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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rehabbed eaglet released at Princess Place, local eaglet fledgling also flies

May 21, 2018 – The eagle population at Princess Place Preserve increased by one on Friday when a rehabilitated male fledgling was released at the county park.



“We did find the newly released male about a half mile from the release site (on Saturday), high in a pine near the Intracoastal,” said Joe Dziak, who along with his wife Judie have been monitoring the Princess Place Preserve bald eagles’ nest for two decades as part of the Audubon EagleWatch Program. “He looked just fine – just getting a lay of the land around the preserve.”

The newly released eaglet – estimated to be 11 or 12 weeks old – was found on March 31 in a rural area of Alachua County. He was first taken to the University of Florida School of Veterinary Medicine, and later transferred to the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey in Maitland.

“He was thin and full of parasites,” said Shawnlei Breeding, EagleWatch Program Coordinator. “We knew there was a fledgling here about the same age, which is ideal.”

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District 1

Greg Hansen
District 2

David Sullivan
District 3

Nate McLaughlin
District 4

Donald O’Brien, Jr.
District 5

In an effort to hold one more moment in the limelight, the locally born fledgling – believed to be female – took her first flight on Saturday.

“She was gone from the nest for several hours, and returned late in the afternoon,” Judie Dziak said.

The Dziaks hoped the release of the male would encourage “Number 30” to take flight. The 13-week old had been “branching” for days, a little late for the normal first flight at 10 to 12 weeks old.

“It was a great weekend at Princess Place for eagle lovers,” said Frank Barbuti, Manager for Flagler County Parks and Recreation.

The released male wears a leg band and has been DNA tested to positively determine gender. The Princess Place-born eaglet is believed to be female because of her large size – females are generally larger than males.

While eagles nest for life unless a partner dies, it is too early to tell if these two will grow together as a couple.

“The parents (of the female) may kind of adopt the other eaglet,” Joe Dziak said. “It will be about five years before they reach maturity.”

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