



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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SECRETARY CLARK HONORS THE DU PONT COMPANY
FOR AIDING RECOVERY OF BALD EAGLES

The outlook for the endangered bald eagle improved further today when the Du Pont Company awarded a second \$50,000 grant for research and captive breeding of bald eagles at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. This is the second year in a row that Du Pont has contributed to the eagle project.

At a ceremony in Washington, D.C., Secretary William Clark presented Du Pont Executive Vice President Robert C. Forney with a "Service Citizen's Award" in recognition of the company's support of the eagle recovery program.

"Du Pont's support has enabled the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to significantly expand the number of young eagles produced in captivity and released into the wild," Secretary Clark said. "Their contributions have been substantive, meaningful, and an extraordinary example of conservation leadership from our major private corporations."

"Du Pont is proud to be part of this unique cooperative effort to restore the nation's bald eagle population," Dr. Forney said. "The government's eagle propagation program is an excellent example of the numerous public and private sector initiatives dedicated to preserving our nation's wildlife heritage for future generations."

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The first Du Pont grant of \$50,000 in 1983 enabled a doubling of bald eagle research and propagation activities at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, the site of the world's largest captive bald eagle breeding colony. Since last year, the colony has been increased from 8 to 15 pairs of birds with the potential to supply as many as 30 eaglets annually for release to the wild in States where eagle populations remain low.

Since the Patuxent breeding program began in the mid-1970's, more than 50 healthy eaglets have been returned to the wild to replenish eagle populations in nine States--New York, Virginia, Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maine, Georgia, Tennessee, and Ohio.

The bald eagle is listed as an endangered or threatened species throughout the Lower 48 States. Although the species has made a gradual comeback in recent years, bald eagles are slow to recolonize areas where their numbers were greatly reduced or eliminated. The captive breeding and release program focuses on speeding the eagle's recovery in such areas. This year, as a result of the Du Pont grant, Patuxent scientists anticipate releasing 18 to 20 bald eagle chicks.

The Du Pont grants are being used to modernize and refurbish bald eagle flight enclosures at Patuxent, to purchase additional equipment for incubation of eagle eggs, and to build additional brooders for hand-rearing of eaglets.

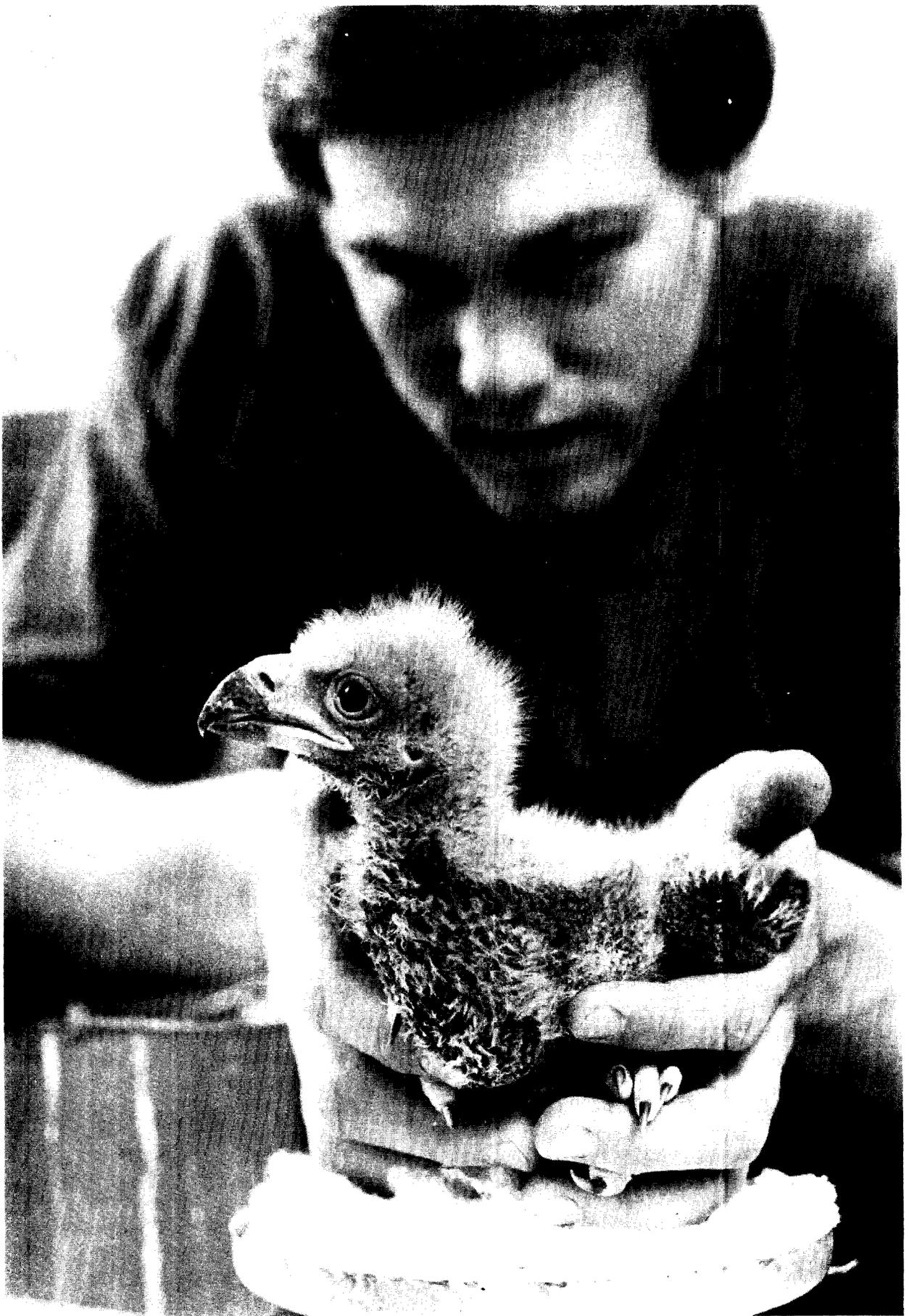
The 1984 grant by Du Pont and its subsidiaries, Conoco, Consolidation Coal, and Remington Arms, also will support new and expanded research activities. These include experiments to conduct physiological studies, increase fertility by artificial insemination, and improve hatching by using bantam hens instead of incubators.

In addition to financial assistance, Du Pont will continue a variety of educational efforts to increase public awareness of the initiatives underway to replenish bald eagle populations throughout the country. The company has printed 100,000 copies of a 19-page eagle booklet for distribution by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at national wildlife refuges.

About 5,000 to 6,000 bald eagles, including 1,450 to 1,500 breeding pairs, reside in the lower 48 States year-round.

-- FWS-19 --

Note to Editors: Good photo opportunity of live bald eagle at April 17 ceremony. Call 343-5634 for details. You may also obtain black and white prints of bald eagles by calling 343-5634.



"Crawford," just 14 days old and the first bald eagle chick born this year at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Patuxent Wildlife Research Center near Laurel, Maryland, is prepared for his daily weigh-in. Patuxent's bald eagle propagation program, the largest in the world, has received \$100,000 in support from the Du Pont Company over the last 2 years. This year the Center expects to return up to 20 eaglets to the wild in States where the species is endangered.