



ILLINOIS. MILE AFTER MAGNIFICENT MILE.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 15, 2005

CONTACT: Anne Dattulo, 312-240-2829
anne.dattulo@edelman.com

DISCOVER THE MAJESTY OF BALD EAGLES IN ILLINOIS THIS WINTER

Illinois offers an abundance of opportunities to view bald eagles

CHICAGO – Flying high above the snow-covered hills and icy lakes and rivers this month, more than 3,000 bald eagles will migrate south from the northern states and Canada to make Illinois their temporary home. Throughout January and February, Illinois is home to the largest population of wintering bald eagles outside of Alaska, giving visitors the chance to view these magnificent creatures in their natural habitat and to celebrate their migration with special events, tours and festivals.

NORTHERN

Experience the flight of the bald eagle at Starved Rock State Park in Utica with the **Starved Rock Bald Eagle Tour**, offered Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays throughout January and February. Visitors will ride a Starved Rock trolley to the Illinois Waterway Visitor Center for eagle viewing and an educational presentation. Seating is limited and reservations are required.

For more information and tickets, contact the Starved Rock Lodge and Conference Center (800-868-7625 ext. 386).

The birding continues at Starved Rock during **Eagle Watch Weekend**, Jan. 28 and 29 at Starved Rock Lodge. Hosted by the Illinois Audubon Society, the event offers a raptor awareness presentation featuring a live bald eagle, a birds of prey show, and an opportunity to view eagles in their natural habitat.

For more information, contact Starved Rock Lodge and Conference Center (815-667-4054).

Visit Henry, known locally as “bald eagle central,” for **Henry Bald Eagle Day**, Feb. 18. The day begins at dawn with breakfast, followed by a self-guided tour of prime eagle-watching spots in the area and a stop at a bald eagle’s nest. Other activities include a bald eagle exhibit from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and Wildlife Prairie State Park’s birds of prey presentation, which offers an intimate look at eagles, owls and hawks.

For more information, contact the City of Henry (www.henryil.com, 309-361-7487).

WESTERN

The **Clinton Bald Eagle Watch**, Jan. 7, offers a host of activities for the whole family. Visitors can view eagles along the Mississippi River at Lock & Dam 13 and then head over to Clinton Community College for live bird programs, exhibits and storytelling. A free bus service will be available to shuttle visitors between the college and the viewing area.

For more information, contact U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (815-259-3628).

-more-

Visitors to the 19th annual **Bald Eagle Days** in Rock Island, Jan. 7 and 8, will enjoy events that include live eagle and birds of prey programs by the World Bird Sanctuary, a wildlife art show and environmental fair, Native American storytelling, music and dancing.

For more information, contact the Mississippi River Visitor Center (309-794-5338).

Tour Meredosia, one of Central Illinois' premier eagle-watching destinations, during **Eagles on the Illinois River 2006**, Jan. 14 and 15. Visitors will meet at the River Museum for an introductory presentation on the bald eagle before embarking on a day-long sightseeing tour. The tour will stop at three locations where bald eagles are regularly seen, enabling visitors to get an up-close look at this rare creature. Reservations are required.

For more information, contact the Meredosia Historical Society and River Museum (217-584-1356).

View eagles from the Clock Tower, one of the Quad Cities' oldest and most recognized historic structures, on an **Eagle Watch and Clock Tower Tour**, Saturdays and Sundays, Jan. 14-Feb. 19. The 75-minute tour will begin with a brief presentation about the American bald eagle followed by an overview of the Clock Tower and concluding with an opportunity to view eagles.

For more information, contact the Mississippi River Visitor Center (www.mvr.usace.army.mil/missriver/, 309-794-5338).

Havana Eagle Days Festival, Feb. 4, offers a series of activities throughout the town of Havana. Visitors can start out at the Eagle Festival Information Center and pick up a festival passport detailing events including eagle watching at River Front Park, an eagle art exhibit, a family story hour, arts and crafts, and nature hikes.

For more information, contact the Nature Conservancy (309-547-2730).

SOUTHERN

The **Union County Refuge** in Union is one of Southern Illinois' most popular birding destinations. Throughout January and February, visitors can drive through the refuge and spot both wintering eagles and Canada geese in their natural habitat. Park rangers will be available weekdays to answer questions about the eagles and other wildlife spotted in the refuge.

For more information, contact the Union County Refuge (618-833-5175).

SOUTHWEST

Experience a 75-minute tour through Alton offering birding enthusiasts the opportunity to view American bald eagles during a **Sample of Eagle Country**, Jan. 7, 14, 21, 22 and 28, and Feb. 5 and 12. Tours will leave from the Alton Visitor's Center and make stops at the Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area and the new Berm Highway Nest Site.

For more information, call Bluff City Tours (618-466-8693).

Enjoy **Pere Marquette Bald Eagle Days** at Pere Marquette State Park in Grafton, January 11, 17, 18, 21-23 and 28-31 and February 1, 4-8 and 18-20. Visitors will learn to distinguish between immature and mature bald eagles, what eagles eat, why they spend winter months in the area, and much more. All programs will begin at the park's visitor center. Following the presentation, guests can take a drive to observe the wintering bald eagles. Reservations are required.

For more information, call Pere Marquette State Park (618-786-3323).

The Illinois Bureau of Tourism offers free travel resources with additional information on 3-Day Getaways, festivals, events and attractions. All are available by calling 1-800-2-CONNECT to speak with an Illinois travel counselor or by visiting the bureau's Web site at www.enjoyillinois.com.

#

EDITOR'S NOTE: Media materials and downloadable images are available on the Illinois Bureau of Tourism's online media center at www.illinoismediacenter.com. Additional photography, available electronically or in slide format, may be obtained by contacting Anne Dattulo at anne.dattulo@edelman.com, 312-240-2829 or Julie Connolly at julie.connolly@edelman.com, 312-233-1246.

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism manages industry efforts that result in sustainable and significant economic and quality-of-life benefits for Illinois residents.