

Auto focus modes:

- AI (Continuous) Servo is the only mode to use for eagles in flight.



AF options if available:

- AI servo tracking sensitivity should be set to slow (focus tracking with lock-on set to long).



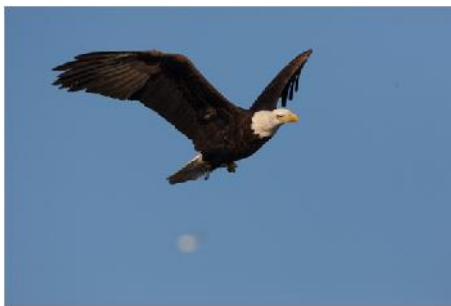
AF options if available:

- I give AF and tracking priority.



AF options if available:

- Use continuous tracking priority instead of main focus point priority.
- Keep focus search on.



Focus points:

- Single point, uses one user selected point for focusing.
- Single point expanded (Dynamic), uses the user selected point and some surrounding points. This is the setting I use most of the time.



Focus points:

- Zone area focus, uses a set number of focus points, in an area selected. The camera will focus on the closest object.
- Auto area focus, uses all the cameras focus points, and adjusts for the subjects shifting location but closer objects will change the focus.



Other Options to use if available:

- Turn on the highlight alert for your camera's display.



Other Options if available:

- Image Stabilization (Vibration Reduction) has little to no effect on an image if your shutter speed is greater than 1/640th of a second. Since it uses battery power and slows down the shutter release time you may not want to use it for flight shots.



Helpful hints:

- The depth of field for a 400mm lens on an aps-c DSLR at f5.6 is about 4' at a shooting distance of 100'.
- The depth of field of a 500mm lens on an aps-c DSLR at f5.6 is about 2.3' at a shooting distance of 100'.
- The eagles almost always catch fish going into the wind, so the best conditions are having the sun and the wind at your back.

Other helpful hints:

- Use programs like The Photographers Emeritus from photoephemeris.com or apps like Lighttrac from lighttracapp.com, to check out a location's lighting conditions before going there.



Other helpful hints:

- Eat a good meal before going out for long periods of time in the cold or take energy bars with you. Your body uses energy to keep warm and it takes longer to get that energy from fat reserves, allowing the body to get cold sooner.
- Bright overcast days give more even lighting on the birds, showing better detail.
- Expose for the subject, not the scene.
- Get the bird in focus as soon as you can before you plan on taking pictures, so the camera has time to track it.

Other helpful hints:

- Be sure to keep your autofocus activated.
- Keep on the eagle after it catches a fish because another eagle may try to steal it.
- For those people using tripods, use a gimbal head and keep the leg nearest you shortened and inward. This will give you more room to move around the back of the tripod.

Helpful Web Sites

- <http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/MississippiRiverProject/Education/EagleWatching.aspx>
- <http://www.photoephemeris.com>
- <http://www.lightracapp.com>
- <http://www.stewardsumrr.org>
- sjbousson@gmail.com

- For snowy owls go to Freedom, WI or Rudyard, MI
- For great grays go to Zax-Zim bog in northern Minnesota