

Brandwein Institute Search for Eagles Sunday, 10 March 2019

The season's final Brandwein Institute half-day Search for Eagles took place in the Delaware Valley Sunday, 10 March 2019 from Noon to 6:00 PM The temperature at the start was 41 degrees and at the finish 36 degrees. It was a cloudy, misty, and at times foggy day. We logged 140 miles in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and Upper Delaware Scenic River from the Callahan House 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 3 participants that recorded 25 species of birds including 24 Bald Eagles (BE), 2 Red-tailed Hawks, Common Raven, and a Tree Swallow. A number Bald Eagles we observed were adults in or at a nest or near open water of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and Scenic Upper Delaware. Eagles we saw were perched, and in flight.



The first raptor of the day was an adult BE perched near the Metz Road nest. From Route 209 mile marker 16 an adult BE was seen in the nest which is east of the highway at the edge of the field in a White Pine close to the river. Another adult was perched nearby. At the north end of the shale pit near mile marker 17 is a BE nest that has had birds around it for the past few weeks but none were present today. This nest site has been active for the past few years.

From the river road we spotted an adult BE perched near the condominiums at the end of Bennett Avenue. We drove to the site to get closer look at the bird, it cooperated.



Next, was the nest on Old Milford Road near the NPS Pierce House. A pair of adult BEs were present. At first we used the spotting scope to look at the BE in the nest. Within a few minutes another BE with a stick in its beak flew to the nest and swapped places with the bird at the nest. We watched as the displaced BE flew above and landed in a nearby tree. The first time we located this nest a few months ago, we heard but did not see a BE. We moved on to the Kittatinny Campground where 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. The nest is gone; however, we still see BEs as well as Common Ravens in the area. We enjoyed a pit stop at the Pennsylvania Welcome Center then proceeded to the Laurel Grove Cemetery in Port Jervis to view the Delaware from the Tri-States monument. We added Canada Goose, Mallard, and Common Mergansers. No BE was at the cemetery nest.

At Eddy Farm Resort overlook we watched Canada Geese fly by. From the Hawks Nest overlook we spotted a juvenile BE flying down river beneath us. We watched as it flew and perched in PA across from us. As this happened another juvenile BE soared above the river. We searched without success for the Peregrine Falcon.

We added four more BEs between the Hawks Nest and Mill Rift bridge. The first we spotted was an adult perched in the White Pine on the PA side where there once was a huge nest. A second adult was perched in their favorite White Pine high above us on the ridge. The next were two juveniles perched on the same branch. One was larger than the other, probably a female. I was able to capture their image and attach it to this report.



Next stop was the Mongaup Falls Observation Blind. We crossed the bridge and spotted a perched juvenile BE up stream. We doubled back to get a better look at the bird who took flight and flew ten yards above us. On Plank Road we spotted a perched juvenile BE. Moving slowly along the road we spotted an adult BE perched in a White Pine with a nest high on the ridge. As we watched, a second adult BE flew into the nest. We continued to the Rio Dam Road, no BE at the dam.



We returned to Delaware at 3:30 PM and traveled upriver. Our 16th BE was an adult perched near the river at the Kittatinny Canoe Pond Eddy camp site. 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 17th BE for the day was a juvenile perched atop a dead tree on the Pennsylvania side of the river across from us. No BE was 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 NPS visitor center 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.

A juvenile BE was perched at the confluence of the Lackawaxen and Delaware rivers. It was here that we added the Tree Swallow. By the time we reached the Lackawaxen we had seen 18 Bald Eagles.

Traveling upstream along the Lackawaxen to the PPL Dam site we saw an additional six BEs. An adult was perched upstream from the Rowlands Bridge another was perched upstream from Church Road, and another at Swinging Bridge. The remaining three were juveniles perched and spotted near Engvaldsen, Appert, and Gelderman Roads.

Future Search for Eagles: Full-day: First Sunday of the month December 2019, January, February, and March 2020

Half-day: Second Sunday of the month, meet at NOON at the North Entrance to DWGNRA RT 209 mile marker 20

TO PARTICIPATE IN A SEARCH FOR EAGLES FIELD TRIP

PHONE: 845.325.0536 AND INDICATE YOU WILL BE ATTENDING.

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

Meet 8:00 am at PEEC OR 10:00 am the north entrance to DWGNRA RT 209 mile marker 20.

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 Brandwein Institute. Join us to Search For Eagles. In addition to the 24 Bald Eagles, 2 Red-tailed Hawks, and a Common Raven we saw:

Canada Goose

American Black Duck

Mallard

Common Merganser

Wild Turkey

Ring-billed Gull

Bald Eagle

Red-tailed Hawk

Downy Woodpecker

Hairy Woodpecker

Pileated Woodpecker

Rock Pigeon

Mourning Dove

Blue Jay

American Crow

Common Raven

Belted Kingfisher

Tree Swallow

White-breasted Nuthatch

Black-capped Chickadee

Tufted Titmouse

European Starling

American Goldfinch

Dark-eyed Junco