

Search for Eagles, Dr. S. Marie Kuhnen
Memorial Field Trip Series, 5 February 2017

The Dr. S. Marie Kuhnen Memorial Field Trip, Search for Eagles took place in the Delaware Valley Sunday, February 5, 2017 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The temperature at the start was 26 degrees, during the search rose to 37 degrees and at the conclusion dropped back to 33. It was a cloudy overcast day which began with watching feeder birds at home and at the Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC) that included Pileated, Downy, and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Brown Creeper, Dark-eyed Junco, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Tufted Titmouse, and American Goldfinch among others. The seven of us logged 150 miles in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and Upper Delaware Scenic River from PEEC. The trip concluded at the headwaters of the Lackawaxen River.

Jack Padalino, president emeritus of PEEC and the Brandwein Institute, a partner with the National Park Service, led the search that included seeing 59 Bald Eagles (BE), 20 adults, 39 juveniles, 21 Red-tailed Hawks and 32 species of birds.

Our first Red-tailed Hawk (RT) was perched at Heller's Farm, a second at the Eshback Access, and a third at the intersection of Little Egypt Road and Route 209. Our first BE was a juvenile that flew to a perch above the shale bank north of Tom's Creek in the vicinity where there once was a long-time active nest. From the Bushkill access we experienced the event of the day. High on the ridge north of the Access an adult female BE was perched. She was joined on the same branch by an adult male. As we watched the BEs copulated. We added 5 Common Mergansers, a dozen Mallards, and a Blue Jay at the access. Back at Eshback's we added 100 American Robins. At the turn off of 209 to PEEC a Common Raven flew overhead as well as 2 RTs. We added 2 RTs at Hornbeck's Trailhead.

One adult BE at the Dingmans Access flew down river then perched. We toured the Dingman's Cemetery in search of a reported BE nest but were not successful in finding it. At mile marker 17 on Route 209 above us on the ridge was an adult BE. The nest there on the north side of the shale bank is active. This nest has been active for at least the past five years and I frequently see BEs on and near it.

At the historic Callahan House, headquarters of the Brandwein Institute, feeders we added White-throated Sparrow, Carolina Wren, and Northern Cardinal.

There is an active nest on Metz road on the way to Milford Beach. The nest is located in the tallest White Pine to the right of the first house on the right after passing Metz Road. The nest is about a quarter of the way down the tree trunk from the top of the Pine. RT #9 as added at Milford Beach. We proceeded upriver and spotted 1 adult BE perched close to us in a Sycamore Tree near River Road.

At Kittatinny Camp Ground above us high on the ridge 2 adult BEs were perched. Next was a RT in the vicinity of Walmart.

On the way to the Riverview RV Park we spotted House Sparrows, House Finches, and Rock Pigeons, 2 juvenile BEs, a RT, and heard a Belted Kingfisher. Mute Swans, Mallards, Goldeneyes, Hooded Mergansers and Common Mergansers were on the water. We added a RT that was perched on a wire as we left.

We made a brief stop at the Pennsylvania Welcome Center.

We added 50 Ring-billed Gulls at Port Jervis West End Beach. No eagles at Eddy Pond Resort.

At the Hawks Nest historical marker in addition to hearing a Belted Kingfisher and having a great vista we added 2 BEs and 4 RTs one of whom was a juvenile.

We crossed the Mongaup and on the way to Pond Eddy spotted a perched juvenile BE. At Pond Eddy in a White Pine on the PA side of the river is an active BE nest. High above on the ridge

on the NY side was an adult BE resting on its favorite perch in a White Pine. Another adult was perched a few yards beneath it. A juvenile BE soared above us.

We were successful on the Mongaup Reservoir loop adding 19 BEs. As we crossed the bridge nearing the Observation Blind we spotted 4 BEs upstream two adults a two juveniles one of whom was perched on a stump low in the water. From the blind we watched 7 BEs both perched and in flight. We spotted an adult BE perched low in a White Pine close to Plank Road while a juvenile soared above and another was perched in a treetop next to the water. Down stream at the water's edge and on the ice was a juvenile BE. Above it high on the ridge 3 adult BEs were perched. Before crossing the Rio Dam we glanced below and discovered a perched adult BE. Another adult was high in a tree further down stream.

We returned to the Delaware, spotted two perched adult BEs near where we saw the juvenile earlier. We added the 14th RT, a juvenile in flight. At the intersection of Berm-Church Road and Route 97 was an adult BE standing on the ice. In the vicinity of Squire Barn an adult BE was perched in a tree near the road and another at Landers. Next it was on to Barryville where an adult RT circled above the Shohola bridge and two BEs perched on the Pennsylvania side of the river. From Landers Minisink Station we saw 3 Adult BEs and a juvenile on the ice upriver.

We traveled north beyond the bridge for a half mile and added 4 adult BEs.

A RT was in flight over the Roebling Bridge. Near the Roebling Bridge in Lackawaxen is where the Eagle Institute is located. Here visitors may find brochures, newsletters, and information about eagles. There is a gift shop and the Institute is open weekends.

From the Zane Grey Museum parking area we saw an adult BE perched at the confluence of the Lackawaxen and Delaware Rivers on the PA side of the rivers and an adult on the ice. Finally we managed to see a Belted Kingfisher. We had already observed 53 BEs and 19 RTs. We proceeded on 590 along the Lackawaxen and added three additional BEs that were perched high on the ridge at Boaba. I've seen as many as 11 BEs in that same tree which is probably where they roost for the night. Near Appert Road we watched 3 perched then active juvenile BEs.

We concluded our search at 4:30 p.m..

Eagle observation data collected is shared with members of the Sussex County Bird Club, Eagle Institute, and Hawk Migration Association of North America HMANA. An Eagle identification field guide and a "Search for Eagles" hand-out is provided for participants by the Paul F-Brandwein Institute. Join us in the future to Search For Eagles. Our final search is scheduled for March 5, 2017.

Call 570.296.6752 or eMail jackpeec@aol.com to register for eagle searches.

Birds seen:

Canada Goose	Mute Swan	Dark-eyed Junco
American Black Duck	Downy Woodpecker	House Finch
Mallard	Hairy Woodpecker	American Goldfinch
Common Goldeneye	Pileated Woodpecker	House Sparrow
Hooded Merganser	Blue Jay	
Common Merganser	American Crow	
Bald Eagle	Common Raven	
Cooper's Hawk	Black-capped Chickadee	
Belted Kingfisher	Tufted Titmouse	
Red-tailed Hawk	White-breasted Nuthatch	
Ring-billed Gull	Brown Creeper	
Rock Pigeon	Carolina Wren	
Mourning Dove	European Starling	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	White-throated Sparrow	