

Bald Eagles Keep Dying Because of Lead Poisoning and No One's Talking About It

By [The Indigenous American](#)

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The national bird of the United States is the bald eagle, because it represents freedom and independence. Rather ironically, bald eagles are disappearing everywhere and nobody is even saying anything about it.

Bald eagles are close to facing extinction because their food sources are being poisoned by US manufacturers. Dangerous chemicals are released into bald eagle habitats and causes them to get sick and slowly die off. In the 1950's they started using pesticides such as DDT. This is infecting their natural habitats, and it isn't just the eagles that are affected. Fish are also taking a heavy hit from this toxic chemical. Thankfully, DDT is now illegal in the United States. However, eagles are still declining.

Lynn Tompkins, executive director of Blue Mountain Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center has been studying the decline of these majestic birds for over 30 years. One eagle was brought into their rehabilitation center that could barely even hold his head up. He was lethally poisoned with chemicals, but the rescuers cleansed them from his blood.



“His head was upside down when we got him,” Tompkins told The Dodo. “Lead affects the nerves, so that’s your brain, your use of muscles, all parts of the body. The birds often cannot stand ... They usually have difficulty breathing. They cannot even open their beaks.” However, this bird was poisoned with lead.

Lead poisoning is prevalent among bald eagles. Tompkins says that she tested 160 birds for traces of lead.

“We’re finding it in more and more species,” she said. “We started off with eagles but now we’re also testing hawks, owls and other birds.”

Tompkins found that 80 percent of eagles, 30 percent of hawks and 25 percent of great horned owls had lead in their blood.

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