic that will stand the test of time."

Hal Cohen, ornithologist and professor at the College of DuPage and other area birders such as Alan Anderson, president of the Chicago Audubon Society, lead eagle trips in winter to promote awareness and teach students about the natural history of Bald Eagles.

I met Hal Cohen several winters ago in early March at Mississippi Palisades State Park. Cohen announced he had seen 100 or more eagles migrating along the river that day. Above our heads, we heard the remarkably high-pitched call of an eagle as it circled around another eagle in pre-courtship flight.

*Table 3.*

### Number of Bald Eagle Nests in Illinois 1985-1993

Year	Known	Active	Successful	Number Fledged
1985	2	2	1	1
1986	3	3	2	2
1987	4	4	1 (+1)	2 (+1)*
1988	10	8	4	8
1989	12	10	4 (+2)*	4 (+5)*
1990	14	8	5	7
1991	15	9	6	12
1992	17	11	8	16
1993**	20	10	6-7	12-14

\* In 1987 and 1989, nests that were active were blown down during storms, killing nestlings in the nest. The numbers in brackets indicate additional nests and nestlings that were fairly far along, close to fledging their young. We lost some of our likely eagle production in those years (over half our eaglets in 1989) due to natural events.

\*\*Estimated numbers as of this writing

Data Compiler: Sue Lauzon, executive director, Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board

We experienced a tentative exhilaration as an eagle plunged to the icy water to snatch a fish with its powerful talons. We hope that with the work of protection board, the National Wildlife Federation, the Nature Conservancy, Dr. Dunstan, and other concerned organizations and citizens, we will be rewarded on many future trips with the pristine sight of an eagle flying over the Mississippi and our prairie state. 🦅

### Acknowledgements

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