

Wooded Island Bird Walk Report for Saturday, December 7, 2013

Hello to All,

The morning was very cold, but the sun was out and the winds were mild. We have endured worse conditions. Three brave birders showed up, with Randy the bravest and best among us in identification, counting and weather endurance.

Having been warned by Paul Clyne and Karin Cassel that Darrow Bridge was completely blocked off, for no known reason, we planned to follow a route suggested by Paul. The new route would include circling the North Lagoon from east to west, to arrive on the west side of the shuddered Darrow Bridge.

At the start, I categorically deny having anything to do with the cutting of the tall chain-linked fence on the east and west side of Darrow Bridge. The openings on the south end of the fences were wide enough to walk through two abreast. Although I had absolutely nothing to do with the creation of these openings, we were grateful to avail ourselves of the short cut.

We searched the 63rd St. Pier carefully for a *Snowy Owl*, but none was found. There was a report of a very cooperative Snowy Owl on a boat dock at Montrose Harbor. However, Rick Richter did locate *eight Snowy Owls* on Sunday morning, in the *Apostolic Church of God*, located at 63rd and Dorchester. Some great gospel music is made within its' confines. Rick texted me to see if the owls were countable by ABA standards. Initially, I texted back that if they moved their heads, opened their eyes, and preened their feathers, they could be countable. If they flew around the sanctuary, that would be a definite plus. If captured, artificial or stuffed, that would negate a count. (Photo attached)

BIRDERS: 3. Randy, Rick and Pat

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

PLACES: Wooded Island, Bobolink Meadow. 63rd St. Beach and Outer Harbor

WEATHER: Sunny and cold. Temperature a steady 14 F. Mild winds from the NW 5 – 10 mph. The lagoons had a thin layer of ice with large open areas in the East and West Lagoons.

TOTAL SPECIES COUNT: 22

Randy Shonkwiler shared his list for this report.

X = commonly seen and/or not counted.

1. Canada Goose – X.

2. AMERICAN BLACK DUCK – 1. Outer Harbor. At base of west wooden ramp.
3. Mallard – 62. Outer Harbor.
4. Redhead – 6. Outer Harbor.
5. Ring-necked Duck – 1. Outer Harbor.
6. Greater Scaup – 170. Outer Harbor.
7. Lesser Scaup – 7. Outer Harbor.
8. Bufflehead – 3. Outer Harbor.
9. Common Goldeneye – 2. Outer Harbor and Lakefront.
10. Hooded Merganser – 6. One male & six females. Outer Harbor. The gals were snatching some sizeable fish near the docks.
11. Common Merganser – 5. Outer Harbor (1 female) and 4 on Lake.
12. Red-breasted Merganser – 25. Twelve in Outer Harbor and thirteen on Lake.
13. HORNED GREBE – 1. 63RD St. Beach waters.
14. DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT – 2. One is the West Lagoon and the other on a dock in the Outer Harbor, looking rather miserable. No hanging wings out to dry today.
15. American Coot – 8. Outer Harbor.
16. Ring-billed Gull – 55. Outer Harbor.
17. Herring Gull – 8. Seven in the Outer Harbor and one on the Lake.
18. Monk Parakeet – 1. Heard by Randy.
19. American Crow – 5.
20. Dark-eyed Junco – 1.
21. Northern Cardinal – 8.
22. American Goldfinch – 1.

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