

Wooded Island Bird Walk Report for Saturday, February 2, 2013

Hello to All,

We had flurries upon us all morning, which made for a beautiful winter landscape, but kept the land birds parked. There was ice patches under the 1 to 2 inches of snow on the paths. Despite the freezing temperatures for the past two days, there was open water in the lagoons near the bridges. A single MALE COMMON GOLDENEYE stayed the night in the East Lagoon along with 75 CANADA GEESE, as seen from Darrow Bridge.

Phil, the Punxsutawney groundhog, was submitted to his annual manhandling today. He did not see his shadow, even after he recovered his sight from all the camera flashes. Thus an early end to winter is predicted. Not quite "Intellicast" weather reporting but it will do.

The most fun today was scoping the lakefront, from the turnaround north of LaRabida Hospital. We were able to see flocks of COMMON MERGANGERS, COMMON GOLDENEYES and RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS. The water was a pale green slush. The birds were out near the end of the 63rd Street pier.

A pair of REDHEAD Ducks was in the Outer Harbor, along with sixteen GREATER/LESSER SCAUP, a single AMERICAN COOT and HERRING GULL. We have not had an uncommon bird since Randy S. discovered the female Black Scouter a couple of months ago. As soon as I find the telephone number to the local oracle who is the intercessor to the bird god, I will make an appointment and bring offerings to request just a single Canvasback to brighten our harbors, or any one of the Scoters. Even a couple of Mute Swans would go a long way to keep the birders content.

BIRDERS: 6. Jennie, Phil, Carol, Leo, Eric and Pat

TIME: 8:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

PLACES: Wooded Island, Bobolink Meadow, 66th St. Outer Harbor and Lakefront

WEATHER: Cloudy. Flurries. Powderly snow. Ice patches. Temperatures steady at 21 – 23 F. Wind NW 5 – 10 mph.

TOTAL SPECIES COUNT: 16

Canada Goose – X. Snow covered backs as they slept. 75 in the open water near Darrow Bridge.

Mallard – 2. Male & Female pair near the North Bridge.

Redhead – 2. Male & Female pair in the Outer Harbor.

Greater/Lesser Scaup – 16. Outer Harbor.

Common Goldeneye – X. 1 male in the East Lagoon. Several in the Outer Harbor, and flocks of six or more in the Lake at the end of the 63rd St. pier.

Common Merganser – X. Flocks in the Lake, in the company of Common Goldeneyes, Red-breasted Mergansers, and a few Scaup.

Red-breasted Merganser – X. Several in the Outer Harbor and small flocks out on the Lake.

American Coot – 1. Outer Harbor.

Ring-billed Gull - ~ 60 Outer Harbor. Eric was designated Counter.

Herring Gull – 1. Outer Harbor.

Monk Parakeet – 2. Fly overs across East Lagoon, from SE to NW, likely heading for breakfast in Hyde Park.

Downy Woodpecker – 1 male north of the Japanese Garden, another heard.

American Crow – 3. Around Wooded Island.

American Robin – 1. Fly over of Wooded Island.

American Tree Sparrow – A single bird was along the shore, NE of the North Bridge. Five more flew from north to south near the golf shack.

Northern Cardinal - 6.

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