

[from Spring '09]

## **CAUTION! EAGLETS HATCHING!**

By Nick Greif

A new baby bald eagle hatched between 3:30 PM on February 25 and 7:30 AM February 26. Ranger Bertie McNally spotted the new hatchling on her morning arrival at the refuge and noted that the new eaglet was already fully dry and so must have hatched in the wee hours of Thursday morning.

There are two other eggs in the nest which have not hatched at this writing.

Visitors, staff and volunteers at the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge have been treated to fantastic views of the eagles nesting this season, since a windstorm blew the original nest down to lodge on some lower branches. The parents continued to work on strengthening the nest even as the eggs were laid.

The lowering of the top level of the nest has been beneficial for viewers, since through a fortunate coincidence, the "Eagle Cam" now enjoys an even clearer view of the nesting activities. The Eagle Cam is a project which is sponsored fully by the Chincoteague Natural History Association. Installed in 2008, this is the second eagle cam to be installed on the refuge, the first having been blown away in tropical storm Ernesto. The CNHA allocated over \$25,000.00 in 2008 to sponsor the replacement of the eagle cam once the birds had chosen a new nesting site.

The Eagle Cam can be viewed daily in the rear of the Herbert H. Bateman Educational and Administrative Center.