

Search for Eagles for the Preserve Sunday, 26 November 2017

The first Search for Eagles from the Brandwein Nature Learning Preserve (BNLP) took place in the Delaware Valley Sunday, 26 November from 12:30 PM to 4:30 PM. The temperature at the start was 34 degrees and at the finish 32 degrees. It was a cold cloudy to sunny day. Tufted Titmouse and Dark-eyed Junco were among the few perching birds we saw. We logged 134 miles in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and Upper Delaware Scenic River from BNLP to the trip's conclusion at the headwaters of the Lackawaxen River.

Jack Padalino, president emeritus of the Brandwein Institute, a partner with the National Park Service, led the search with 4 participants that recorded 14 species of birds including 17 Bald Eagles (BE), 1 Turkey Vulture and 1 Red-tailed Hawk. Thirteen of the seventeen Bald Eagles we observed were adults and near open water of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and Scenic Delaware. Eagles we saw were perched, and in flight.

The first raptor of the day was an adult BE west of Route 209 perched high above on the ridge at the north end of the shale pit near mile marker 17. The BE nest near mile marker 17 has had birds around it for the past few weeks. This nest site has been active for the past few years.

Next, a pair of adult BEs were sighted perched on the same branch very high on the ridge west of the Kittatinny Camp Ground just north of Milford. For a number of years there was an active eagle's nest halfway up the cliff in a white Pine about twenty yards west of the west bound lane on Interstate 84. There was a pair of Common Ravens in addition the eagles perched on the ridge.

As I traveled Minisink Turnpike on the way to the BNLP a Red-tailed Hawk and Turkey Vulture soared above me. At the Preserve following introductions, distribution of eagle identification guides, and binoculars, a summary of the trip itinerary was reviewed.

Down river from the Matamoras - Port Jervis bridge we saw 20 loafing Ring-billed Gulls. At eddy Farm Resort overlook we were presented with Black Ducks, Mallards, and Canada Geese.

We continued to Old Plank Road, no eagles seen. Next stop at 2:00 PM was the Mongaup Falls Observation Blind. We spoke with the couple in the blind who told us the location of two eagles along Plank Road in the vicinity of the power station. From the blind we watch a juvenile BE fly toward us then soar above us over the blind, circling a few times.

We returned to Plank Road and spotted a perched juvenile BE that rapidly took flight. Moving slowly along the road we spotted two adult BE perched in a White Pine across the stream. We were able to view this pair through a spotting scope. While we were viewing, two additional adult BEs joined the perched pair. We listened to their call, high pitched, descending "kee-kee-ki-ki-ki-ki-ki." Two BEs took flight upstream and began what appeared to be courtship display, darting and diving at each other in the air, a spectacular sight.

We continued to the Rio Dam Road where along the route we stopped at an overlook at utility lines and watched two Common Ravens flying high above. An adult BE was perched down stream from the Rio Reservoir Dam. We watched it take flight and glide downstream. We returned to the Delaware at 3:05 PM and traveled upriver.

As we approached the Pond Eddy nest sight we had hopes of seeing eagles at the nest. None were there. We continued past the Pond Eddy bridge construction to Berm Church Road where two juvenile BE took flight and headed upriver.

In Barryville along the road that parallels the river we stopped at the yellow house, looked across the river and rediscovered the BE nest. Our fourteen BE for the day was an adult perched on the Pennsylvania side of the river across from the fishing access area. No BE at Minisink Ford Observation Blind.

We traveled north to the Roebling bridge in NY and crossed to the Pennsylvania side. Proximal to the Roebling Bridge is The Eagle Institute which provides visitors with a video of area eagles, brochures, newsletters, and other information about eagles is. There is a gift shop and the Institute is open weekends December through March.

An adult BE was perched at the confluence of the Lackawaxen and Delaware rivers. In the parking area we looked at the mature BE perched across the Lackawaxen. Above us on the north side of the Lackawaxen river near the confluence with the Delaware is an active relocated BE nest just over the ridge.

By the time we reached the Lackawaxen we had seen 15 Bald Eagles.

We traveled upstream along the Lackawaxen to the PPL Dam site and saw an two additional BEs one flying downstream near Appert Road and the other soaring above the bridge where we concluded our field trip at 4:30 PM.

Next Eagle Searches from the Preserve: February 11, 2018, February 25, and March 11, 2018.

TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SEARCH FOR EAGLES FROM THE PRESERVE FIELD TRIP

REGISTER ON LINE

PHONE: 570.296.6752 AND INDICATE YOU WILL BE ATTENDING.

Or, eMail: jack@brandwein.org to leave a message.

Meet 12:30 PM at the Brandwein Nature Learning Preserve, 400 Minisink Turnpike, Greenville, NY

WEATHER PERMITTING. - Dress warmly, bring binoculars, and field guides.

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 17 Bald Eagles, 1 Red-tailed Hawk, and a Turkey Vulture we saw:

Canada Goose

American Black Duck

Mallard

Ring-billed Gull

Bald Eagle

Red-tailed Hawk

Turkey Vulture

Rock Pigeon

Blue Jay

American Crow

Common Raven

Tufted Titmouse

European Starling

Dark-eyed Junco