

Search for Eagles, Dr. S. Marie Kuhnen - Memorial Field Trip Series, Sunday, 7 February 2016

The third 2015-16 Dr. S. Marie Kuhnen Memorial Field Trip, Search for Eagles took place in the Delaware Valley Sunday, 3 January 2016 from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 PM The temperature at the start was 25 degrees and at the finish 43 degrees. It was a bright sunny morning and clear day. We began watching feeder birds at the Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC) with a Pileated Woodpecker fly-by and included Dark-eyed Junco, Black-capped Chickadee, and Tufted Titmouse among others. We logged 104 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.

Jack Padalino, president emeritus of PEEC and the Brandwein Institute, a partner with the National Park Service, led the search with seven participants that recorded 28 species of birds including 14 Common Ravens, 13 Bald Eagles (BE), 1 Cooper's Hawks and 11 Red-tailed Hawks. The Delaware River, which is subject to freezing temperatures during much of winter, was totally open water. Nine of the 13 Bald Eagles we observed were adults and near open water. Eagles we saw were both perched, and in flight.

Leaving PEEC we traveled south on Route 209 where we saw our first two Red-tailed Hawks at the Bushkill Access. At the Access also were 2 Common Mergansers, and 2 Canada Geese.

As we traveled north on Route 209 the escarpment of the Pocono Plateau was clearly visible. A dozen American Robins fed on the weed seeds in the fields. In route to the Dingmans Ferry Bridge and access we saw some Mourning Doves. During the past few weeks I had been seeing perched adult BEs upriver from the Dingmans Bridge on the Jersey side near open water. At the Dingmans Ferry Access we saw our first two adult BEs downriver, one perched in a White Pine on the Jersey side and another further down river.

At the pull-off north of the Raymondskill Creek we watched 10 Common Ravens in the air, one of the ravens had a bright object in its beak. In addition there were two Red-tailed Hawks perched high on the ridge.

Another adult Red-tailed Hawk was sighted south of the National Recreation Area entrance kiosk. We continued to Milford Beach. Along the way we spotted a huge nest in a White Pine tree, a BE nest with one adult female BE present above the nest. We will continue observing the nest on subsequent searches for eagles. There was not much activity at Milford Beach.

At the Callahan House, satellite office of the Brandwein Institute, we filled the feeders and watched birds, quite a few Black-capped Chickadees, one of whom landed on the feeder as I was filling it, Dark-eyed Juncos, White-breasted Nuthatch, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, as well as a fly-over of a mixed flock of Cedar Waxwings and American Robins.

Next was Mott Street nest site that was in the top of a White Pine proximal to the Sawkill Creek. We continued on Mott Street to the former nest site but this nest is also gone. The first nest crashed to the ground two years ago and the BEs immediately constructed a new nest on the north side of the creek next to a house. Now this nest is also gone. My best guess is that the BEs have constructed a new nest further up creek. We lingered and watched a Hairy Woodpecker at feeder.

At the River View Restaurant near where PA, NJ, and NY converge no BE; however, a Red-Bellied Woodpecker greeted us. We made a brief visit to the PA Welcome Center and viewed the Roebling bridge diorama. As we crossed the bridge to Port Jervis a flock of Rock Pigeons took to the air and a group of Ring-billed Gulls was down river.

At the Hawks Nest historical marker with a great vista where on two trips ago we saw Peregrine Falcon above the Hawks Nest we spotted a Belted Kingfisher below us

At the Pond Eddy nest, in a White Pine on the PA side of the river we located the BE nest and saw a perched adult BE above it a female BE was on the nest. This Pond Eddy site and the cliffs above it was a favorite of Dr. Kuhnen's. We also saw three BE soaring high above. We continued to the Mongaup Falls Observation Blind.

As we crossed the bridge approaching the Observation Blind we searched upstream for BEs, there were two BE high in the sky an adult and a juvenile. From the parking lot we watched a soaring adult BE. Common Mergansers on the water. Plank Road also had one juvenile BE. We crossed the Rio Reservoir Dam, looked downstream but no BE. We returned to the Delaware and traveled downriver. At the Hawks Nest and adult BE soared high above. On our way back to PEEC we spotted an additional three Red-tailed Hawks.

We concluded our field trip at 1:00 PM.

Next and this season's final Search for Eagles - March 6, 2016.

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 14 Common Ravens, 13 Bald Eagles, 12 Red-tailed Hawks, and a Cooper's Hawks we saw:

Canada Goose
Common Merganser
Wild Turkey
Turkey Vulture
Bald Eagle
Red-tailed Hawk
Cooper's Hawk
Ring-billed Gull
Rock Pigeon
Mourning Dove
Belted Kingfisher
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Pileated Woodpecker
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
Downy Woodpecker
Hairy Woodpecker
Blue Jay
American Crow
Common Raven
Black-capped Chickadee
Tufted Titmouse
White-breasted Nuthatch
American Robin
Cedar Waxwing
Dark-eyed Junco
Northern Cardinal
American Goldfinch
House Sparrow