

## **NDG&F January 23rd Newsletter**

### **Mid-Winter Bald Eagle Survey Sets Record**

The annual mid-winter bald eagle survey conducted Jan. 13 along the Missouri River stretching from Bismarck to the Garrison Dam showed a record number of bald eagles, according to Patrick T. Isakson, conservation biologist for the North Dakota Game and Fish Department.

A total of 108 bald eagles were counted, breaking the previous best of 85 in 2008. "The mild winter has kept the river open and a lot of waterfowl in the area," Isakson said, while mentioning the availability of prey is also indicative of the number of eagles wintering in the state.

The aerial survey is part of a nationwide effort to try to get an estimate of the number of bald eagles wintering in the lower 48 states. All survey routes across the country are run at the same time to avoid counting the birds twice.

Eagles are relatively easy to spot as they prefer to perch in large cottonwood trees along the river. Adult bald eagles have a white head and tail and a dark brown body, while immature bald eagles are brown with irregular white plumage. Golden eagles, which are also counted, are dark in color and have a gold cap on their head.

### **BOW Program Offers Darkhouse Spearfishing, Ice Fishing Class**

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department's Becoming an Outdoors-Woman program has scheduled a one-day darkhouse spearfishing and ice fishing class Feb. 11 at Upper Souris National Wildlife Refuge in Ward County.

Women interested in attending the class are encouraged to [register online](#) at the Game and Fish website, [gf.nd.gov](http://gf.nd.gov). A [registration form](#) is also available for download, or by contacting Nancy Boldt, North Dakota Game and Fish Department, 100 N. Bismarck Expressway, Bismarck, ND 58501-5095; (701) 328-6312; or email [ndgf@nd.gov](mailto:ndgf@nd.gov).

The cost is \$50, and preregistration with payment is required. Equipment and snacks will be provided.

### **North Dakota Earth Day Patch Contest**

The state Game and Fish Department's annual Earth Day awareness campaign is accepting entries for design of a 2012 Earth Day patch. North Dakota students ages 6-18 are eligible to participate. The deadline to submit entries is March 15.

The Game and Fish Department will announce a winner in three age categories – 6-9, 10-13, and 14-18. Each winner will receive a pair of Nikon 8x40 binoculars. The final patch design will be chosen from the three winners.

The winning design will be used on a patch given to members of Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, 4-H clubs and any school participating in Earth Day cleanup projects on state-owned or managed lands in North Dakota in April and May.

The patch should incorporate some aspect of Earth Day – celebrated April 22 – or keeping North Dakota clean. It must be round and three inches in diameter. There is a limit of five colors on the patch, and

lettering must be printed. Name, address, age and phone number of the contestant must be clearly printed on the entry form. Only one entry per person is allowed.

Earth Day entry and reporting forms are available on the Game and Fish Department's website, [gf.nd.gov](http://gf.nd.gov). For more information, contact Pat Lothspeich by email at [ndgf@nd.gov](mailto:ndgf@nd.gov), or call (701) 328-6300.

 [Get Earth Day Patch contest rules](#)

 [Get Earth Day Recognition Patch Entry Form](#)

 [Get Earth Day 2012 Report Form](#)