

NEWS / WEATHER NEWS

Watch: Big Bear bald eagles Jackie and Shadow finally welcome eaglets

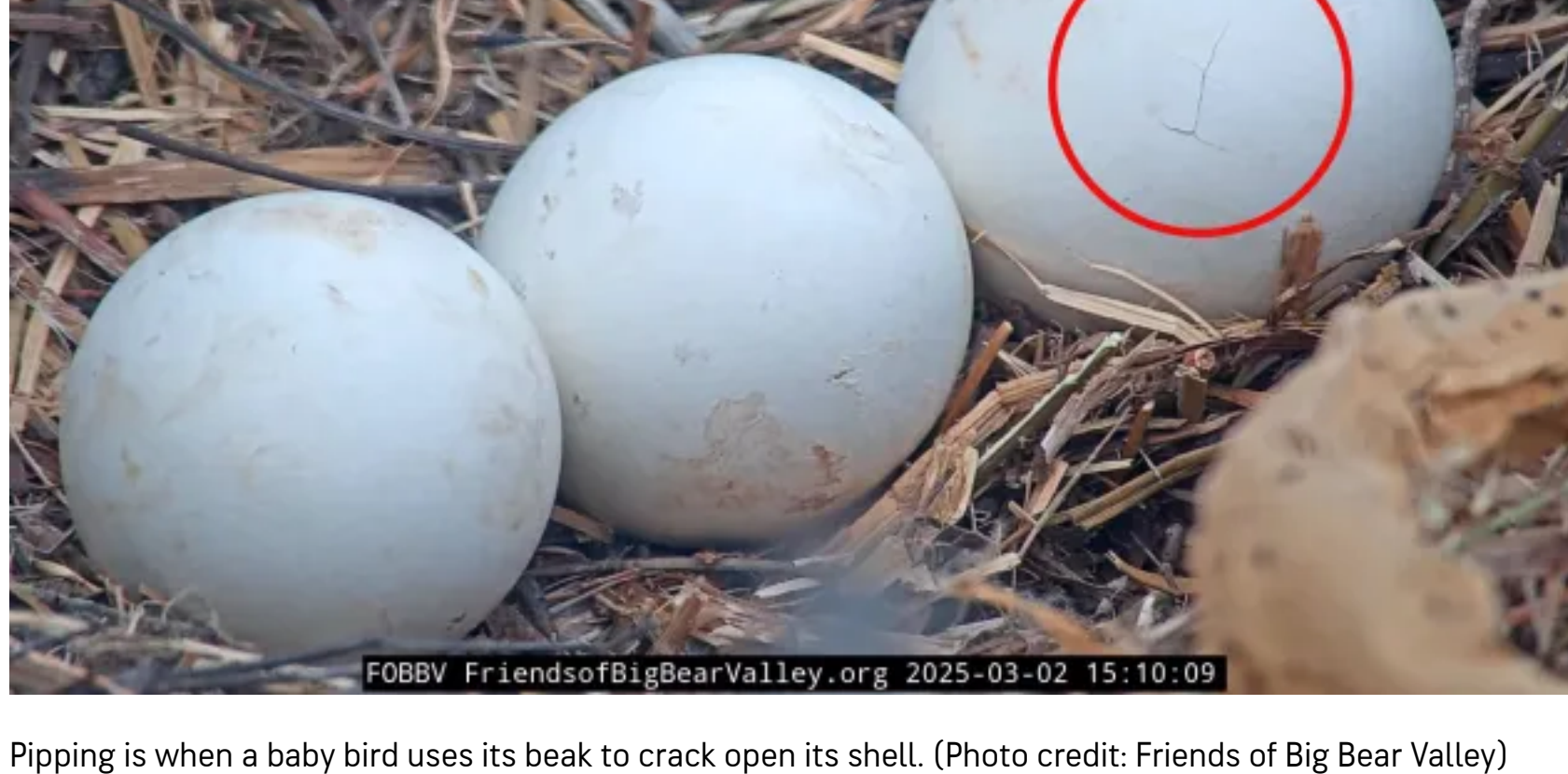
The sight of the tiny eaglets breaking free from their shells (pipping) has sparked widespread excitement and joy, drawing tens of thousands of viewers.

By Monica Danielle, AccuWeather Managing Editor
5 Mar, 2025 1:09 AM GST | Updated 5 Mar, 2025 4:24 AM GST



The eagle has landed. Two, in fact! Jackie and Shadow, the renowned bald eagle pair of Big Bear Valley, California, have successfully welcomed two new hatchlings into their nest, captivating viewers worldwide.

"By the wee hours this morning, Chick #1 had become a fluffy fuzz ball as its downy covering dried into a soft gray coat," Friends of Big Bear Valley posted on Facebook Tuesday. "Then Chick #2 started "zippering" its way out of the shell. This is the final stage of hatching, as the little one pokes its egg tooth against the shell and uses its feet to spin it around and break a nearly straight line around the shell to crack it fully open."



Pipping is when a baby bird uses its beak to crack open its shell. (Photo credit: Friends of Big Bear Valley)



Pipping is when a baby bird uses its beak to crack open its shell, and a pip watch is the online vigil and hoopla surrounding that activity. (Photo credit: Friends of Big Bear Valley)

The first egg began hatching over the weekend. Viewers who had been closely monitoring the nest via a 24-hour webcam caught the magical moment when the first baby eagle emerged just before 11:30 p.m. on Monday. The webcam, positioned 145 feet high in a Jeffrey pine overlooking Big Bear Lake, provided a front-row seat to the long-anticipated event.

(Photo credit: Friends of Big Bear Valley)

Jackie and Shadow's journey to parenthood has been fraught with challenges. Last year, despite the couple diligently taking turns watching three eggs, they never hatched. In 2023, their eggs were eaten by ravens, and the previous winter brought severe weather conditions, including a storm that left Jackie on the nest for two consecutive hours, often buried in snow. These hardships, combined with the low oxygen levels at high altitude, were suspected reasons why their eggs failed to hatch in previous years, according to Friends of Big Bear Valley. 2022 marked the last time Jackie and Shadow successfully hatched an eaglet, later named Spirit, in a contest held by Friends of Big Bear Valley.

Bald eagle eggs generally have a 50-50 chance of hatching, according to Sandy Steers, biologist and executive director of Friends of Big Bear Valley. Despite the odds, the eagle couple's determination has paid off this year, with two eggs successfully hatched and the third expected to follow soon.



The sight of the tiny eaglets breaking free from their shells (pipping) has sparked widespread excitement and joy, drawing tens of thousands of viewers to the Friends of Big Bear Valley website and Facebook page.

Friends of Big Bear Valley continue to monitor the nest closely, providing adorable updates and ensuring that the new family remains safe and healthy.

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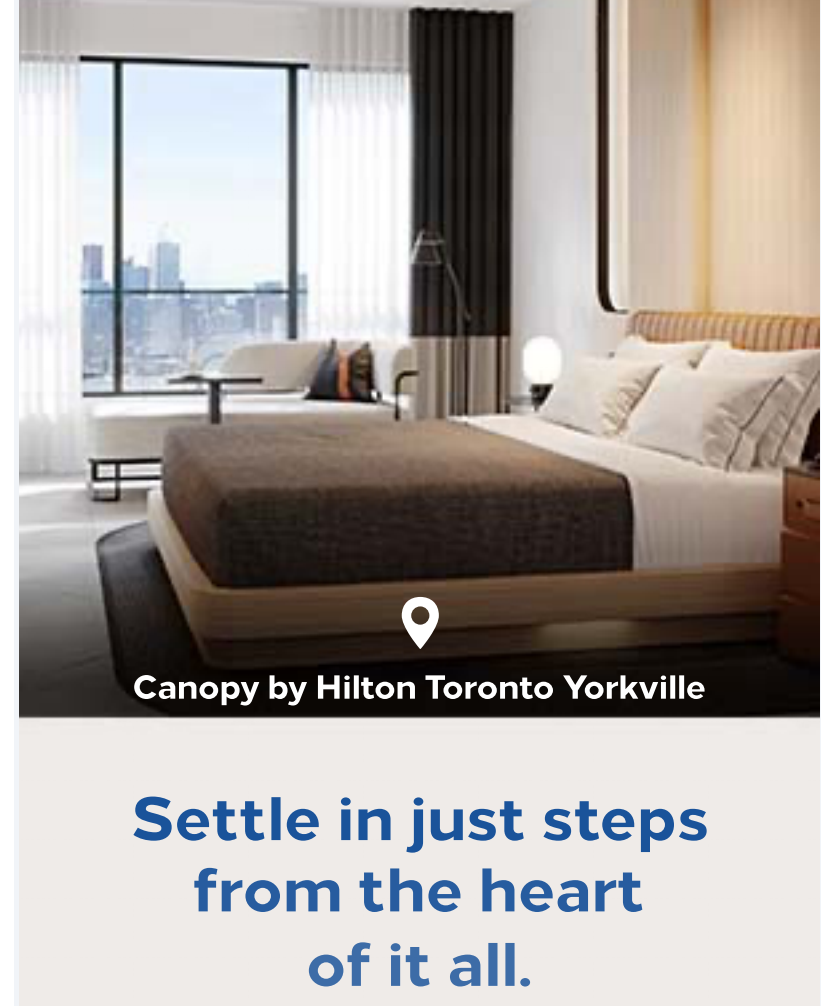
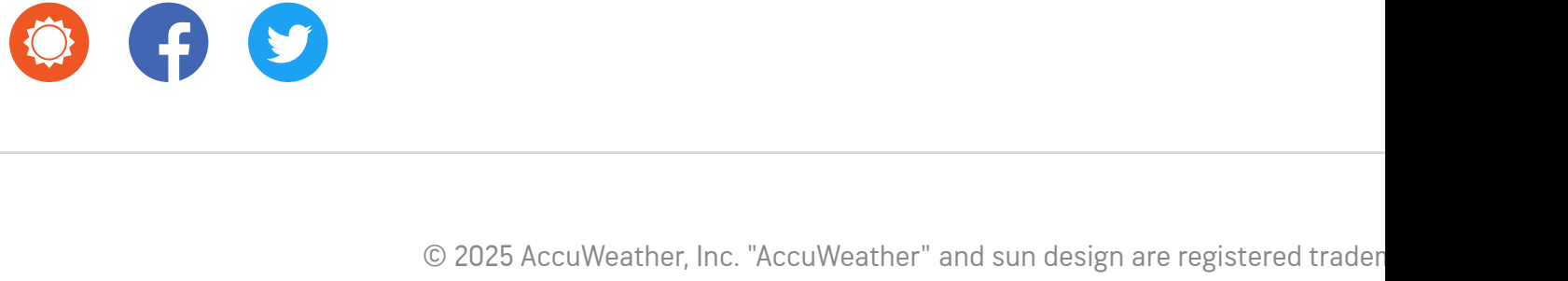
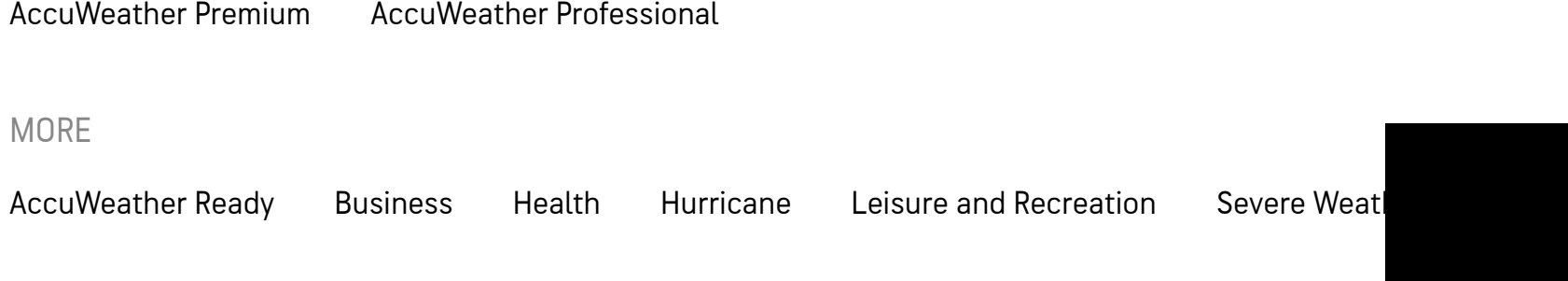
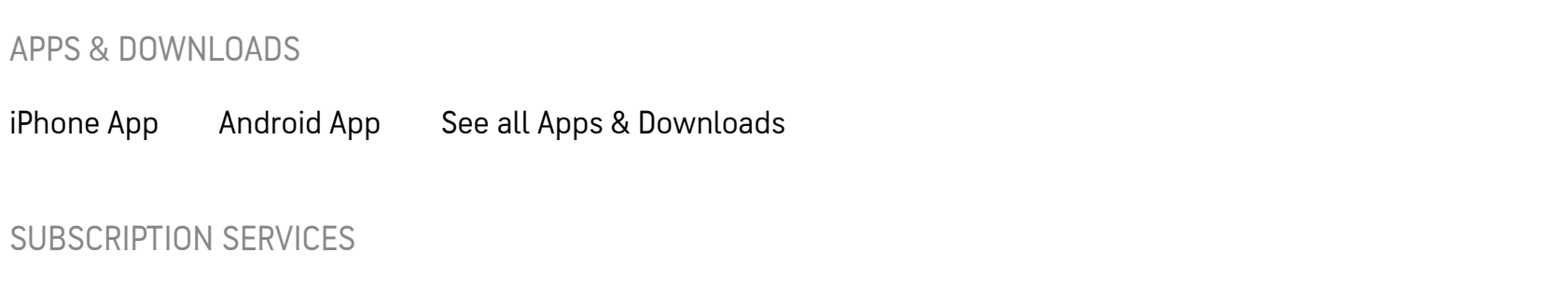
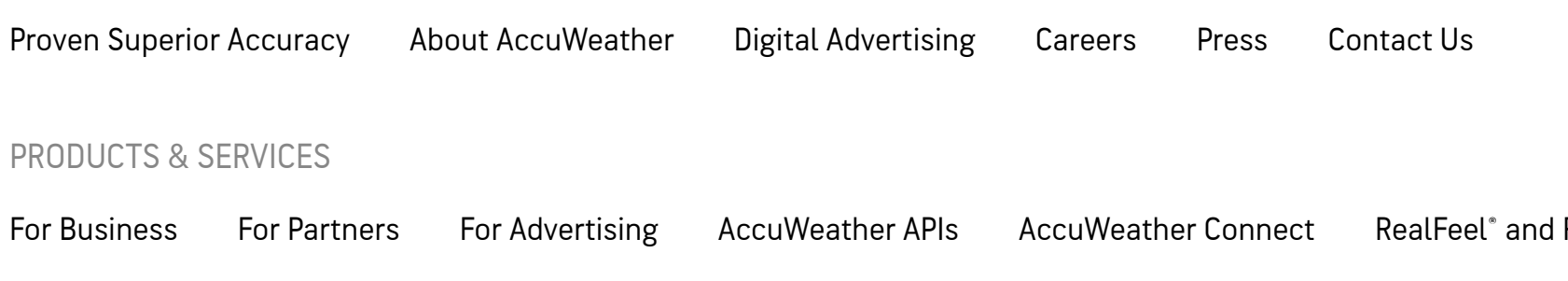
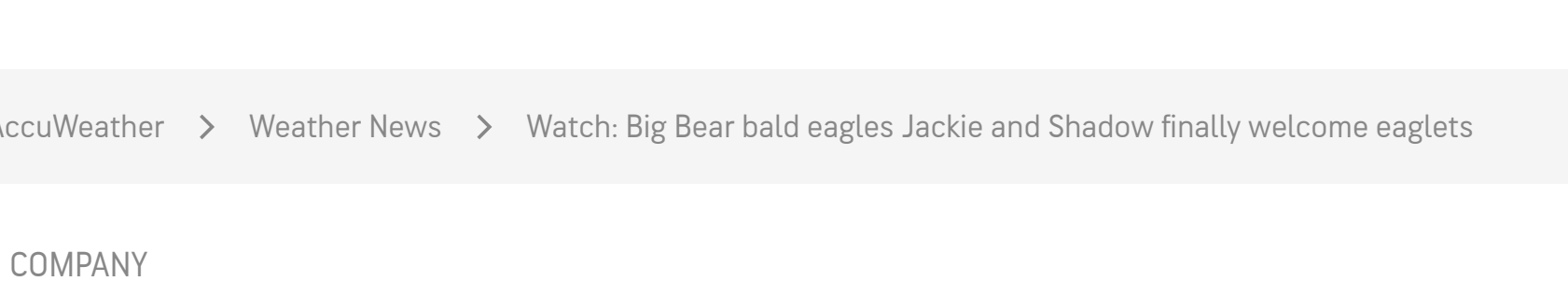
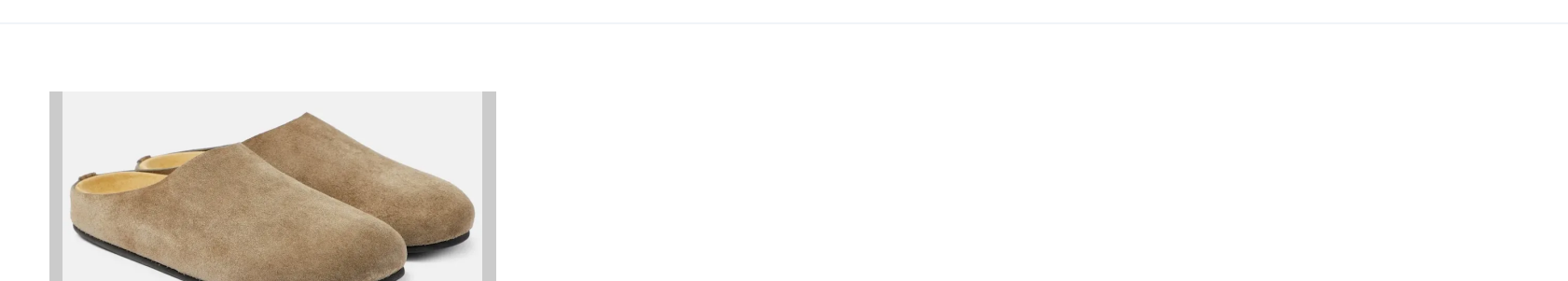
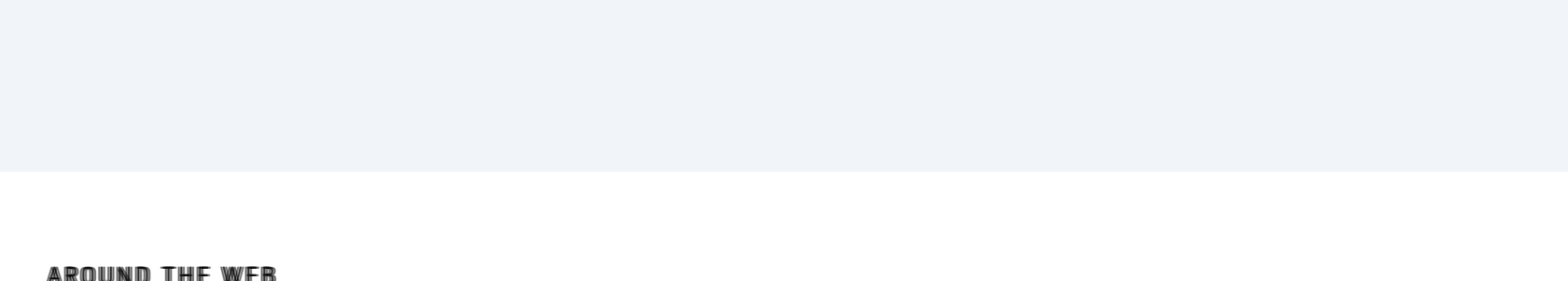
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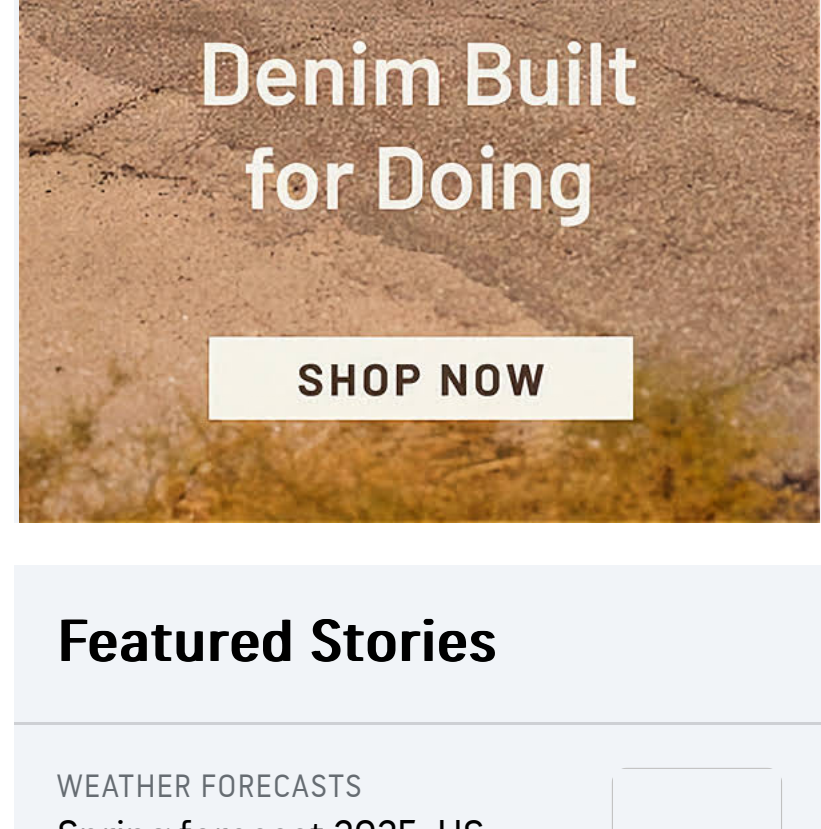
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