



Quiet Walker Lodge

Come and Experience the Difference

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The chicks are about to hatch



Here in Iowa, we are very proud of our bald eagles. In Decorah, Iowa. The big excitement here is the Raptor Resource Project Eagle Cam. The first egg was laid on February 23rd and so far at least one of the eaglets has hatched. Over a hundred thousand people are watching the eagle cam at any one time.

The live eagle cam website has already had about seven million hits. It's been viewed in more than 130 countries and teachers all over the United States are using it in their classrooms as part of a science lesson.

The internet audience is keeping a vigil via the webcam in the hopes of catching a glimpse of the baby eagle's fuzzy head whenever the adult moves around in the nest. Catching a peek requires patience since the parent is doing a good job taking care of the new arrival and its siblings.

The hatchery is owned by the Raptor resource Project and the nonprofit helps preserve eagles, falcons, osprey, hawks and owls here in Iowa.

You can view the eagles by clicking on the web cam at http://www.raptorresource.org/falcon_cams/.

Lasagna Garden

Spring is here and it is time for planting. During the month of March, I have been preparing the soil. I did a lot of research to find out the best way to plant here in the northeast part of Iowa. At first I thought tiller the land would be the smart way to get the clay soil broken up. However there are lots of rocks in the soil and I was not sure if the tiller would be able to work through the rocky soil.

As I researched further, I came across a technique called lasagna gardening. This is a no dig, no till organic gardening method the results in rich, fluffy soil. This method works on the concept of building the garden by adding layers of organic materials that will "cook down" over time. The method is also known as sheet composting and is very easy to do.

In March I began to put down the first layer of the lasagna garden which is newspaper laid directly on top of the weeds and grass in the area. I wet the layer and put on top of it some of the mulch that I had piled up from wood chopping last Fall. This first

layer begins the decomposition process. The grass and weeds break down quickly because they are smothered by the newspaper and mulch. This layer also provides a dark, moist area to attract earthworms which naturally break down the soil.

Over the month of April I will continue to layer the area alternating between brown and green layers using grass clippings, leaves, fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee and tea grounds, and cow manure. In May my garden friends are bringing over slips from their own gardens and we will plant the area with false blue indigo, hardy geraniums, daylilies, blazing star, Carolina lupine, black-eyed Susan, cone-flowers, goatsbeard, snackroot, gas plant, balloon flower, stonecrop, little blue stern, ajuga, and creeping sedum. We will also put up deer fencing to keep the deer from munching on the newly planted garden.

The lasagna garden is a great way to make a garden. I have few weeds thanks to the newspaper suppressing them from below and the mulch covering the paper. There is better water retention and less need to fertilize because the garden is almost pure compost.