

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

Hello to All,

A forecast for cloudy skies did not hold true for our morning in Jackson Park. Under sunny but cold conditions, with mild winds, we made the usual circuit on Wooded Island and through Bobolink Meadow. The lagoon waters are open near the bridges. The North Lagoon (Museum Basin) water was over half open. The ice along the Lake shoreline has expanded to beyond the end of the 63rd St. Pier. Even with a scope we only found a few COMMON MERGANSERS near the edge of the ice.

As expected, there was not much to see on our usual course through Wooded Island and Bobolink Meadow. The dog walkers reported a hawk near the Rose Garden, but we did not find it.

The 66th St. Outer Harbor had open water near the lake channel and near the Animal Bridge that connects the Inner and Outer Harbor. We were hoping to find the male Canvasback that was reported last week. No luck with him, but he could have been just beyond or viewing point. Mark did find a MALE NORTHERN SHOVELER.

Afterward, Mark, Jennie, Phil and I took a short trip up to Montrose Harbor to see the ROSS'S GOOSE that has been keeping company with the Canada Geese. There we hit pay dirt and a plus. A SNOW GOOSE was grazing on the grass and the ROSS'S GOOSE was nearby in the Lake water. We were able to easily look at them, at fairly close range, from the same viewing spot, and compare their size, head and bill differences.

Feeling lucky and with some time left before our return to Hyde Park, we drove a few miles northwest of Montrose to Rosehill Cemetery. Peterson & Western Avenues is the NW corner of this large parcel of land. We found the sections where the FEMALE EVENING GROSBEAK was reported just an hour before. Mark, Phil and Jennie gave the section and neighboring sections a thorough search, but the rare bird was not found.

As I waited to exit the Cemetery on Peterson, another driver held traffic to allow me access to the road. I said to the others that he must think we were mourners, and was being kind. Someone in the backseat quickly quipped that we were indeed mourners: we missed the Evening Grosbeak.

BIRDERS: 8. Karin C., Jennette, Leo, Carol, Jennie, Mark, Phil and Pat

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

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

WEATHER: Sunny. Temperature 24 to 29 F. Winds: WSW 10 to 20 mph.

TOTAL SPECIES COUNT: 18 + 2 outside Jackson Park

Canada Goose – X. 14 were in the East Lagoon near Darrow Bridge.

Mallard – X. 13. East Lagoon, near Heron Island. Others were in the Outer Harbor.

NORTHERN SHOVELER – 1. Male. Outer Harbor.

Greater/Lesser Scaup – X. Outer Harbor. White on base of bills of females notable.

Common Goldeneye – 5 in the East Lagoon: 3 males and 2 females. Others in Outer Harbor.

HOODED MERGANSER – 4. A male/female pair in the East Lagoon and another pair in the Outer Harbor.

Red-breasted Merganser – x. A few females in the Outer Harbor.

American Coot – X. Increased numbers from last week in the Outer Harbor.

Ring-billed Gull – X. On ice in Outer Harbor. No Herring Gulls were found among them per Mark.

Herring Gull – 3. Flyovers. East Lagoon.

Monk Parakeet – 2. Flew over us at the North Bridge on their way to Hyde Park. Calling out per usual.

Downy Woodpecker – 1. Male. Oak tree on Wooded Island NW side of South Bridge.

American Crow – 3. At start of walk near Darrow Bridge.

Black-capped Chickadee – 1. Wooded Island.

European Starling – 1.

American Tree Sparrow – small flocks on Wooded Island.

Dark-eyed Junco – small flocks with American Tree Sparrows on Wooded Island, south of Rose Garden.

Northern Cardinal – 7. The birds were singing and calling.

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