

# THE WCR LEARNING COMMUNITY



PHOTO – NICK PROCAYLO / THE VANCOUVER

Eagles flock to the dump from December to March every year.

LEVEL 2

## Eagles flock to the dump

“They are all over the place. I don’t think you’re going to see any other place with this many,” says Albert Shames. Shames is the director of waste management for the City of Vancouver.

“Anything that sticks out of the ground has an eagle on top of it.”

Sometimes a dozen or more sit on top of one tree. They perch there watching the ground below.

## March is the busiest month

From December to March over 2000 bald eagles flock to the dump. The dump is also called a landfill. After March the eagles move away to nest and hunt.

## Eagles are not interested in eating garbage

Eagles eat mostly ducks and gulls in the area around the dump and Boundary Bay.

Environment Canada studied the eagles at the dump. They think they come to the dump because it’s warm and protected from winter winds.



PHOTO – NICK PROCAYLO / THE VANCOUVER

Eagles perch on anything that sticks out of the ground.



PHOTO – NIK PROCAYLO / THE VANCOUVER

Sometimes a dozen or more eagles sit together on one thing.

### **The landfill is normally very tidy**

Eagles like to carry plastic up into the trees. No one knows why. It makes the dump look untidy. The plastic hangs from the trees.

### **The dump is now a safer and healthier place**

Two things have changed. They make the dump a safer place for birds. As a result, the number of eagles living at the dump has grown in recent years

- DDT is a toxic pesticide. DDT used to kill birds living and eating near dumps. It is now banned.
- Eagles' nesting sites are now protected.

### **The dump is a great place to hunt**

Shames says the dump is a great place to hunt.

It is close to the Fraser River and the delta. The dump is "a very nice open area with plenty of places to perch."

### **The dump is closed to the public**

People cannot go into the dump to see the eagles.

However, you can see the eagles from the foot of 72nd Street and from the Boundary Bay dike in Delta.

## The eagles may be in trouble

Things are changing near the Vancouver landfill. The area around the Fraser River is being developed.

- The port and the highway are becoming bigger and busier.
- A new 10-lane bridge is planned.
- A huge new shopping mall is being built.
- Many hectares of farmland are becoming blueberry fields and greenhouses.

All these things together reduce the available habitat.

## Did you know....

The Vancouver landfill site is 225-hectares near the Burns Bog in Delta.

It opened in 1966. The landfill is now almost one-third full. It will close in 2037.

The landfill gets about 1500 tonnes of garbage every day.

The methane gas created by the garbage is kept and used to power a local greenhouse.



Story adapted from *The Vancouver Sun*  
by Patty Bossort

ALL PHOTOS ABOVE – NICK PROCAYLO / THE VANCOUVER

## Exercise - What did you learn?

Landfill      Eagles      warm      gulls      hectares  
Burns Bog in Delta      plastic      ducks      March

1. What kind of birds flock to the dump?

\_\_\_\_\_ flock to the dump.

2. What is another word for “dump”?

\_\_\_\_\_ is another word for “dump”.

3. Where is the City of Vancouver landfill?

The City of Vancouver landfill is near \_\_\_\_\_.

4. What do eagles eat?

Eagles eat \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

5. What do eagles like to carry up into the trees?

Eagles like to carry \_\_\_\_\_ up into the trees.

6. How big is the landfill?

The landfill is 225 \_\_\_\_\_.

7. What month is the busiest month?

\_\_\_\_\_ is the busiest month.

8. Why do eagles like to be at the dump?

Eagles like the dump because it is \_\_\_\_\_ and protected from the wind.

### Answer Key

1. Eagles 2. Landfill 3. Burns Bog in Delta 4. ducks and gulls 5. plastic 6. hectares  
7. March 8. warm