



**U.S. Forest Service
Pacific Southwest Region
San Bernardino National Forest
602 S. Tippecanoe Ave.
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News Release

For Immediate Release

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Bald eagle lays two eggs as public event approaches

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. — Last week, a bald eagle near Big Bear Lake laid two eggs, just in time for the public January bald eagle count on Saturday, Jan. 13. The eagle and her mate are year-round residents of the area. The eggs should hatch after about 35 days – around Feb. 10.

“This is part of the story of bald eagle population recovery nationwide. Only a few decades ago, bald eagles were considered an endangered species,” said Robin Eliason, a U.S. Forest Service biologist. “We think these are the first eggs laid by this young female. We do not know for sure because she’s not banded, but some of us are convinced that the female is the first bald eagle recorded to be hatched in the San Bernardino Mountains, which was in 2012.”

Because bald eagles will abandon nests if disturbed, the Forest Service has [closed the area](#) to all public entry through June 22, the duration of the nesting season. “We’re very concerned about people trying to get close for photographs, viewing, etc.” said Eliason.

Better viewing can be found from the comfort of one’s home, anyway. The nonprofit group Friends of the Big Bear Valley installed a [livestream camera](#) on the nest in 2016 which is still active today (choose “Big Bear Eagle Cam, Big Bear Lake” under the “Live Nest Cameras” list).

Four eagles, including the nesting pair, were spotted around Big Bear Lake by 35 citizen scientists at the December bald eagle count. Nine total were spotted at all eagle count sites, which are located at six different lakes throughout the Inland Empire in San Bernardino National Forest and at two California State Park sites.

The public is invited to come out and help with the eagle count on Saturday, which also happens to be on National Winter Trails Day (forest partner Southern California Mountains Foundation is hosting a [number of events](#)). The monthly winter events started as a way to monitor bald eagle populations when the species was listed as endangered. Although the species was delisted in 2007, the U.S. Forest Service continues to monitor the local population, which also gives the public an ongoing opportunity to view eagles and get a taste of scientific field work.

Details for this Saturday’s eagle count are:

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- **Big Bear Lake** area volunteers will meet at 8 a.m. at the Forest Service's Big Bear Discovery Center on North Shore Drive for orientation. Contact Robin Eliason (reliason@fs.fed.us or 909-382-2832) for more information. Please call 909-382-2832 for cancellation due to winter weather conditions – an outgoing message will be left by 6:30 a.m. on the morning of the count, if it has to be cancelled. Contact the Discovery Center (909-382-2790) for information about Eagle Celebrations. There will also be a free slideshow about bald eagles at 11 a.m. after the counts.
- **Lake Arrowhead/Lake Gregory** volunteers will meet at 8 a.m. at the Skyforest Ranger Station for orientation. Contact Robin Eliason (reliason@fs.fed.us or 909-382-2832) for more information. Please call 909-382-2832 for cancellation due to winter weather conditions – an outgoing message will be left by 6:30 am on the morning of the count if it has to be cancelled.
- **Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area** volunteers should plan to meet at the Visitor Center at 8 a.m. for orientation. Contact Mark Wright for more information about volunteering or taking an eagle tour (760-389-2303 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.; or email: mark.wright@parks.ca.gov).
- **Lake Hemet** volunteers should plan on meeting at the Lake Hemet Grocery Store at 8:30 a.m. for orientation. Contact Ann Bowers (annbowers@fs.fed.us or 909-382-2935) for more information.
- **Lake Perris State Recreation Area** volunteers should plan to meet at the Lake Perris Regional Indian Museum at 8 a.m. for orientation. For more information call Lake Perris SRA at 951-940-5600 or the Lake Perris Regional Indian Museum at 951-940-5657.

No experience is needed. Signing up ahead of time is unnecessary — just show up at the designated time and location, dress for cold weather, bring binoculars and a watch. Observers meet at one of the count locations for a short orientation and then they proceed to their observation sites where they record their observations between 9 and 10 a.m. Then they return to the meeting location to turn in the data sheet. The biologists use those data to determine the minimum number of eagles in the area.

For those who cannot make the event, the remaining two counts for the winter season are scheduled for Feb. 10 and March 10. The public can also try watching eagles on their own. Contact the Big Bear Discovery Center (909-382-2790) or the Idyllwild Ranger Station (909-382-2921) for wildlife watching tips and etiquette on the San Bernardino National Forest.

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The mission of the U.S. Forest Service, part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners, and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world. Public lands the Forest Service manages contribute more than \$13 billion to the economy each year through visitor spending alone. Those same lands provide 20 percent of the nation's clean water supply, a value estimated at \$7.2 billion per year. The agency has either a direct or indirect role in stewardship of about 80 percent of the 850 million forested acres within the U.S., of which 100 million acres are urban forests where most Americans live.

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