

Arizona Wildlife Podcast Comprehension Activity

Episode 8: Baby Eagle Biology

Part A: Each statement below is incorrect. Determine what is wrong with each one and make changes so they will be correct.

1. It will take the baby eagles ~~one year~~ (only twelve weeks) to grow as large as the adults.
2. ~~Smell~~ (Vision) is the most important sense for a bald eagle.
3. Instead of fingers, bald eagles use ~~their feet~~ (barbs at the back of their tongue) to help push food down their throats.
4. Placing the hood over the baby eagle's head ~~protects the biologist from the sharp and powerful beak~~ (reduces the stress level of the bird and calms them down).

Part B: Define each of the terms below.

1. Contour Feather – ~~the feathers an adult bird that determine its shape~~
2. Talon – ~~the sharp, hooked claw of a bird~~
3. Thermoregulate – ~~the ability of an animal to keep its body temperature within a certain range~~

Part C: Read the arguments presented below. Then, provide one statement for and one statement against each argument. *Note: Answers are just some possible examples. Additional answers may be acceptable.*

1. The bald eagle was recently removed from the Endangered Species list. However, many people believe the southwestern bald eagle, found in Arizona, is a genetically unique group. They argue that this group of eagles should remain on the list.

Pro: Being a unique and somewhat isolated breeding population, it is important to maintain the genetic diversity of this group. Keeping the eagles listed would insure management and protection of them. Con: Keeping one group of eagles on the list could send mixed messages and confuse the public, thus decreasing support for conservation efforts. The management involves specific actions (like lake closures) that can frustrate the public.

2. Even though the bald eagle management can be resource intensive (time, staffing, and money) and a disturbance to the birds, many people argue that it is necessary.

Pro: This hands-on approach to management helps deal much faster with problems that may be encountered. Eagles are an American symbol and these types of actions serve as a positive image for wildlife management practices in general. Con: Continued disturbance of the eagles may reduce reproductive success. So much public money should not be spent on one specific animal.