

Wooded Island Bird Walk Report for Saturday, January 12, 2013

Hello to All,

The mild temperature brought out more birders, than new bird species. We had a very comfortable time in the field.

To add a few new species, a few of us traveled to Wolf Lake and O'Brien Lock and Dam after our morning outing in Jackson Park. Randy, Mark, Eric, Tobias and Cathy and I drove to the *William Powers Conservation Area, on the Chicago side of Wolf Lake*. Entrance is along Avenue O at 126th St. Hunting Season continues until January 17th. We were restricted to the west side of Wolf Lake, and were able to view two of the three swan species reported to be seen there. Randy counted 51 MUTE SWANS. There were also 4 TUNDRA SWANS. The reported Trumpeter Swans were not found. The hunters have to stop shooting at 1 p.m. The swans are likely in the Lake Calumet area, and may return to Wolf Lake after the shooting stops.

Randy, Mark and I later went to *O'Brien Lock and Dam*. At the start of the road to Whitford Pond, seven WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS were gathered together, and kindly perched on the fence for viewing. Randy found a SONG SPARROW among the AMERICAN TREE SPARROWS. Two AMERICAN KESTRELS were patrolling the Lock and Dam. This is located south of 131st Street, west of the bridge over the Calumet River.

Sometimes one has to travel beyond Jackson Park, but not too far, to see a few more species.

BIRDERS: 12. Randy, Mark, Leo, Carol, Cathy, Eric, Jennette, Sally, Jennie, Karin C., Karin D. and Pat

TIME: 8:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. in Jackson Park.

PLACES: Wooded Island, Bobolink Meadow, 66th Outer Harbor. Post extension trip to Wolf Lake and O'Brien Lock & Dam.

WEATHER: April in January. Mostly cloudy. Temperature in the 50's F. Thin ice on half of the East and West Lagoon.

TOTAL SPECIES COUNT (Jackson Park): 20

Canada Goose – Randy counted ~ 400 from Darrow Bridge.

Mallard – 14, excluding those in the Outer Harbor.

Redhead – X. Outer Harbor.

Greater Scaup – X. Outer Harbor.

Lesser Scaup – X. Outer Harbor.

Bufflehead – X. Outer Harbor.

Common Goldeneye – X. Outer Harbor.

HOODED MERGANSER – 2 Male/female. West Lagoon (Photo)

COMMON MERGANSER – 1. Male. Outer Harbor. Resting out of water on the rickety wooden launch of the defunct Jackson Park Bar & Grill building. Usual sighting in the Harbor and out of water. (Photo)

Red-breasted Merganser – X.

RED-TAILED HAWK – 2. Immatures. The first was seen by me while photographing the pair of Hooded Mergansers in the West Lagoon. The tannish hawk was flying low over the Lagoon, from South to North. It caused the Hooded Mergansers to duck underwater. The second hawk was seen around the Outer Harbor. This fearless and inquisitive raptor seemed to enjoy engaging with the crows. It even perched on a crane near the birders, seeming to check us out. (Photos) The belly band is more pronounced than on the quieter hawk regularly found on Wooded Island.

AMERICAN KESTREL – 1. Near LaRabida Hospital. It cleared out of the air space when the Red-tailed Hawk attracted the attention of the crows. The falcon flew north towards the trees near the beach house on Hayes Drive.

Ring-billed Gull – X

Herring Gull – X.

Downy Woodpecker – 3. One was near Darrow Bridge. A male and female were west of the Rose Garden.

American Crow – X

European Starling – 1. Flew into the trees at the south end of Bobolink Meadow.

American Tree Sparrow – X. Wooded Island.

Northern Cardinal – 7. A pocket was found west of the Rose Garden.

American Goldfinch – 2.

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