

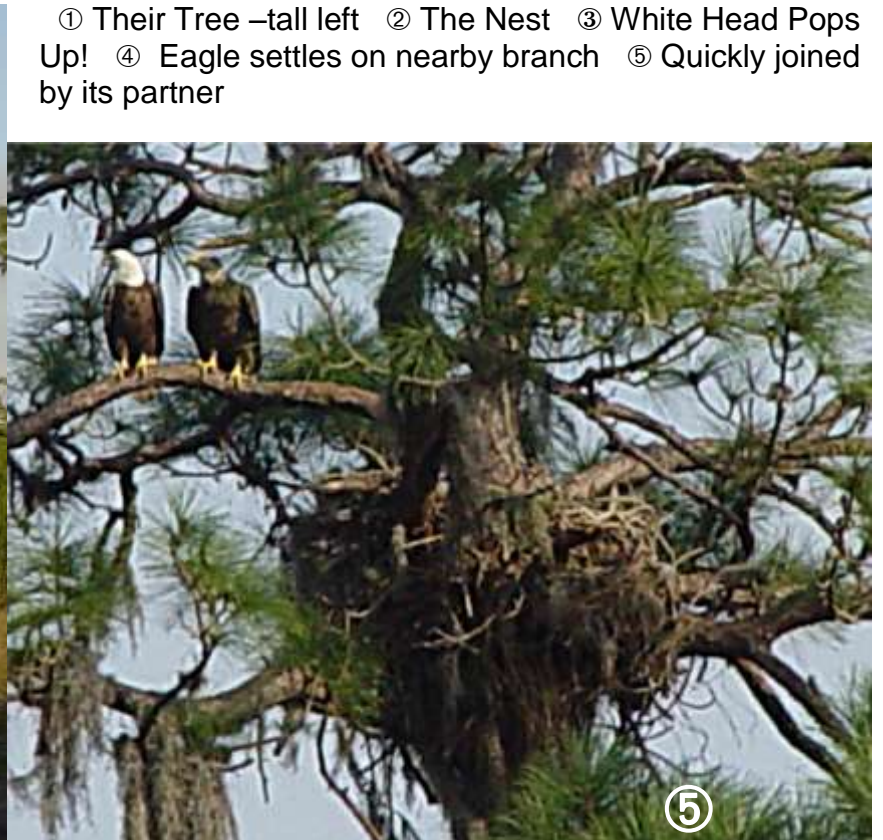
The Landings Eagle

Eagles Return
Commemorative
Issue

March 2008



Eagles' Nest Area panorama from approximately its southern most point.



① Their Tree –tall left ② The Nest ③ White Head Pops Up! ④ Eagle settles on nearby branch ⑤ Quickly joined by its partner

Eagles Nest Area History

Following the death of Honore Palmer, owner of what was then called *Immokalee* after an area Indian tribe, the property now called *The Landings* fell to an unwieldy trust of 37 heirs.

In the late seventies real estate brokers heard the Trust was ready to move on the Palmer homestead property. Developers C & M Associates, "M" for Robert Morris and "C" for his longtime development partner Jaime Carrion, decided they wanted the property. Knowing there would be great competition for this prime land, near the water, near the city itself and a land of natural beauty, they made a risky decision. They would offer a very strong contract of approximately four million dollars cash, payable in thirty days with no contingencies to let them off the hook.

They won the property and *Immokalee* (a name they were originally intending to keep) was on its way to becoming one of the most desirable gated communities in Sarasota, *The Landings*.

Bob Morris is a developer known for maintaining as much of the natural surroundings as possible. In laying out his vision for the property he came upon two unexpected obstacles. The prehistoric middens - essentially junk piles of early Indian residents and wanderers - and an eagle's nest. Morris says he "looked on these as assets - something to set his development apart from others."

At the time there were few regulations regarding disturbing such sites. But Morris, wanting to maintain the environment and ensure no objections to the development, he sought out professional opinions on both the middens and the eagle's nest.

The midden solution was relatively easy, build structures over them on short stilts, retaining their contours, rather than leveling or digging broad foundations.

The eagles' nest was trickier. Consulting the Audubon Society he learned 300 feet in all directions were adequate to preserve their environment. He learned eagle, as fishers, they need a direct route to water.

The result, of course, is the 600 foot diameter, 7.4 acre *Eagle's Area*, as it is referred to in the original covenants. But it also influenced the placement, the lush foliage and roof color of the *Treehouses*, by providing a fairly natural setting for the eagles path from the nest to the bay.

Bob Morris reaffirmed to *The Eagle* just recently there really were eagles in that nest at the time.

As *The Landings Eagle* reported in 2003, after an extensive investigation of documents and county records, the 600 foot circle never attained any "preserve" status. With eagles gone and the nest unused for five years regulation regarding the status of the site fell to the covenants and the article 29 entitled "Eagles' Nest Area."

When Morris sold off portions of the property to other development he did retain property rights to the Eagles' Nest Area ultimately turning it over to the LMA via a quitclaim deed dated March 13, 1987.

The area had seen neither eagles nor nest for at least 21 years. In recent years cleaning it up, ridding it of exotics and undesirable growth and undertaking long needed drainage maintenance have been planned. Had the area been a "preserve" such actions would have been considerably more complicated.

Also in recent years other suggestions for use of the area have raised disagreements on the interpretation of the original covenants, how the quitclaim deed may or may not affect interpreta-



Above © Chris Zalewski 2002—just off Landings Blvd.
Below first known photo 2008 Eagle



tion of the paragraph, and the rights of all landings residents vs. the rights of those adjacent to the Eagles Nest Area.

Those issues are now secondary to the reemergence as a true Eagles' Nest Area. Those guidelines and regulations necessary to protect the eagle habitat, while letting it be enjoyed by Landings residents now take center stage.

Eagles 2008

There have been a number of eagle “spottings” in the Landings over the years including a spectacular photograph of one in a tree between Landings Lane and Peregrine Point Way several years ago. It was taken by then Landin Chris Zalewski – © used here with permission.

The first reported spotting of our new visitors was on Christmas day 2007 was by David Bewley of Kestral Parkway S. The first known photo, as published in last months *Eagle*, was shot News Years Eve, 2007. The nest was not spotted at that time, but activity suggested one soon would be visible.

Ironically the eagles chose to come, and build a home in the middle of drainage maintenance, including plowing, digging and heavy equipment moving about the area. All this after at least 21 years of a fallow Eagles’ Nest Area!

Just as the work was finishing, with all but hydro-seeding completed, Bewley called the County who contacted necessary



This communication to Mr. Bewley from Janell Brush of Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation announced the official designation of the new eagles nest: *An FWC biologist conducted surveys of bald eagle nests in Sarasota County on Thursday, January 31st. The new nest that was reported by you a few weeks ago was observed by the FWC biologist, John White. The nest is in a live pine tree and was assigned nest ID # SA051. An adult eagle was seen sitting on the nest at the time of the survey. The nest coordinates are N 27 16.74 W 82 32.13.*

The Landings Eagle spoke with Ms. Brush who translated those co-ordinates into an alternate format matching one used by Google in their **World** program. (27 1644.4 N 82 3207.8 W) You must download and use **World** to take advantage of the co-ordinates search. She also indicated the co-ordinate are measured from the air. Therefore total accuracy is not guaranteed– but is “official.” The above diagrams are based on existing information and mapping, not professional surveys.

state and federal officials. All work was halted. However, a permit was granted to complete the hydro-seeding. It was completed February 14.

There is conflicting information regarding what may or may not occur outside and within in the 660 foot perimeter but here are the general guidelines as outlined by Chance Steed, Environmental Specialist for Sarasota County: Restrictions which apply during the Breeding season are as follows: Non-motorized recreation and human entry (including hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, canoeing). If you walk, bike, canoe, camp, fish, or hunt near an eagle nest during the breeding season and your activity will be visible or can be heard from the nest stay at least 330 feet (100 meters) from the nest. None of these activities near a nest would disturb the eagles if the activity cannot be seen or heard from the nest.

There are no restrictions on activity in the area from May until the Eagles return in the late fall or early winter. However, disturbing the nest itself is always prohibited.

A Florida Wildlife publication adds this information:

Eagles are unlikely to be disturbed by routine use of roads, homes, and other facilities where such use pre-dates the eagles’ successful nesting activity in a given area.

Therefore, in most cases ongoing existing uses may proceed with the same intensity with little risk of disturbing bald eagles. However, some intermittent, occasional, or irregular uses that pre-date eagle nesting in an area may disturb bald eagles. For example: a pair of eagles may begin nesting in an area and subsequently be disturbed by activities associated with an annual outdoor flea market, even though the flea market has been held annually at the same location. In such situations, human activity should be adjusted or relocated to minimize potential impacts on the nesting pair.

Legend

— The Original 600 ft. diameter Eagles Nest Area

- - - Original area extended to the new guideline of 660 ft.

⋯ New parameter shifted to the “official” co-ordinates of the new Eagles Nest.



Our pair on a Cloisters chimney—by Nate Richards, Inset—by Jack Kahgan

Eagle Facts

Once bald eagles mate, they form long-term bonds that can persist for many years.

Nests are sometimes as high as 100 feet above ground

They return year after year to their traditional nests to begin to repair and enlarge the structures and begin the annual mating process.

Florida is home to 1000-1200 mated pairs of Eagles who nest here every year.

Biologists have recorded bald eagle nests as large as nine feet across with weights up to two tons, but most are four or five feet wide.

In Florida, eagles mate in the winter, laying their eggs between late November and early February. Hatching takes 35 days.

Most pairs produce two eggs per season. The offspring leaving the nest 10 to 12 weeks after hatching. The statewide average for chicks surviving to that point is 1.5 per nest.

Southern bald eagles are considerably smaller than their northern counterparts. Juvenile eagles are chocolate brown, but show varying degrees of mottled white on their tails, bellies and wing linings. It is not until their fourth year they acquire the white head and tail feathers identifying them as adults.

Female eagles are larger than males. Wingspans range from 6 1/2 to 8 feet. Eagles are usually seen perched in the open or soaring on very long, broad wings.

Scientists have observed eagles "harassing" ospreys to force them to drop freshly caught fish that the eagles then snatch in mid-air.

The birds also eat small animals, reptiles and other prey, and carrion.

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission classifies them as a threatened species, which means bald eagles require rigorous protection but are not in immediate danger of extinction, here.

Source: Florida, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission © 1999-2006



This is a "screen grab" of a live video feed provided by Audubon of Florida from Tesoro, Florida. Such shots of our nest are not likely to be possible. Watch it live at:

<http://fl.audubon.org/friendsoftheeagle/cam.html>

Editorial Opinion

The Eagle hopes the LMA will seek some means by which ALL LANDINGS can have the opportunity to share the experience of seeing these regal visitors. It is exhilarating! Your editor lived in Alaska for three years and saw hundreds of eagles. But the chill was still there seeing and photographing our local residents all from outside the 660 foot perimeter..

IPS

Judy Greene - The Landings Specialist

We Welcome Our Eagles Home
Just one more reason to love The Landings

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