

Video of eagle attacking toddler sparks online buzz

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Coming just a week after a monkey wearing a sheepskin coat was found wandering around a [parking lot](#) in [Toronto](#), the video purported to show

the massive eagle—which typically has a six-foot (two-meter) or more [wingspan](#)—circling a public park.

The eagle then swoops down, lifts an unsuspecting toddler off the ground by its winter coat and carries it a few feet before dropping it on the grass.

After cursing in English, the French-speaking man filming the incident races over to comfort the bewildered child, who starts crying but does not appear to be seriously hurt.

Netizens have rushed to see the video, which had more than a million views by noon on Wednesday and was also making the rounds on Twitter.

But a blog posting under the banner "Centre NAD reassures Montrealers: no danger of being snatched by a golden eagle" debunks the video.

The posting identified four students at the Montreal [3D animation](#) and digital design school as being behind the [hoax](#), which it said was part of a school project.

"The child and the eagle were created using 3D animation by the students and then dropped into real footage," it said.

Earlier, several journalists who watch the Internet closely were already suspicious of its [authenticity](#).

Others posted stills from the footage that they said show the eagle's shadow suddenly appearing on the video when it was not previously visible.

"If the eagle video is fake, it's a really well made fake," said @DocWan,

echoing what many other people were saying on [Twitter](#).

[Conservation biologist](#) Claude Drolet confirmed that the video was shot at Mont Royal Park, probably in November.

The site shown in the video is "50 meters from my office" in the park, he told AFP. But he noted that it was unlikely anyone whose child had been attacked would "not seek help, nor inform park staff."

The Black Swamp Bird Observatory, meanwhile, warned that "this kind of publicity does so much damage to birds."

"The golden eagle is a scarce visitor in the [Montreal](#) area," said bird expert Kenn Kaufman, cited by the observatory in a Facebook posting, adding that the bird in the video is not a golden eagle, "nor anything else that occurs in the wild in North America."

"With all the ignorance about nature that's out there already, the last thing we need is this kind of stupid garbage," Kaufman wrote.

But others just enjoyed the show. "Destined to be huge!" one online user wrote. "Craziest video I've seen in a long time," tweeted another.

The golden eagle is the largest bird of prey in North America, and can dive at its quarry at speeds of more than 150 miles (241 kilometers) per hour, according to the US-based National Geographic Society.

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