

Environmental toxins may be hurting North American eagles

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New research indicates that bald and golden eagles in North America may be exposed to dangerously high levels of polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs), which are chemicals used in the production of a wide variety of textiles, plastics, and electronics.

Investigators analyzed the livers of 33 [bald eagles](#) and 7 [golden eagles](#) collected throughout Washington and Idaho, finding that eagles associated with large urban areas had the highest PBDE concentrations.

"The PBDE concentrations we observed in eagle livers suggest a range of exposure, from nearly no detection to concentrations that may be significant toxicologically," wrote the authors of the *Environmental Toxicology* study. "More information is required to evaluate trends in exposure and accumulation in eagles in the northwest United States and whether trends or source areas differ regionally across North America."

More information: Polybrominated diphenyl ethers in bald (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and golden (*Aquila chrysaetos*) eagles from Washington and Idaho, USA, *Environmental Toxicology*, 2014.

Provided by Wiley

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