



WORLD BOOK

Golden eagle is a large bird of prey known for the golden sheen of the feathers on the back of its head and neck. Adult golden eagles measure 30 to 40 inches (75 to 100 centimeters) long. The average wingspread of an adult golden eagle is about 6 1/2 feet (2 meters). Adults may weigh between 5 1/2 and 14 pounds (2.5 and 6.4 kilograms). Females are larger than males. Golden eagles are only found in the Northern Hemisphere throughout the world. They feed primarily on medium-sized mammals, such as ground squirrels, hares, and rabbits. They will eat just about anything they can catch or find, however, including other birds, amphibians, reptiles, and *carrion* (dead animals). Golden eagles have also been known to attack much larger prey, such as young deer or mountain goats. A female golden eagle may lay one to three eggs per clutch. Golden eagles lay eggs December through June, with southern birds laying earlier than northern ones. Chicks hatch after about 40 to 45 days. The young have white feathers on the tail and wings. Adult golden eagles are usually fully covered in brown feathers. Golden eagles face many threats to their survival. Some threats include illegal trapping and shooting, poisoning from eating spoiled carrion, and habitat loss. Other threats to golden eagles include electrocution by power lines and collisions with active turbines at wind energy farms. Golden eagles are legally protected in most countries where they naturally occur.

Scientific classification.

The scientific name of the golden eagle is *Aquila chrysaetos*.