

Dr. S. Marie Kuhnen - Memorial Field Trip Series
Search for Eagles - Sunday, 3 December 2017

The first 2017-18 Dr. S. Marie Kuhnen Memorial Field Trip, Search for Eagles took place in the Delaware Valley Sunday, December 3, 2017 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The temperature at the start was 31 degrees and at the finish 34 degrees. Winds, strong at times were mostly from the southeast. It was a day that started with a 100% overcast sky through the conclusion with partly sunny skies. The day began with watching feeder birds that included Dark-eyed Junco, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, and Downy Woodpecker among others. The 11 participants, including a teacher and three students from Wallenpaupack High School, logged 134 miles in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and Upper Delaware Scenic River from PEEC to the Bushkill Access and the trip's conclusion 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 seeing 31 species of birds that included 25 Bald Eagles (BE), one Golden Eagle, and 9 Red-tailed Hawks.

The first raptors of the day were a pair of Red-tailed Hawk perched east of Route 209 near the Heller Farm. At the Bushkill Access in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area were Belted Kingfisher, White-throated Sparrows, and 2 Mallards. Additional Red-tailed Hawks were seen proximal to the PEEC turn off of route 209 and at the Hornbeck's Trail Head.

Our first BE of the day was at the Dingmans Ferry Access down river and perched on the New Jersey side. The feeders at the bridge hosted a Brown Creeper and Red-bellied Woodpecker. Our tour of the cemetery added Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Tree Sparrows and another Red-tailed Hawk. Near the Zimmerman Farm Road we added an adult BE that was perched in a Sycamore on the PA side of the river.

The BE nest near mile marker 17 on Route 209 has had birds in and around it for the past few weeks. This nest has been active for at least six years and today we saw an adult perched on the rim of the nest. I was able to capture an image of the eagle perched on the rim of the nest and have included it with this report.

At the Callahan House, headquarters of the Brandwein Institute we shared a round of introductions, distributed Search for Eagles field guides and background information, and reviewed the trip itinerary.

On the way to Milford Beach we observed two adult BEs on and in the Metz Road nest while constructing it. We watched as one of the BE brought a stick to the nest. We enjoyed the coming and going of both birds for about 15 minutes. We visited Milford Beach, no BE. On the road along the river we were able to locate an adult BE perched in a Sycamore tree at the end of Bennett Road at a condominium complex.

We drove past an interesting wood sculpture at the intersection of Ann and Third Streets and continued a pull off at the Kittitunny Camp ground to view the cliffs where Common Ravens are believed to nest and BEs are frequently seen. No luck, no BEs or Ravens.

We enjoyed a rest stop at the Pennsylvania Welcome Center where we viewed an Eagle Institute exhibit, a 701 pound Trophy Black Bear, and added Cedar Waxwings, Eastern Starlings, Rock Pigeons, and Ring-billed Gulls.

On the way to Pond Eddy Farm overlook we added Common Mergansers.

Plank Road and Rio Reservoir was our next destination. Traveling north we added a perched adult BE. As we crossed the bridge approaching the Observation Blind we searched upstream for BEs, there were none.

We back tracked along Plank Road where there were two eagles, an immature in flight and a perched adult.

The Rio Reservoir Dam had 2 adult BEs perched downstream. An image of one of the perched birds is attached. There were a half dozen people at the dam in addition to members of our group who enjoyed watching the eagles.

We returned to the Delaware and traveled upriver.

About a half mile upriver from where the Mongaup enters the Delaware we were excited by 3 perched BEs, an adult, a sub-adult, and a juvenile. Near Indian Head Canoe livery we watched an adult BE in flight.

As we approached Pond Eddy nest site, we looked at an adult BE at a favorite perch high above us on the ridge. One of the students located a juvenile BE perched down river from where we parked. The group had fun trying to determine whether or not there was one or two birds that we were seeing. Conclusion: one juvenile bird.

In Barryville we were able to locate the BE nest on the PA side of the river in Shohola. We have frequently seen BEs in this area and were delighted to have finally located the nest. Close by at the Angler's access to the river we added two adult BEs, one perched and one in flight.

No eagles were at Minisink Ford Observation Blind.

We crossed the Roebling Bridge, enjoyed a pit stop, then proceeded to the confluence of the Lackawaxen and Delaware and the Zane Gray access. By the time we reached here we had seen 20 BEs.

Traveling upstream along the Lackawaxen we saw an additional 5 BEs and a Golden Eagle at locations such as the Engavaldenger Road, Mail Box 510, Appert Road, and downstream from Swinging Bridge where we had great looks at a perched then in flight Golden Eagle.

We concluded our field trip at 4:30 p.m.

Eagles' nests we discovered will be monitored on subsequent Searches for Eagles:

Sunday, January 7, 2018

Sunday, February 4, 2018

Sunday, March 4, 2018

TO PARTICIPATE IN A SEARCH FOR EAGLES FIELD TRIP
PHONE: [570.296.6752](tel:570.296.6752) AND INDICATE WHICH SEARCH YOU WILL BE ATTENDING.
Or, eMail: <mailto:jack@brandwein.org> to leave a message.
Meet 8:00 a.m. at the PEEC parking lot OR Meet 10:00 a.m. at the Historic Callahan House,
[101 Route 209](#) South @ mile marker 21, Milford, PA –
WEATHER PERMITTING. - Dress warmly, bring binoculars, field guides, and a lunch.

THERE IS NO CHARGE

An Eagle identification field guide and a “Search for Eagles” hand-out will be provided for participants by the Paul F-Brandwein Institute. Join us to Search For Eagles.

In addition to the 25 Bald Eagles and a Golden Eagle we saw:

Canada Goose
Mallard
Common Merganser
Wild Turkey
Ring-billed Gull
Bald Eagle
Golden Eagle
Red-tailed Hawk
Sharp-shinned Hawk
Rock Pigeon
Morning Dove
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
Downy Woodpecker
Pileated Woodpecker
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Blue Jay
American Crow
Common Raven
Belted Kingfisher
Tufted Titmouse
Black-capped Chickadee
White-breasted Nuthatch
Brown Creeper
American Robin
Cedar Waxwing
European Starling
Northern Cardinal
Dark-eyed Junco

White-throated Sparrow
Tree Sparrow
Song Sparrow