



**NEWS RELEASE**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **HERITAGE PARK EAGLETS MAKING PROGRESS**

### **Following Fourth of July Stresses, Venturing Onto Branches Near Nest**

KIRKLAND — After a day of cannon fire from parading Seafair Pirates, citizen pyrotechnics, and a late night bagpipe serenade at the base of their home tree, two young Bald Eagles at Heritage Park in Kirkland were seen flapping their wings and hopping around their nest on the morning of July 5.

“They seemed fine this morning,” said Nancy Roberts, an Eastside Audubon member who worked with Celebrate Kirkland! to have the fireworks barge moved farther south of the park for the sake of the eaglets.

When unofficial fireworks went off north of the park before the planned Kirkland show, one of the adult eagles called out from a perch near the nest, Nancy reported. “It was almost like a little reassuring chirp,” she said. “The eaglets just lay down flat in the nest and we didn’t see them again.”

Earlier in the day, one of the eaglets was clearly startled by the first boom from the Pirates’ cannon nearby. The young bird was perched at the edge of the nest at the time and remained alert afterward. The other crouched low in the nest.

### **Community Watching for First Flight**

Hundreds of people celebrating Independence Day in Kirkland stopped by Heritage Park during the day and evening to look through Eastside Audubon members’ spotting scopes at the nestlings, which are yet to take their first flight.

Many were surprised at how large the “baby” eagles are. The birds reach adult size while still on the nest so their wings will give them the lift they need when they’re ready to fly. Bald Eagles get their fully white head and tail feathers at age four or five years, and mature wingspan may be seven to eight feet.

Bald Eagles fledge — take their first flight — at 12 to 14 weeks of age. This year’s Heritage Park eagles probably hatched three to six days apart and may be 10 to 11 weeks old now. But predicting first flight is uncertain. A single eaglet was hatched by the same parents in Heritage Park on about the same schedule in 2012, and it didn’t fledge until the first week of August.

### **Visible Progress**

In the few days since July 4, both of this year’s eaglets have been hopping onto branches noticeably farther from the nest than the more advanced of the two had been attempting on the holiday. Both are flapping and stretching their wings, working on muscle development and coordination in preparation for flight on a day soon when there’s a good breeze.

- more -

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They were both seen on the weekend tearing up their own food after it was delivered by a parent, a developmental milestone reached on average at 6 weeks, but one that the less advanced of the two had apparently not reached on the Fourth.

Eastside Audubon invites members of the community to post their photos of the eagles and their nest on the group's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/eastsideaudubon](http://www.facebook.com/eastsideaudubon), where updates on the eagles' progress also will be posted as available.

### **About Eastside Audubon**

Eastside Audubon is the National Audubon Society chapter active in Bellevue, Bothell, Carnation, Duvall, Issaquah, Kirkland, North Bend, Redmond, Sammamish, Snoqualmie, Woodinville, and unincorporated East King County.

Eastside Audubon works to protect, preserve, and enhance natural ecosystems and our communities for the benefit of birds, other wildlife, and people. We welcome new and experienced birders on our birding walks and field trips and in our birding classes. Visit [www.eastsideaudubon.org](http://www.eastsideaudubon.org).

### **Web Link for Event Information**

[www.eastsideaudubon.org](http://www.eastsideaudubon.org)

### **Contact Info for Publication (if required)**

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