How Rachel Carson helped bald eagles come back

Discover how a gentle naturalist cared for a magnificent bird.



Eagles by the lake

Long ago, by a big blue lake, two bald eagles built a nest. A giant nest! Made of sticks, way up in a tall pine tree. The eagles fished in the lake. They laid their eggs in the nest. And every spring, fluffy babies hatched.

> **TALK ABOUT IT**
> Can you find the eagle's eggs in the nest?





The spray goes far

Then people started using a strong bug spray. Planes sprayed it over fields and marshes, to stop the bugs. But the rain came. Splish, splash! The rain washed the spray off the land and into the lake.

TALK ABOUT IT

True or false: the spray stayed only on the bugs.

From lake to fish to eagle

In the lake, little fish swam in the water with the spray. A bit of it went inside them. The eagles caught the fish and ate them. So the spray went inside the eagles too. Field, then lake, then fish, then eagle.

> **TALK ABOUT IT**
> The spray is inside the mother eagle now. What do you think will happen to her eggs?





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Eggs that cracked

The spray made the eggshells thin. Too thin! When the mother eagle sat on them to keep them warm, crack. The eggs broke. No baby eagles hatched. Year after year, there were fewer and fewer eagles.

> **TALK ABOUT IT**
> Can you find the cracked eggs?

Rachel Carson writes

A scientist named Rachel Carson was worried. Bird watchers told her about eagle nests with no babies. She studied and studied. Then she wrote a book called Silent Spring. It told everyone: this spray hurts more than bugs!





People stop the spray

People listened. In 1972, the United States stopped using that spray. The lake got clean again. The fish got clean again. And one spring, the eggs didn't crack. Out came a fluffy baby eagle. A baby eagle is called an eaglet!

Eagles today

Little by little, the eagles came back. Today, there are many bald eagles again. Maybe you can spot one by a lake! Rachel Carson helped. People helped. When we take care of the land and water, we take care of the eagles too.

> **TALK ABOUT IT**
> Why did the eagles come back?



Check your wonder

1 **How did the spray get into the lake?**

- **A.** The rain washed it in
- **B.** The eagles carried it

2 **What did the spray do to the eagle eggs?**

- **A.** Made the shells thin so they cracked
- **B.** Made the eggs bigger

3 **What did Rachel Carson do to help?**

- **A.** She wrote a book to warn people
- **B.** She built eagle nests

ANSWERS 1-A 2-A 3-A

1. Yes! Rain washed it from the fields into the lake. 2. Right. Thin shells cracked, so no babies hatched. 3. Yes! Her book Silent Spring helped people stop the spray.

THE END

Discover how a gentle naturalist cared for a magnificent bird.

Put your child in this story

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