

RAMSEY READER



THIS WEEK'S ACTIVITIES:

Visit an eagle nest and build one at home

Learn how owls hear

Resources for learning more about raptors

Raptors

Minnesota is home to many species of raptors, including bald eagles, osprey, red-tailed hawks, barn owls, barred owls and great horned owls, just to name a few. Explore the fascinating world of Minnesota raptors through some interesting details about these birds of prey.



Nests

Bald eagles return to the same nest for many years and add on to what is already there. Over several seasons, the nest can expand to enormous sizes!

The average bald eagle nest is 4 - 5 feet across and 2 - 4 feet deep. The largest recorded bald eagle nest was over 9 feet across and weighed over 5000 pounds.

For more information on eagle nests, visit nationaleaglecenter.org/eagle-nesting-young



VISIT THE EAGLES AT KELLER REGIONAL PARK

There are nesting bald eagles at Keller Regional Park, and their nest is easy to view from a safe distance. Head to the parking lot at 2166 Maplewood Drive in Maplewood and walk directly toward Keller Lake. Once you get to the lakeshore, look up and across the lake. If you're lucky, you'll see an adult eagle in the nest!



SEE A REPLICA OF AN EAGLE NEST

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation has started building a replica eagle nest on the ground, near the eagles at Keller Regional Park. This will give you an approximation of how large eagles' nests can be. Stop by to see its progress and take a photo with it.



BUILD A NEST AT HOME

Try it at home: make a nest of your own. If you can get outside, you can gather natural materials such as twigs, grass and leaves. You can also use items like pencils, pens, small sticks or popsicle sticks that you have at home. See the full activity at kidscraftroom.com/make-a-birds-nest-steam-project

Try stacking and weaving these items into a nest. *What was challenging about this activity? What type of natural materials would be best for laying the eggs on?*



Owls

Owls are nocturnal raptors that hunt silently so they don't scare away their prey. Some owls, such as the barred owl pictured here, use their exceptional hearing to hunt at night. The shape of their face, called a facial disc, helps funnel the sound into their ears, which are underneath their feathers.

→ TRY IT OUT

Close or cover your eyes and have a sibling or an adult move around the room and make different noises. They could scratch on the table, slide their feet on the floor, open a drawer, etc. Try to determine what the sound is and where it is coming from. Try cupping your hands behind your ears, does that help you hear?

Learn more

There's so much more to learn about raptors. Check out these select resources to continue exploring and discovering.

[University of Minnesota Raptor Center](#)

Learn all about raptors through the University of Minnesota's Raptor Center, located in Saint Paul.

raptor.umn.edu

[Merlin](#)

Merlin is a free bird app that can help you identify raptors on your next outdoor adventure.

merlin.allaboutbirds.org/download/

[International Owl Center](#)

The International Owl Center is located right here in Minnesota.

internationalowlcenter.org

[Owl Research Institute](#)

This resource provides an owl identification page with photos, sounds and information about the 19 owl species that live and breed in the U.S. and Canada.

owlresearchinstitute.org/species-id-guide

Did you know?

Federal law prohibits non-Native Americans from collecting or possessing eagle feathers. The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act make the "possession, use and sale of eagle feathers and parts" illegal. You could be fined thousands of dollars if you have an eagle feather, even one you just found on the ground. So, if you find an eagle feather, let it be.