

Search for Eagles, Dr. S. Marie Kuhnen - Memorial Field Trip Series, Sunday, 14 February 2014

The third 2013-14 Dr. S. Marie Kuhnen Memorial Field Trip, Search for Eagles took place in the Delaware Valley Sunday, February 16, 2014 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The temperature at the start was 15 degrees and at the finish 23 degrees. It was a cold clear day that began with watching feeder birds at the Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC) that included Dark-eyed Junco, Black-capped Chickadee, and Tufted Titmouse among others. We logged 148 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 that included seeing species of birds including 30 Bald Eagles (BE) and 28 Red-tailed Hawks. Much of the Delaware River was frozen; eagles we observed were concentrated in areas of open water in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

The first raptors of the day were three Bald Eagles (BE) two adults and an immature soaring above the Delaware at Eshback Access. They were joined by a Red-tailed Hawk. Perched above the Tom's Creek picnic area was another adult BE. As we approached the area a Cooper's Hawk flew across the road and into the woods in front of us. We left the area with a look at American Robins eating Sumac berries. Perched at the Bushkill Access was an adult BE and two Red-tailed Hawks. One of the hawks caused a Pileated Woodpecker to leave its perch. Here too were Downy Woodpecker, American Crows, White-throated Sparrows, and American Goldfinches. Two Common Mergansers were on the river.

Below PEEC and east of the Briscoe Mountain Road two Red-tailed Hawks took flight traveling north along Route 209.

We were about not to visit the Dingmans Ferry Access Area because of its closure due to the snow; however, we did stop at the toll both parking area, looked above the bridge and watch three BE an adult and two immatures. The two immature birds appeared to be courting as they approached each other and tumbled together. Returning to RT 209 north we saw another Red-tailed Hawk perched above on the cliff above the highway. The eighth Red-tail of the day was sighted at Zimmerman Flats.

The BE nest near mile marker 17 on Route 209 has had birds in and around it for the past few weeks and there was an adult BE perched on the rim of the nest today. This nest has been active for at least the past six years.

No eagles at Milford Beach.

At the Callahan House, satellite office of the Brandwein Institute, we watched feeder birds and added White-breasted Nuthatch.

No BE were on the Milford Mott Street nest that is being reconstructed. Last year the former nest crashed to the ground and the BEs immediately began constructing a new nest on the north side of the Sawkill.

On Ann Street at the park that overlooks the Delaware we spotted a flock of over 100 American Robins.

We continued to the Best Western, no eagles. On the way to the River View Restaurant near where PA, NJ, and NY converge, we saw six Eastern Bluebirds and a Song Sparrow. While we were leaving the Riverview we spotted two immature BE soaring high above.

We enjoyed a rest stop at the Pennsylvania Welcome Center where we saw two soaring BE's and viewed a 701 pound Trophy Black Bear, as well as a diorama of the Roebling Bridge.

Eddy Farm Resort overlook presented Canada Goose and Common Mergansers.

By 11:10 we were at the Hawks Nest historical marker with a great vista and two immature BEs soaring above the ridge.

In Pond Eddy on the snowy shore bank and lower trees along the Delaware were six BE three adult and three immature. The BEs were feeding on a sucker and displacing one another on the fish. We watch the spectacle for about 20 minutes. At the Pond Eddy nest sight, a White Pine on the PA side of the river we found the nest covered with snow no BE. We continued to the Mongaup Falls Observation Blind.

As we crossed the bridge approaching the Observation Blind we searched upstream for BEs, there were none. No BE from the blind as well. Plank Road also lacked BE. No BEs were at the Rio Reservoir Dam. We returned to the Delaware and traveled upriver. Revisited the BE feeding on the bank. An adult BE was perched in the White Pine high above on the cliff in Pond Eddy.

No BE at Minisink Ford Observation Blind.

On the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware proximal to the Roebling Bridge is The Eagle Institute where a video of area eagles is screened and where brochures, newsletters, and information about eagles is made available to visitors. There is a gift shop and the Institute is open weekends.

At the confluence of the Lackawaxen and Delaware rivers many eagle volunteer viewers in the parking area but no BE. Above us on the north side of the Lackawaxen river is an active BE nest where an adult BE was perched.

By the time we reached the Lackawaxen we saw 30 Bald Eagles.

We traveled upstream along the Lackawaxen to the PPL Dam site and did not see another BE.

We concluded our field trip at 3:00 p.m.

Next Search for Eagles: Saturday, March 8, 2014

TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SEARCH FOR EAGLES FIELD TRIP

PHONE: 570.296.6752 AND INDICATE YOU WILL BE ATTENDING.

Or, eMail: 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 30 Bald Eagles we saw:

Canada Goose

Mallard

Common Goldeneye

Common Merganser

Cooper’s Hawk

Red-tailed Hawk

Rock Pigeon

Mourning Dove

Red-bellied Woodpecker

Downy Woodpecker

Hairy Woodpecker

Northern Flicker

Pileated Woodpecker

Blue Jay

American Crow

Common Raven

Tufted Titmouse

Black-capped Chickadee

White-breasted Nuthatch

Eastern Bluebird

American Robin

European Starling

Eastern Towhee

Song Sparrow

White-throated Sparrow

Dark-eyed Junco

Northern Cardinal

Purple Finch

American Goldfinch

House Sparrow

