

Bald eagles spotted in Walters

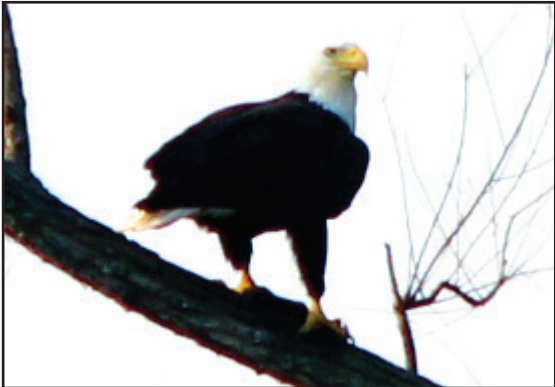
Special to Pelahatchie news

Two bald eagles have excitedly been spotted in the Walters community. It is a rare sight for many. The Walters community is south of Pelahatchie, driving on Hwy. 43 east, heading towards Puckett. In this area, the bald eagles have been spotted perched at the top of trees, and it is thought that they may be nesting.

According to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the Nation's bird, the bald eagle, was removed from the extinction list in 2007. It was then that they estimated there were "at least 9,789 nesting pairs of bald eagles in the contiguous United States."

Although no longer extinct, the bald eagle is protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. The act states that it "provides criminal penalties for persons who take, possess, sell, purchase, barter, offer to sell, purchase or barter, transport, export or import, at any time or any manner, any bald eagle, alive or dead, or any part (including

feathers), nest or egg thereof." And, "a violation of the Act can result in a fine of \$100,000 (\$200,000 for organizations), imprisonment for one year, or both, for a first offense."



Photos by Pelahatchie News

Two bald eagles have been spotted in the Walters area. Pictured here is one of the two.

The history of the Christmas tree



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By Doug Carter, Rankin County Extension Agent

Around Christmas, usually when we are putting up a Christmas tree, I often wonder, where did the Christmas tree tradition begin? A Christmas tree is a decorated tree, usually an evergreen conifer, such as a fir, spruce or pine, or an artificial tree of similar appearance, associated with the celebration of Christmas.

The winter solstice is when the sun travels the shortest path through the sky, and therefore that day has the least daylight and the longest night. In ancient cultures, the winter solstice was heralded as the beginning of brighter days ahead, and an indication that the Sun God was gaining strength. In ancient Egypt, a similar mindset was adapted. This Sun God typically grew weak as conditions became colder and darker. This solstice was seen as a turning point in seasons, so Egyptians decorated their homes with palm leaves and branches.

Evergreen trees became part of Christian

rites in Germany and, in the Middle Ages, "paradise trees" began to appear. These trees were traditionally decorated with roses made of colored paper, apples, wafers and tinsel. Martin Luther reportedly first hung lighted candles on a tree in the 16th century, and paradise trees evolved into Christmas trees.

According to Wikipedia, a Hessian soldier put up a Christmas tree while imprisoned in 1777 in Windsor Locks, Connecticut. The First Christmas Tree in America is also claimed by Easton, Pennsylvania, where German settlers erected a tree in 1816.

August Imgard, a German immigrant living in Woodster, Ohio, is said to be the first to popularize the practice of decorating a tree with candy canes. It

is said Mr. Imgard cut a spruce tree for a Christmas tree and had a star constructed and decorated the tree with the star, paper ornaments, gilded nuts and candy canes.

Sources: *Christmas Tree*, Wikipedia Encyclopedia; *The History of the Christmas Tree Goes Back Farther Than You Might Realize*, by Amy Mitchell, Countyliving.com, 2021; and *How Did the Tradition of the Christmas Trees Start*, Britannica.com.



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