

The Bald Eagle Comes Back



Read the passage. Then answer the questions in full sentences.

Name _____ Date _____

The bald eagle is the national symbol of the United States. A grown eagle has a white head, a white tail and a brown body. Young eagles are brown and white, and most have their grown-up feathers by the age of five.

Bald eagles are big birds. A female's wings can stretch up to 8 feet from tip to tip. Fish are their main food. Each year a pair lays one to three eggs, which hatch after about 35 days.

Bald eagles nearly disappeared. After World War II, a chemical called DDT was sprayed to kill mosquitoes and other insects. It made the eagles' eggshells weak. By 1963, only 417 nesting pairs were known.

In 1972, DDT was banned in the United States. Slowly, the eagles came back. In 2007, the bald eagle was taken off the list of threatened and endangered species.

1. What is the bald eagle's main food?

2. How long do bald eagle eggs take to hatch?

3. Why did bald eagles nearly disappear?

4. What do you think helped the bald eagles come back? Why?

Answer key

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1. What is the bald eagle's main food?

Fish.

2. How long do bald eagle eggs take to hatch?

About 35 days.

3. Why did bald eagles nearly disappear?

DDT, a chemical sprayed to kill insects, made their eggshells weak.

4. What do you think helped the bald eagles come back? Why?

Sample answer: banning DDT in 1972, because then the eagles could lay strong eggs again and more of their chicks hatched.