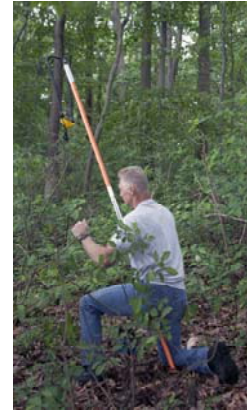
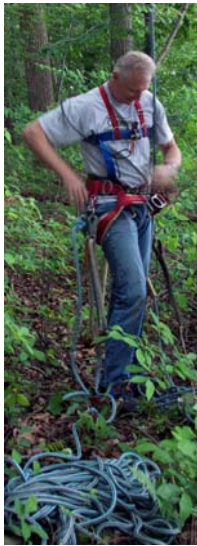


Mick Valent, NJDEP F&W ENSP Senior Zoologist, prepares to climb to the eagle nest approximately 80 feet up in the tree. He used a forester's slingshot to get a thin rope over a large branch high up in the tree. A sturdier rope, tied to the thin rope, was pulled over the branch for him to climb.



Once the ropes were set, Valent put on his harness and started up the tree.



Valent had to reach into the nest to capture the young eagles, cover their head with a hood, tape their talons and lower them to the awaiting biologists and veterinarian who were on the ground below the nest.

Valent would stay in the tree, basically hanging by the nest, while the birds were worked on. He would then return the first bird to the nest and send the second one down. He stayed in the tree until both of the eagles were safely back in their nest.



Kathleen Clark, NJDEP F&W ENSP principle biologist, and Erica Miller, wildlife veterinarian, prepared an area to work in while the climbers retrieved the first bird. They found the flattest clearing they could that was easily accessible from the nest and laid out a blanket. They set out all of the items that would be used and reviewed everything they would be doing so things would go smoothly and the birds would be returned to their nest as quickly as possible.



The transmitters are attached to the birds with a teflon ribbon harness. The young eagles are the same size as an adult so the harness can be fitted to the birds without it becoming too tight as they mature.

Valent had to use a pole to reach the eagles since his arms wouldn't reach across the nest. He hooked the pole around the bird's leg and pulled lightly causing the bird to walk to him. He covered the bird's eyes with a leather hood which helps to calm the bird by eliminating visual stimuli to reduce stress during the banding process. He also wrapped pre wrap bandage around the birds talons so that it wouldn't hurt itself or anyone handling it. Then he carefully placed the bird in a bag and lowered it to the ground.



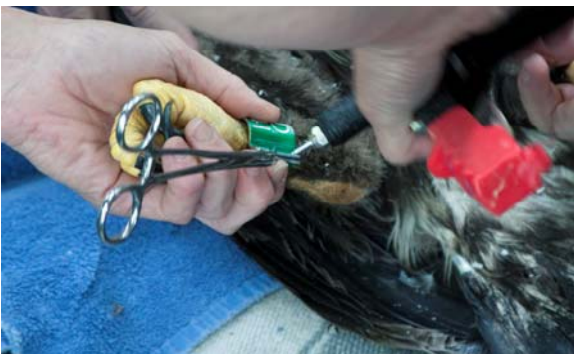
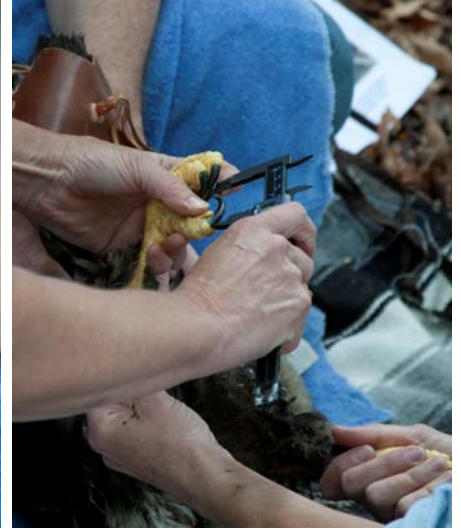
The bag was weighed with the bird in it. It was weighed again without the bird so that its weight could be subtracted from that of the bird. The wildlife biologist carefully took the bird out of the bag and the wildlife veterinarian made sure its talons were secure.



The eagle was placed securely in a volunteers lap so that the team could begin the process of collecting data, banding and finally fitting the bird with a satellite transmitter.



A series of measurements were collected from each of the birds; wing length, talon size, bill depth and length and weight were collected. Because eagles are sexually dimorphic, (male and females are different sizes), the data indicated that that one was a female and one was a male. Blood samples were collected to analyze for heavy metals and a variety of pesticides including DDT.



After all of the measurements are taken, the bands are recorded and secured to the eagle's feet. The green NJ State eagle band is on the left leg on the female and the silver federal bird band on the right leg. They are reversed on the male so that the birds can be identified from a distance. NJ is the only state in the eastern US to use green, which also makes these birds easier to identify from a distance.

The GPS transmitters were the last things to be fit to the eagles. The biologist and wildlife veterinarian carefully fit the transceiver and checked to be sure that the transmitter was secure and the placement would be safe for the bird.



Jeff Angle, Asset Manager, Exelon and Vicky Will, VP Environmental for Exelon Power are given the opportunity to hold the eagle before it is safely returned to its nest.

