

Hatch watch is underway at a California bald eagle nest monitored by a popular online camera feed

February 29 2024



In this remote camera image released by Friends of Big Bear Valley, are a pair of bald eagles standing over eggs in a nest atop a tree overlooking Big Bear Lake in the San Bernardino Mountains in southern Calif., Thursday Feb. 29, 2024. Three bald eagle chicks could emerge this week from eggs laid in the nest. A nest camera set up by Friends of Big Bear Valley monitors the eagles and draws lots of views from eagle enthusiasts. Credit: Friends of Big Bear Valley via AP

Hatch watch is underway in Southern California mountains. Three bald eagle chicks could emerge this week from eggs laid in a nest monitored by nature lovers via a popular [online camera feed](#).

The mother, Jackie, laid the eggs in late January atop a tree overlooking Big Bear Lake high in the San Bernardino Mountains east of Los Angeles. She diligently sat on the eggs for more than two and a half days straight when a recent winter storm blanketed the nest with snow.

"This is the longest time she has ever stayed on the nest incubating her eggs without a break! 61 hours 58 minutes!" said the nonprofit Friends of Big Bear Valley, which installed the nest camera in 2015 and documents the successes and failures each breeding season.

Since the storm, Jackie has shared incubating duties with the watchful father, Shadow. Biologists expect the eaglets could begin to hatch Thursday or Friday. The process of chicks breaking out of their shells is also known as pipping.

Among those monitoring the eggs' progress from afar is biologist Kelly Sorenson, executive director of the Ventana Wildlife Society in central California. While his group is not involved with the Big Bear eagles, he sees their breeding as emblematic of the comeback the species has made in the state over the past decades.



In this remote camera image released by Friends of Big Bear Valley, is a bald eagle standing over eggs in a nest atop at tree overlooking Big Bear Lake in the San Bernardino Mountains in southern Calif., Thursday Feb. 29, 2024. Three bald eagle chicks could emerge this week from eggs laid in the nest. A nest camera set up by Friends of Big Bear Valley monitors the eagles and draws lots of views from eagle enthusiasts. Credit: Friends of Big Bear Valley via AP



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American bald eagles teetered on the brink of extinction until the pesticide DDT was banned in the 1970s and other protections were established, leading the species to rebound.

"We love keeping track of nesting pairs like this," he said Wednesday. "They show that conservation works and that the habitat is intact."

Jackie has been using the nest, built by other eagles, since 2017. Last year, she laid eggs in January and spent weeks incubating them. The eagle pair then began leaving them unattended. In March, ravens breached the eggs, revealing no obvious development, according to Friends of Big Bear Valley.

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