

NJ North Coast Region Sunday, January 31, 2015
Sussex County Bird Club Field Trip in Memory of Dr. S. Marie Kuhnen

The Dr. S. Marie Kuhnen Memorial Field Trip took place on the New Jersey North Coast Region Saturday, January 31, 2015. The tour began at Twilight (7:00 AM) from Ross's Corner parking area (car pool) in Sussex County. Two participated and three cancelled. We traveled south via Route 206, 18 and 35 to Old Sams Pond south of Manasquan Inlet, and were at Point Pleasant Beach, Jenkinsons at about 9:30 AM, and concluded at Seven Presidents' Park in Monmouth County at 4:30 PM. It was a cold (7 degrees at the start and 21 degrees at the finish.) clear, sunny, blustery day with high on shore winds.

I first birded the North Shore during a Field Ornithology course taught by Dr. Kuhnen in 1967 at Montclair State University. Subsequently, Marie and I birded the NJ North Shore together for the next 39 years. Many of those trips led by Marie served as opportunities for Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC) staff members' professional development and personal enrichment.

Jack Padalino, president emeritus of PEEC as well as Brandwein Institute, a partner with the National Park Service, led the North Shore Tour that included visiting numerous fresh water ponds, estuaries, inlets, jetties, and the oceanfront.

On our way "down the shore," a Jersey idiom, we looked for Red-tailed Hawks as well as other birds. We arrived at the South jetty, Manasquan Inlet 9:30 AM.

A New Jersey North Shore tour, November through March is noted for loons, grebes, Northern Gannet, Great Cormorant, geese, ducks including dabblers, divers, and sea ducks, Purple Sandpiper, gulls, and if you're lucky, Alcids. It is also possible to see noteworthy species sighted in the past such as Red-necked Grebe, Eurasian Widgeon, Common and King Eiders, Harlequin Duck, Little, Common Black-headed, Bonapart's, Iceland, Lesser Black-backed, and Glaucous gulls, as well as Black-legged Kittiwake. A list of rare species observed in the past include Eared and Western Grebes, Tufted Duck, Barrow's Goldeneye, Sooty Tern, Black-tailed Gull, Sabine's Gull, Dovekie, Common and Thick-billed Murres, Black Guillemot and Razorbill, an impressive list of "target species" for the tour.

How did we do?

Total bird species seen: 53

Target birds seen: Northern Gannet, Great Cormorant, Common Eider, Long-tailed Duck, Black Scoters, Common and Red-throated Loons, Red-necked, Horned, and Pied-billed Grebes, Black-bellied Plover, Three raptors; Cooper's, Red-shouldered, and Red-tailed Hawks, sixteen (16) species of waterfowl, as well as Common and Fish Crow

The next Search for Eagles field trip is scheduled for Sunday 8 FEB.