

Lead kills 1st Yellowstone golden eagle fitted with tracker

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Officials say the first golden eagle in Yellowstone National Park to be fitted with a tracking device has died of lead poisoning.

Golden eagles often scavenge during the fall and winter. Scientists suspect the adult female may have eaten carrion containing lead bullet fragments.

Some advocacy groups have called for hunters to use bullets made of copper to help prevent such deaths.

Eagle scientist Todd Katzner with the U.S. Geological Survey called the death "gut wrenching."

He says researchers were nonetheless able to gather valuable information about the eagle and its movements before it died.

Golden eagles are one of North America's largest birds, with a wingspan that can top 7 feet (2.1 meters).

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