

News Release



Long Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge Closes Little Neck Run Due To Nesting Bald Eagles

Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) staff have continued to monitor the pair of bald eagles along Little Neck Run, a small tributary of the Carmans River. Recent observations of the pair at the nest site prompts this seasonal closure of Little Neck Run to public access. This closure will help reduce disturbance and help protect the birds and the nest location during this very sensitive time. Once eagles select a nesting territory they tend to use it for the rest of their lives. It is believed that their nest attempt in 2013 may have been the first ever by bald eagles in the history of Wertheim NWR. We are unsure if last year's nest attempt was successful, but there were sightings of an immature eagle alone, and at times with a mature adult during the winter.

Bald eagles reach sexual maturity at five years of age and obtain the characteristic white head and tail. They build large nests in tall trees and prefer undisturbed areas along the shorelines of rivers, marshes and large lakes. In the northern U. S., eagles generally initiate nest building in December - January. Egg laying and incubation (33-35 days) can start in February and chick hatching and rearing takes place in March - May. Eaglets make their first unsteady flights 10-12 weeks after hatching and begin fledging in June - August. Refuge staff will monitor the nest to determine if eagle chicks are present. If so, Little Neck Run will re-open after the chicks have fledged. Bald eagles were removed from the endangered species list in 2007, but are still federally protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. These acts help to ensure the safety of eagles and their parts (feathers, nests and eggs) from hunting, collection, harassment and other harmful actions.

Favorable locations to view eagles and other wildlife exist along the Black Tupelo trail at Indian Landing and at refuge overlooks along the Carmans River, with the use of a spotting scope or binoculars. The White Oak and Black Tupelo Trails will remain open for public access. As always, visitors are reminded to obey closed area boundary signs and to adhere to refuge regulations.

For further information, please contact us at 631-286-0485 or visit www.fws.gov/refuge/wertheim. The Visitor Center is open Monday through Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

The mission of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.