

Search for Eagles, Dr. S. Marie Kuhnen - Memorial Field Trip Series, 18 February 2024

The seventh in a series of eight Dr. S. Marie Kuhnen Memorial Field Trips, Search for Eagles, funded by the Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC), took place in the Delaware Valley Sunday, February 18, 2024 from 8:00 a.m. through 4:00 p.m. Temperature at the start was 11 degrees and finish 35 degrees. The day which was clear, cold, and partly cloudy began with watching feeder birds at home and at PEEC that included, Dark-eyed Junco, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, and Blue Jays. We logged 162 miles in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and Upper Delaware Scenic River from the Bushkill Access to the conclusion along the headwaters of the Lackawaxen.

Jack Padalino, president emeritus of PEEC and Brandwein Institute, led the search that included eight participants and recorded 33 bird species including 23 Bald Eagles, 9 Red-tailed Hawks, a Peregrine Falcon, and 6 Common Ravens.



The first eagle we saw was an adult perched above the shale bank north of Tom's Creek. At the Bushkill Access we added two adult eagles perched in a dead tree on the Jersey side of the river and two juveniles in flight downriver. A Red-tail was perched at Valley View Group Campground. No eagles at Eshbacks. One adult eagle downriver from the Dingmans Ferry Bridge. We searched the Dingmans Cemetery where previously this week I had spotted two Red-tails perched in the same tree and 100 yards north of them two perched adult eagles, none were present. Our next Bald Eagle near the river from RT 209 mile marker 16 was spotted hunkered down in the nest probably incubating eggs. The same bird was there last search.

The eighth eagle of the search flew over us at Zimmerman Flats. An adult eagle was perched above the shale bank at mile marker 17. At Milford we added a number of Red-tailed Hawks. No eagles along River Road. Driving along High Street we spotted an adult eagle soaring over Milford. We checked the nest near the Pierce House but no eagles were present.

From the Kittatinny Camp Ground pull over we located a pair of Common Ravens north of us west of I 84. Two eagles flying south above the ridge were spotted from the DV High School parking lot together with a Turkey Vulture and three Common Ravens. Behind the Best Western on the Jersey side of the river an adult eagle was perched. Our next stop was the Riverview Restaurant near where PA, NJ, and NY converge, a gaggle of Canada Geese were there as were Mallards and Common Mergansers. We enjoyed a rest stop at the Pennsylvania Welcome Center and spotted



Turkey Vultures, Common Ravens, and American Crows. We checked the nest at the Port Jervis Laurel Grove Cemetery no eagles were seen there or from the Eddy Pond Resort overlook.

At the Hawks Nest where on occasional there is a Peregrine Falcon, we found it perched on a ledge above some whitewash. It took flight, rose high above, went into a stoop, then landed on the ledge again. We were able to view the falcon through a spotting scope with 50 power magnification. WOW, we were even able to see the notch in the falcon's beak. While we were at the overlook two eagles, an adult and a juveniles soared above.



After we crossed the Mongaup River and checked the Indian Head PA nest, no luck. We did see an eagle perched in a white pine on the PA side of the river at Pond Eddy. At the Mongaup Observation Blind one eagle was perched in a tree upriver that we were able to see through a spotting scope in the blind. Plank Road no sightings nor at the Rio Reservoir Dam.

We returned to the Delaware and traveled upstream, crossed the Roebling Bridge into PA and parked in the observation area at the Zane Gray Museum. We added a perched adult downriver, an adult if flight that put on quite a show while it was harassed by a pair of Red-tailed Hawks.

We traveled upstream and added three juvenile eagles after we crossed the bridge over the Lackawaxen and neared the Rowlands bridge. The birds appeared to have been exhibiting courtship display.. The final pair of eagles for the day were perched together on the same branch at Appert Road.

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

Sunday - March 3 2024

Eagle observation data that we collect are shared with the National Park Service, members of the Sussex County Bird Club, Eagle Institute, and Hawk Migration Association of North America HMANA.

In addition to the 23 Bald Eagles observed

- Canada Goose
- American Black Duck
- Mallard
- Hooded Merganser
- Common Merganser
- Turkey Vulture
- Red-shouldered Hawk
- Red-tailed Hawk
- Rock Pigeon
- Morning Dove

Red-bellied Woodpecker
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
Downy Woodpecker
Hairy Woodpecker
Northern Flicker
Pileated Woodpecker
Peregrine Falcon
Blue Jay
American Crow
Common Raven
Tufted Titmouse
White-breasted Nuthatch
Black-capped Chickadee
Eastern Bluebird
American Robin
European Starling
Dark-eyed Junco
White-throated Sparrow
Red-winged Blackbird
Common Grackle
House Finch
Purple Finch
American Goldfinch