

Seek out a falcon, win a prize

BY JIM WRIGHT
NJMC

This Sunday is Super Bowl XLIV, and the opening kickoff isn't until around 6:30 p.m. So what are you going to do the rest of the day, besides loading up on snacks and beverages?

How about competing in Super Bird Sunday that same morning at Lyndhurst's DeKorte Park?

This Sunday at 10 a.m., the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission and the Bergen County Audubon

Society are holding a free guided bird walk with a twist: We are offering great prizes to each person on the walk who first spots a bird that shares its name with an NFL team.

The two-hour walk begins outside the Meadowlands Environment Center at DeKorte Park. Five NFL teams are named after birds (as we're sure you know!), so you have plenty of chances to win.

"We think this a perfect start to Super Bowl Sunday," says Robert Ceberio, the NJMC's executive director. "You can go for a walk, see the natural wonders of the Meadowlands, and come home a winner—even if your team is already out of the running!"

Here's how the walk works. If, for example, you are the first person to see a cardinal, you win a prize. If you are the first one to see a falcon, you win. And so forth. But, as Ceberio is quick to note: "Don't expect to win anything if you are the first person to see a jet."



JIM WRIGHT/NJMC

You can win a prize if you're the first to see a falcon playing in the Meadowlands on Sunday.

Although seahawks (ospreys) are pretty hard to find in the Meadowlands this time of year, the other birds are by no means rare. Cardinals are downright common. Falcons—especially peregrines and kestrels—are seen frequently. A pair of ravens appears to be ready to nest in Laurel Hill County Park. And there have been several bald eagle sightings in DeKorte.

Each winner will receive a goodie bag containing nifty swag, including two free tickets for a two-hour Meadowlands Commission eco-cruise on the Hackensack River next summer, a limited-edition Peter Max Meadowlands poster and NJMC bookmarks featuring DeKorte Park attractions.

Don Torino of BCAS, who will be one of the leaders of the walk, says: "What better way to kick off Super Bowl Sunday than to get

the family off the couch and out of the house to enjoy nature and see the great birds of the Meadowlands?"

Sunday's walk is a special edition of the twice-monthly free Meadowlands nature walks run by NJMC and BCAS. Although DeKorte Park is a favorite spot for these events, the walks also take place at other Meadowlands sites, including Harrier Meadow in North Arlington, Mill Creek Marsh and Laurel Hill County Park in Secaucus, and the Ridgefield Nature Center and Skeetkill Marsh in Ridgefield.

NJMC Communications Officer Jim Wright maintains the Commission's daily nature blog, meadowblog.net - featuring beautiful photography and the latest info on the region's abundant natural wonders.