

LOCALNEWS



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

A bald eagle crouches in a nest along the Rainy River.

Spring on the river

Mike Thiele shot these photos recently of a great gray owl and nesting bald eagle along the Rainy River.

With its thawing ice and greening shoreline, rivers often attract the large birds as they search for food.

Minnesota is at the southern edge of the range of this huge, secretive north woods owl, according to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources website. Great gray owls use nests that were abandoned by hawks or ravens, or build their nests from sticks in evergreen trees. Each female lays two to five eggs. She sits on them while the male hunts. The eggs hatch after 28 to 36 days and the young fledge after about 28 days. Great gray owls may use the same nest year after year. Great gray owls hunt during the daytime, mainly for rodents.

In late March, the DNR reported bald eagles had begun migrating back to Minnesota and may be seen in large numbers across



A great gray owl is known by its size, yellow eyes and the white “mustache” below its beak.

parts of the state over the next few week. Only two states, Florida and Alaska, have greater nesting populations of bald eagles than Minnesota. Each spring, pairs perform spectacular aerial courtship displays. In the cartwheel display, for example, the pair flies to great altitude, locks talons, and tumbles back toward the ground, breaking away at the last moment to avoid collision. Other displays include chases, rolls, and dives from great heights

MOVING IN?



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A red squirrel peaks out of the heart-shaped opening of birdhouse as a local reader snaps its photo.

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