



1

00:00:00,149 --> 00:00:05,390

NASA's Kennedy Space Center is well known
for rockets taking flight to explore

2

00:00:05,390 --> 00:00:07,990

and utilize the space frontier.

3

00:00:07,990 --> 00:00:12,590

4, 3, 2, 1,

4

00:00:13,780 --> 00:00:19,060

Alongside the high-tech facilities at the
Florida spaceport, employees work in the Merritt

5

00:00:19,060 --> 00:00:24,970

Island National Wildlife Refuge, home to hundreds
of wildlife species.

6

00:00:24,970 --> 00:00:31,650

The diverse, 140,000-acre landscape provides
a habitat for many varieties of birds, including

7

00:00:31,650 --> 00:00:33,930

numerous active bald eagle nests.

8

00:00:33,930 --> 00:00:39,770

The Merritt Island Wildlife Refuge encompasses
fresh-water impoundments, salt-water estuaries

9

00:00:39,770 --> 00:00:46,770

and brackish marshes. The diverse landscape
provides a habitat for more than 320 species

10

00:00:46,800 --> 00:00:53,800

of birds, including Florida scrub jays, ospreys,
wood storks and several wading bird rookeries.

11

00:00:56,100 --> 00:01:00,700

Eagles have long been an important symbol

for American human spaceflights, depicted

12
00:01:00,710 --> 00:01:05,350
on more than a dozen mission patches. One of the most memorable was designed for the

13
00:01:05,350 --> 00:01:08,130
first moon landing mission, Apollo 11.

14
00:01:09,990 --> 00:01:15,460
About three times a year, NASA Aircraft Operations teams up with environmental ecologists from

15
00:01:15,460 --> 00:01:19,940
InoMedic Health Applications for "Eagle Flights" to keep tabs on

16
00:01:19,940 --> 00:01:21,960
the nests of these majestic birds.

17
00:01:23,330 --> 00:01:27,610
The aerial survey uses one of NASA's helicopters, taking off near the center's

18
00:01:27,610 --> 00:01:29,250
Shuttle Landing Facility.

19
00:01:31,500 --> 00:01:36,560
The flights cover areas near well-known spacecraft processing facilities and some of the more

20
00:01:36,560 --> 00:01:39,479
remote areas of the space center.

21
00:01:39,479 --> 00:01:43,880
The importance of these surveys was underscored following a severe thunderstorm that blew

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00:01:43,880 --> 00:01:50,880

through Kennedy in March of 2013 with winds exceeding 60 miles per hour.

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00:01:50,950 --> 00:01:56,270

Two days after the big storm, Aircraft Operations and environmental ecologists conducted an

24

00:01:56,270 --> 00:02:00,940

eagle flight and found that three nests had been blown to the ground from leafless pine

25

00:02:00,940 --> 00:02:04,270

trees, called "snags."

26

00:02:04,270 --> 00:02:10,019

One of the nests blown down by the high winds contained two baby eagles. Wildlife ecologist

27

00:02:10,019 --> 00:02:15,480

Becky Bolt was one of those who helped rescue the eaglets.

28

00:02:15,480 --> 00:02:19,400

After receiving medical attention, one of the eaglets was returned to the wild in a

29

00:02:19,400 --> 00:02:21,349

reconstructed nest.

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00:02:21,349 --> 00:02:28,099

Due to an eye problem unrelated to the storm, the other is now a star attraction at SeaWorld

31

00:02:28,099 --> 00:02:32,599

in San Antonio, Texas.

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00:02:32,599 --> 00:02:38,319

Ecologists at Kennedy have plenty of opportunities to track the activities of local bald eagles.

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00:02:38,319 --> 00:02:43,900

The sprawling space center averages about 14 to 15 eagle nests each year, with a pair

34

00:02:43,900 --> 00:02:48,010

of eagles usually returning to the same spot.

35

00:02:48,010 --> 00:02:52,430

A nest along Kennedy Parkway, south of the center's Vehicle Assembly Building has been

36

00:02:52,430 --> 00:02:54,490

there for more than 30 years.

37

00:02:56,290 --> 00:02:58,959

While NASA continues flying rockets into space

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38

00:02:58,959 --> 00:03:05,400

. . . the collaboration between the agency's Aircraft Operations and environmental specialists