

Wooded Island Bird Walk Report for Saturday, November 23, 2013

Hello to All,

Mr. Percy Shelley asked, “O Wind, If winter comes, can Spring be far behind?” After exposure to the cold and wind today, I for one, would respond, “Well, yes, Percy, it sure feels as if Spring is very far behind.” It was not a “cut-your-face-off-wind”, but that is something to look forward to, until the cherry blossoms bloom on the newly planted ornamental cherry trees.

This is the time to look over outerwear and underwear on the web sites of Patagonia, LL Bean, Columbia, etc. and make your Christmas Wish List known to family and friends. Specify size and color while you are at it.

We are a dogged lot of birders. Despite the weather conditions, we faithfully make our rounds of winter spots in Jackson Park in search of birds. Usually the harsher the exposure to the elements, the better the place where the birds are found, i.e, the Lake and Harbors.

Although *Monk Parakeets* may be a tiresome bird to some, I fear that their nest on the light fixture near the golf driving range may be abandoned. That would be a loss for the birders from out of town who join us, as they are countable in Illinois. A bird that is often heard before being seen, flying in squadron formation, they have been an avian mascot for Hyde Park.

There are some birders, Karin D and myself included, who have a magical ability to call forth a desired bird, as if on cue, from somewhere backstage. It happened again today. As we were standing along the southwest corner of the Inner Harbor, I remarked to Eric and Tobias that we have not seen a raptor all morning. Just then, Tobias spots a very low flying adult *Red-tailed Hawk* coming our way. It flew low over the Inner Harbor, parallel to Richards Drive. Karin D. wastes her magic on such things as Pink Flamingoes, but she has been known to find a Merlin or a Strike in the past. I still dwell in the land of The Probable.

BIRDERS: 9. Eric, Tobias, Will, Julie, Rick, Jennie, Jennette, Karin D., and Pat

TIME: 8:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

PLACES: Wooded Island, Bobolink Meadow, Lakefront, Outer Harbor& and south end of the Inner Harbor.

WEATHER: Sunny. Cold. Windy. Temperature 14 – 25 F. Winds from the North 15 – 25mph. Wind Chill subzero F.

TOTAL SPECIES COUNT: 20

X = commonly seen and/or not counted.

1. Canada Goose – X.
2. Mallard – X. 1 in the Marina. Others in the Harbors.
3. Greater/Lesser Scaup – X. Outer Harbor.
4. Bufflehead – X. Harbors.
5. Common Goldeneye – X. A few in the Outer Harbor.
6. Red-breasted Merganser – X. 2 in the East Lagoon. More in the Harbors.
7. Pied-billed Grebe – 2. 1 in the East Lagoon; seen from the Music Bridge. The other was in the Inner Harbor beside the docks.
8. Horned Grebe – 4. 1 in the Outer Harbor. 3 in the Inner Harbor near each other.
9. Red-tailed Hawk – 1. Adult. Low fly over of birders at 67th and Richards Drive.
10. Ring-billed Gull – X. On docks and fly overs.
11. Herring Gull – 1. At least one big young fellow on an Outer Harbor Dock.
12. American Crow – 3.
13. Black-capped Chickadee – 6. Small visible flock in the Rose Garden.
14. HERMIT THRUSH – 1. On brush with berries west of the Rose Garden.
15. GRAY CATBIRD – 1. In the company of the Hermit Thrush. Eric posted to IBET about this late date find.
16. American Tree Sparrow – 2. South end of Bobolink Meadow.
17. White-throated Sparrow – 3. Rose Garden.
18. Dark-eyed Junco – 7. On Wooded Island. 5 were in the Rose Garden.
19. Northern Cardinal – 4. On Wooded Island. A pair was in the same area as the Hermit Thrush and Gray Catbird.
20. American Goldfinch – 5. Rose Garden.

This is a group report, with many birders contributing to the list. Most of the birds were seen by a least several or all the birders.

Corrections, additions and comments are welcome.

This report will be recorded on eBird as a group report for the Wooded Island Bird Walks.

The Walks are free and open to one and all. They are held year round. Birders always show up on Darrow Bridge at the start times. Newcomers are warmly welcomed.

The Walks start at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, and at 7:15 a.m. on Wednesday.

Birders gather on Darrow Bridge, which is located south of the Museum of Science and Industry. Ample parking is available east of Darrow Bridge and is accessible from South Lake Shore Drive at 58th Street (labeled Science Drive on a small blue street sign). There is a Stop Light at 58th Street. Make a turn at the Stop Light towards the Museum. Turn Left (south) at the intersection of Science Drive and Columbia Drive. Go through the parking lot to the west end near Darrow Bridge.

Best of Birding to All,

Patricia Durkin

Chicago Audubon Society Representative

Wooded Island Bird Walks