



TRAVEL THE LEWIS & CLARK TRAIL

🦅 January is National Bald Eagle Watch Month

A Winter Wildlife Wonder

January is one of the **best months of the year to spot bald eagles** as they gather near open water to fish, roost, and soar. Slow down, bring your binoculars or camera, and enjoy a winter wildlife escape at America's **National Wildlife Refuges**—some of the finest wildlife-viewing destinations on Earth.

☞ **Learn more:** <https://www.fws.gov/program/national-wildlife-refuge-system>

📖 Did You Know?

🦅 Lewis & Clark noted that **Native American tribes prized bald eagle feathers** for ceremonial use

- Wingspan: **6–7½ feet**
- Eyesight: **5–6x stronger than humans**
- Can lift **3–5 pounds**
- Primarily fish-eaters, always near water
- **Often mate for life**

🌟 One of North America's most powerful and symbolic birds

★ Highlighted Eagle Hotspots & Where to Stay

🦅 **Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge** ⬇ Brussels, Illinois

Some of the **largest wintering concentrations of bald eagles in the Lower 48** gather along the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers.

- ✓ 500+ eagles counted near the river confluence
- ✓ Peak season: October through early spring
- ✓ Several nesting pairs remain year-round

🔗 Refuge info: <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/two-rivers>

Where to Stay | Riverfront Getaway

★ Great River Views • Relaxing Weekend Escape

Perfect for unwinding after a day of eagle watching along the river.

🔗 <https://expedia.com/affiliates/grafon-hotels-perfect-weekend-getaway-condo-with-great-river-views-pool.AecF23y>

Loess Bluffs National Wildlife Refuge ⚡ Forest City, Missouri

Winter brings massive flocks of waterfowl—and bald eagles follow.

- ✓ 300+ bald eagles during peak migration
- ✓ Record 662 eagles counted in 2020
- ✓ Diverse wetland and grassland habitats

🔗 Refuge info: <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/loess-bluffs>

Where to Stay | Retreat on the Water

★ Only 11 minutes from the refuge

A peaceful lakeside stay ideal for wildlife lovers and photographers.

🔗 <https://expedia.com/affiliates/craig-hotels-hunters-retreat-or-vacationers-fun-located-on-water-at-big-lake-mo.rjvAaTJ>

Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuge ⚡ Fort Calhoun, Nebraska

- ✓ Eagle numbers peak in December and late February
- ✓ Look along the Missouri River and the chute itself

🔗 Refuge info: <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/boyer-chute>

Where to Stay | Close to the Refuge

★ Comfortable home base near prime viewing areas

🔗 <https://expedia.com/affiliates/fort-calhoun-hotels-fort-calhoun-home-w-screened-porch-playground.dW6zPBD>

Karl E. Mundt National Wildlife Refuge **Lake Andes, South Dakota**

One of the **most critical bald eagle winter roosts in the country**.

- ✓ Supports 100–300 wintering eagles
- ✓ Refuge closed to protect birds
- ✓ Viewing available from Eagle Drive and Fort Randall Dam

✉ Refuge info: <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/karl-e-mundt>

Where to Stay | Lake Andes

 *Driftwood Lodge – Cozy and Convenient*

✉ <https://expedia.com/affiliates/lake-andes-hotels-driftwood-lodge-lake-life-paradise.pgnT9eC>

Bonus Eagle Watch: Columbia River Gorge **The Dalles Dam**

Watch migrating bald eagles from Alaska and Canada gather along the Columbia River.

Annual Eagle Watch Event

 Saturday, January 17, 2026 | 9 AM – 3 PM

- ✓ Bald eagle viewing
- ✓ Binoculars and expert spotting scopes
- ✓ Hosted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers & Columbia Gorge Discovery Center

✉ Event info: <https://www.gorgediscovery.org/event-list>

Where to Stay | The Dalles, Oregon

 *Steps from the Columbia River Gorge*

- 1-minute walk to Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area
- 17-minute walk to The Dalles Dam Visitor Center
- 2-minute drive to The Dalles Dam & Locks

✉ <https://expedia.com/affiliates/the-dalles-hotels-shilo-inn-suites-hotel-the-dalles.IJMN8WP>

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