

Wooded Island Bird Walk Report for Saturday, April 6, 2013

Hello to All,

Our First Saturday walk of April started out a bit cruel. The winds were strong, from the north east, cooling the air as it blew across Lake Michigan. After the noon hour, the winds changed direction, coming from the south, and the earth felt its warm breath. Birders have been shaking off winter and coming out to join the walk in greater numbers. After greetings and introductions, we moved off of Darrow Bridge to find shelter from the wind on the Island. Here, there and everywhere, the birds were waiting for us.

As you can see from our list, some of our late winter favorites remained for another day, and some new spring arrivals were seen. The snowdrops and scilla were in bloom on the Island, and most notably in the Japanese Garden. (photos attached)

BIRDERS: 20 Al, Karin C., Jennette, Rick, Carol, Leo, Peter, Dorothy, Sadako a former Hyde Parker, on a visit from her home in Hawaii, Jennie, Henry, Phil, Jessica, who spotted the Turkey Vulture parked on a branch in the north meadow woods, Eric and Camille, new birders to our walk, Raman, Mark, Pat, Randy, and Ron, formerly from PA; now a local resident, who incidentally did a Mini Big Year in 2012 and recorded 376 ABA birders!

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

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

WEATHER: Cloudy, cold and windy. Temperature in the upper 30's and low 40's F. Winds were from the WSW in the morning 10 to 20 mph.

TOTAL SPECIES COUNT: 47

Canada Goose – X. Nesting.

GADWALL – 3. 1 male & 2 female. East Lagoon.

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK – 1. 66th St. Outer Harbor. Reported by Randy S.

Mallard – X.

NORTHERN SHOVELER – 18. Lagoons.

RING-NECKED DUCK – 1 female. 66th St. Outer Harbor. Reported by Randy S.

Greater Scaup – x More numbers than Lesser Scaup. Outer Harbor.

Lesser Scaup – x. Outer Harbor.

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER – 1. Female. Outer Harbor. Reported by Randy S.

Bufflehead – 4. A male/female pair was in the 59th St. Marina. Another pair was in the Outer Harbor.

Common Goldeneye – 1 female.

Hooded Merganser – 2.

Red-breasted Merganser – X. Numerous in the Lagoons and harbors.

Pied-billed Grebe – 1.

Horned Grebe – 1.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT – 7. All spotted six in one flock overhead.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON – 2. Possibly 3. At the end of our walk we spotted an adult with a juvenile on the southwest side of the Music Bridge. Note, we have always seen Black-crowned Night Herons roosting during the summer in Jackson Park, but none have nested.

TURKEY VULTURE – 1. Possibly 2. The vulture was first seen flying over the East Lagoon in an east direction. As we entered the wooded area at the north end of Bobolink Meadow, Jessica spotted the vulture perched on a branch about 12 feet from the ground. The crows spotted it too, and harassed it until it took flight. At the 66th St. Outer Harbor, a Turkey Vulture flew over the harbor, heading southeast. It may have been the bird in the woods, or another migrant. (Photo vulture and crow attached)

Cooper's Hawk – 1. Flew into the pine trees in Bobolink Meadow and was seen by several birders.

American Coot – 29. Lagoons, Marina and Outer Harbor.

Ring-billed Gull – X. Outer Harbor and Marina, plus fly overs.

Herring Gull – 1. Reported by Mark W.

CASPIAN TERN – 1. We love to see our Caspian Tern patrolling the lagoons. Welcome back!

Mourning Dove – 2. West of the Japanese Garden.

Monk Parakeet – 2. In flight.

YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER – 6. Sure sign of Spring. The Magnificent Driller of Tree Trunks.

Downy Woodpecker – 2. Wooded Island.

HAIRY WOODPECKER – 1.

NORTHERN FLICKER – 3. Cotton ball rump. South end of Wooded Island.

Eastern Phoebe – 5. Even with the strong winds they perched in the open. Wooded Island and Soccer Field.

American Crow – 4.

BARN SWALLOW – 1. AI reported. First of Year for us.

Black-capped Chickadee – 4.

Brown Creeper – 2. (Photo attached)

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET – 5.

HERMIT THRUSH – 1. AI found walking on a fallen tree along the shore, east of Heron Pond. With patience, most of us were able to see it.

American Robin – X Abundant and in good size flocks on the Soccer Field.

EASTERN TOWHEE – 1. Male. Central part of Wooded Island. Found by Mark and AI.

American Tree Sparrow – 3.

FOX SPARROW – 10. Big day for this handsome sparrow that hops with both feet in the air when digging. There was a concentration at the south end of the Rose Garden and along the east path near the Rose Garden. Two squirrels flushed the birds for us in the Rose Garden.

Song Sparrow – 6. In the Rose Garden and around Wooded Island.

Dark-eyed Junco – 4.

Northern Cardinal – 4.

Red-winged Blackbird 12. A flock of ten was in flight over the south end of Bobolink Meadow.

Common Grackle – 1.

Brown-headed Cowbird – 3.

House Sparrow – 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