

Search for Eagles, Dr. S. Marie Kuhnen - Memorial Field Trip Series, 3 December 2023

The first in a series of eight Dr. S. Marie Kuhnen Memorial Field Trips, Search for Eagles, took place in the Delaware Valley Sunday, December 3, 2023 from 8:00 a.m. through 3:30 p.m. Temperatures at the start and finish were 40 degrees. The day which was rainy and drizzly began with watching feeder birds at home and the Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC) that included, Dark-eyed Junco, Black-capped Chickadee, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, and Blue Jays. We logged 147 miles in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and Upper Delaware Scenic River from the Bushkill Access. The trip concluded along the headwaters of the Lackawaxen.

Jack Padalino, president emeritus of PEEC and Brandwein Institute, a partner with the National Park Service, led the search that recorded 30 species of birds including 23 Bald Eagles most of whom were perched adults and 2 juvenile eagles, 4 Red-tailed Hawks, 2 Red-shoulder Hawks and 1 Peregrine Falcon.

At the Bushkill Access were American Crows. No eagles were seen at the access, at Toms Creek, or at Eshbacks; however we spotted 100 Cedar Waxwings there. The first Red-tail was seen just south of the Briscoe Mountain Road near PEEC and another near the Dingmans Ferry campground. One adult eagle at the Dingmans Ferry Access down river on the Jersey side. We added a dozen Mourning Dove, Blue Jays, Red-winged Blackbirds and a Red-tailed Hawk. We searched the Dingmans Cemetery where previously we observed adult eagles perched and in flight. None were present. We added a perched Red-tailed Hawk at RT 209 mile marker 19.

Our second adult Bald Eagle was spotted from RT 209 mile marker 17 perched on the Jersey side of the river. No eagles at Milford Beach or along River Road. We checked the nest near the Pierce House, it is huge, but no eagle there.

No eagles at the old nest site over the I-84 westbound lane across from the Kittatinny Camp Ground or the DV High School.



Behind the Best Western we added Eastern Bluebirds and another 50 Cedar Waxwings.

Our next stop was the Riverview Restaurant near where PA, NJ, and NY converge. We added a second Red-shoulder Hawk, a Common Merganser and 100 Canada Geese but no eagles.

We enjoyed a rest stop at the Pennsylvania Welcome Center and spotted a Red-tailed Hawk perched on a lamp post as well as murmuration of 1,000 plus European Starlings wheeling about.

We checked the nest at the Port Jervis Laurel Grove Cemetery and discovered an eagle perched across the river from it and flocks of Eastern Bluebirds as well as Dark-eyed Juncos flew along side us as we drove.

No eagles were seen from the Eddy Pond Resort overlook.

Fog was thick at the Hawks Nest; however, we were able to spot a perched Peregrine Falcon above some white wash.

We added the 4th eagle perched in PA after we crossed the Mongaup River and checked the Indian Head PA nest.

The Pond Eddy nest site on the PA shore has been reconstructed. Two eagles were perched near a White Pine tree high on the ridge on the NY side of the river.

As we crossed the bridge approaching the Mongaup Observation Blind we spotted 3 Black Ducks.

An eagle was perched along Plank Road where we also spotted a Rough Grouse, a first for our eagle searches. No sightings at the Rio Reservoir Dam.

We returned to the Delaware and traveled upstream until we saw an adult eagle on the ridge proximal to the Pond Eddy road sign.

Two eagles were perched near a nest on the PA side about 100 yards up river from the Mill Rift bridge. There were also two eagles perched near the NPS Upper Delaware Headquarters. We were treated to a perched eagle proximal to the Shohola nest and saw two eagles from the Barryville observation pullover. Up river from the Roebling Bridge in PA two eagles were perched in the same tree.

On the north side of the Delaware near the confluence, we located an eagle on the PA side of the river. While we having lunch in the Zane Gray parking observation area we saw one of the bridge perched eagles fly to the water's edge.

As we traveled upstream along the Lackawaxen, two adult eagles were seen perched within ten feet of each other. These two eagles were near Engvaldsen Road. Our next eagle was high on the ridge where the birds have been known to roost. About 100 yards down river from the Swinging Bridge we spotted a Golden Eagle perched in a Sycamore 20 feet above the water. Three additional eagles were seen up river from Appert road, the last of whom was a juvenile that landed and we spotted it as we crossed the bridge over the Lackawaxen.

The eagles' nests will be monitored on our future Searches for Eagles:

- Sunday, December 10, 2023
- Sundays - January 7 & 14, 2024
- Sundays - February 4, 11, & 18, 2024
- Sunday - March 3 2024

TO PARTICIPATE IN A SEARCH FOR EAGLES FIELD TRIP

PHONE: 845.325.0536 or email jackpeec@aol.com

AND INDICATE WHICH FIELD TRIP(S) YOU WILL BE ATTENDING

Meet 8:00 a.m. at the PEEC parking lot OR 10:00 a.m. in the parking area at the north entrance to the DWGNRA, Route 209 South @ mile marker 21, Milford, PA .

WEATHER PERMITTING.

Dress warmly, bring binoculars, field guides, and a lunch.

THERE IS NO CHARGE

Eagle observation data that we collect is shared with the National Park Service, members of the Sussex County Bird Club, Eagle Institute, and Hawk Migration Association of North America HMANA. An Eagle identification field guide and a "Search for Eagles" hand-out is provided for participants by the Paul F-Brandwein Institute.

Join us to Search For Eagles, the symbol of our nation!

In addition to the 23 Bald Eagles and a Golden Eagle observed were:

Canada Goose
Black Duck
Common Merganser
Rough Grouse
Red-tailed Hawk
Red-shouldered Hawk
Peregrine Falcon
Ring-billed Gull
Rock Pigeon
Morning Dove
Cedar Waxwing
Pileated Woodpecker
Downy Woodpecker
Hairy Woodpecker
Belted Kingfisher
Carolina Wren
Blue Jay -
American Crow
Tufted Titmouse

Black-capped Chickadee
American Robin
Eastern Bluebird
European Starling
Song Sparrow
White-throated Sparrow
Dark-eyed Junco
Northern Cardinal
Red-winged Blackbird