

## Wooded Island Bird Walk Report for Saturday, December 28, 2013

Hello to All,

Life is uncertain. Let's start with dessert first. The new Park, No. 523, along the lakefront at 87<sup>th</sup> St was our last stop. Waiting for us were TWO SNOWY OWLS! A speckled wonder was sitting hunched on its feathered feet on the ice, about fifty yards off shore. The other owl was sitting on the edge of the ice near the lights at the opening in the breakwaters. They did relocate. The near one hid on the north side of the north breakwater. The "harbor lights" owl slipped away unnoticed.

It was nice to see the MALE HAIRY WOODPECKER working the tree trunks along the east side of the Rose Garden. Mark and Randy reported TWO WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCHES on Wooded Island. A wintering HERMIT THRUSH called as it flew across the path near the north gate to Bobolink Meadow. It perched in the open for a minute, and then dropped to the understory. Red berries are in the area.

Randy found a FOX SPARROW on Wooded Island. About twenty-five AMERICAN TREE SPARROWS were sprinkled along the fence in Bobolink Meadow.

Jennie spotted TWO MUTE SWANS a-swimming off of Hayes Beach.

*An Extra Large +++ double layered mushroom* was found near the golf driving range building. (photo). Although of interest, none of us wanted to make a portabella-like hamburger out of it. We left it where we found it.

It was just a nice morning to be birding. Did I mention the Snowy Owls?

To honor Doug Anderson, the founder of the Audubon Wooded Island Bird Walks, and continue a tradition established by him, birders will meet on Darrow Bridge on New Year's Day at 8 a.m. We will conduct our usual Walk and will likely add an extension trip to see nearby Snowy Owls.

BIRDERS: 11. Jennie, Karin C., Mark W., Randy, Rick, Leo, Jennette, Karin D. Dan and his young son John, a budding birder with his new binoculars, and Pat. (group photo of four)

TIME: 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

PLACES: Wooded Island, Bobolink Meadow, Outer Harbor and 87<sup>th</sup> St. Lakefront.

WEATHER: Sunny. Warm. Mild SW winds 10 – 20mph. Temperature 30 – 42 F.

TOTAL SPECIES COUNT: 29

X = commonly seen and/or not counted.

Both Randy Shonkwiler and Mark Webster shared their list for this group report. Most of the birds were seen by a least several or all the birders.

1. Canada Goose – X. Soccer Field and Outer Harbor.
2. Mallard – 25. Outer Harbor.
3. REDHEAD – 1. Male. Outer Harbor.
4. Greater Scaup – 2. A male and female pair. Outer Harbor.
5. Bufflehead – 1. Male Outer Harbor.
6. Common Goldeneye – 3. A single male was the only waterfowl in the Marina. A male was displaying for a female in the Outer Harbor.
7. Hooded Merganser – 3. 1 male and 2 females. Outer Harbor.
8. Common Merganser – X. Low numbers on the Lake.
9. Red-breasted Merganser – 8. Outer Harbor. Abundant on Lake.
10. Red-tailed Hawk – 1, possibly 2. Immature. First observed at the beginning of the Walk, perched on a Heron Island tree. Later, a same type of Hawk flew near LaRabida and was harassed by five crows. It could very likely be the same hawk.
11. American Kestrel – 1. Along the new section of Rte. 41 north of 87<sup>th</sup> St.
12. American Coot – 1. Outer Harbor.
13. Ring-billed Gull – X. Outer Harbor.
14. Herring Gull – 8. Outer Harbor.
15. SNOWY OWL – 2. 87<sup>TH</sup> St. Park No. 523. On breakwater and ice. Active.
16. Downy Woodpecker – 1. Wooded Island.
17. HAIRY WOODPECKER – 1. Male. Wooded Island.
18. American Crow – 9.
19. Black-capped Chickadee – 3. Wooded Island.
20. WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH – 2. Wooded Island.
21. BROWN CREEPER – 1. Wooded Island.
22. HERMIT THRUSH – 1. Bobolink Meadow.
23. European Starling – 3.
24. American Tree Sparrow – 26. One on Wooded Island. 25 along the fence and in the woods of Bobolink Meadow. Randy, Mark, Dan and Young John walked along the fence.
25. FOX SPARROW – 1. Wooded Island. Reported by Randy.

26. White-throated Sparrow – 1. Wooded Island. Reported by Randy.
27. Dark-eyed Junco – 15. Bobolink Meadow.
28. Northern Cardinal – 5.
29. American Goldfinch – X. Heard. Bobolink Meadow.

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 58<sup>th</sup> Street (labeled Science Drive on a small blue street sign). There is a Stop Light at 58<sup>th</sup> 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