

Bald Eagle Watch December 12, 2015

By Lynn Moseley, Field Trip Leader

Ten members of PBC joined Lynn Moseley for a morning trip to Lakes Brandt and Higgins where our local pair of Bald Eagles have their territory. We negotiated around the road work in progress as Route 220 North is being widened, and were able to set up scopes right on the bridge over Lake Brandt that was closed for construction and directly across from the eagle nest. Unfortunately, the eagles must have been off in another part of their territory during the 45 minutes that we were there.

Although we saw no eagles, several species of ducks, including Gadwall, Mallard, and Green-winged Teal offered distant views, as well as other birds typical of the area such as Pied-billed Grebes and Belted Kingfisher.

One interesting observation was that the Great Blue Heron rookery was already occupied by eight or ten birds perched in the bald cypress trees not far from the eagle nest. This choice of location by the herons is curious, given the fact that studies of the diet of Bald Eagles almost always reveal that they eat Great Blues!

The group then continued on to the Lake Higgins marina and walked part of the Bald Eagle Trail. We identified Brown-headed Nuthatches, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, and other winter visitors and permanent resident species.