



18 Dec 2024 Teta Kain Interview by Jeff Wright:

Question: Do you prefer the title Queen of the Dragon or Empress of the Dragon and why?

Answer: *Empress of the Dragon. It was a promotion from Queen and a fun title.*

Question: Did you know that the Friends of Dragon Teta Kain Nature Preserve is now the top birding spot in Middlesex County based on eBird data? This may be the Empress Teta effect!

Answer: *No and wow. I love birds and am happy to hear this.*

Question: You are a great photographer of the natural world. Is there a favorite species you liked to photograph on the Dragon Run?

Answer: *Owls! I loved when we were on the Dragon Run and we would see them or hear them. They were exciting to see. Their presence was an especially wonderful experience on night paddles. I remember the paddle trip you and I were on when we spotted a mother Barred Owl and her two babies on branches directly above where we were paddling. All the paddle guests got to see them also and take pictures. And this was in the daytime. Owls are amazing.*



Question: In your role as a nature guide on the Dragon Run what did you like better - canoes or kayaks? Any memorable moments in the canoes?

Answer: *Kayaks! Not a big fan of canoes. Sometimes I would fall out of the canoe, and not always by accident. I always got a fun reaction when I did this. I did this in the famous picture of Davis Rhodes and I in a canoe. I tipped us over.*



Question: How did you become a member of the Friends of Dragon Run?

Answer: *After we moved to Gloucester, I started to learn about the area. I don't quite remember how I found out about the Friends of Dragon Run. But somehow, I found it! There were quite a few enthusiastic people I met. No specific names come to mind from my initial experiences. But I liked the place, and the people who were involved in conserving it, so I joined. Andy Lacatell is one of the folks whose presence and contributions I remember during my early years with FODR. But it was the Dragon Run that "reeled me in", to help protect it. That was an easy sell as I really loved the Dragon Run and I was inspired by what the organization was trying to do.*

Question: What is your favorite memory about the Dragon Run?

Answer: *My favorite overall memory is of all the years we paddled on the Dragon with guests. Great credit goes to Gordon Page as one of the folks who helped lead these paddles for years, who did exceptional work to make the trips a success, and who was a great teammate for nature. We had a lot of challenges planning for and conducting the paddle trips. But we had a great group of folks doing the work. It was a great team.*



Question: What was the greatest challenge in building the Friends of Dragon Run?

Answer: *In many ways it was starting the paddle trips. They really helped build name recognition in the community, introduced people to the wonderful place the Dragon is, and explained why we needed help to protect it. Seeing it was believing in it. It was a lot of fun: challenging and rewarding.*



Question: Any ideas you want to share on how to further protect the Dragon Run?

Answer: *Keep taking folks on paddle trips toward convincing them of the wonders of this magical place we must protect.*

Question: What is the one thing you would like others to have learned from you?

Answer: *The beauty of the Dragon Run and the species that depend on the Dragon Run. The Dragon Run is a wonder. It was an exceptional honor of a lifetime to introduce it to so many people over the decades. It has a big place in my heart, and I sense we helped it enter the hearts and minds of others. And occasionally we made people smile and laugh.*

Comment: Thank you, Empress. Your Kingdom thanks you for both your words but most importantly for your deeds.

