

Wooded Island Bird Walk Report for Saturday, August 31, 2013

Hello to All,

At the start of our Walk, I thought that I would try something different. I prepared a short list of early migrants that we might see, with key identification markings. Just as I was saying how the *Veery* was the favorite bird of Rachel Carson, (I am a Master of the Non-Pertinent) *I interrupted myself* when I saw a thrush in the tree southwest of Darrow Bridge. We settled back down, just as a *Cooper's Hawk* made a visit over the North Lagoon, with crows and birders in chase. Oh well... "Never mind", as Lily Tomlin's character, Ernestine would say. Maybe another time. I was able to mention that I would like to dedicate our Walk today in memory of **Seamus Heaney**. At the end of this report, I added a poem of Seamus's.

It was a nice morning of birding for us all in our loosey-goosey ramble. The warblers showed up and showed themselves despite the raptors, drizzle, and then rain. The thrushes are here.

BIRDERS: 19. Karin C., Eric, Tobias, Kurt, Pam, Raman, Jennie, Maddie, John and his daughter Rebekah from Seattle, Mark W., Hal and Joanne, Sally, Leo, Randy (briefly), Phil, Diana, and Pat D.

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

PLACES: Wooded Island and quick pace through Bobolink Meadow, prodded by the approaching rain from the west.

WEATHER: Strong north winds with heavy rain last evening. Partly cloudy this morning at the start, with a gentle fine drizzle with sunshine for a brief time. Heavy rain ended our Walk. Temperature from 68 to 75 F. Winds NNE 5 – 10 mph.

TOTAL SPECIES COUNT: 43

Mark Webster, Randy Shonkwiler, Hal Cohen, and Eric and Tobias Ginsburg shared their sightings for this report.

X = commonly seen and/or not counted.

1. Canada Goose – X
2. Wood Duck – 7. Two families of three plus one.
3. Mallard – X
4. Double-crested Cormorant – 7.
5. Great Blue Heron – 2.

6. Green Heron – 2.
7. Black-crowned Night Heron – 1. Juvenile. Stood on one greenish foot. Perched on a rock near the Moon Bridge, with a forlorn look. We all diverted our walk to the gravel path to leave the heron alone in his thoughts. His grayish feathers were softly beautiful.
8. Sharp-shinned Hawk – 1. Called by Hal.
9. Cooper's Hawk – 4, possibly 5. The first sighting was a repeat of last week's. A Cooper's flew around the North Lagoon. Three crows took chase. Ran the hawk off past the MSI dome in a northwesterly direction, to perhaps more receptive confines in Hyde Park. Mark spotted three Cooper's sitting together on a snag in the middle of Wooded Island. Two hawks flew low over the tip of Wooded Island, heading southeast.
10. Sandpiper Species – 1. Reported by Eric near Turtle Island. Possible Spotted.
11. Ring-billed Gull – X. Fly overs.
12. Caspian Tern – 2. Flying together, high over the East Lagoon, heading south.
13. Chimney Swift – X. Magical moment. Many were skimming the water of the East Lagoon for insects. If you are lucky, you get to see this happen at the end of summer.
14. Downy Woodpecker – 1.
15. HAIRY WOODPECKER – 1. Female. Wooded Island.
16. OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER – 1. Perched high on a snag in the NW corner of the Rose Garden.
17. EASTERN WOOD PEWEE – 1. Reported by Mark.
18. LEAST FLYCATCHER – 1. In the grove SW of Darrow Bridge.
19. Eastern Kingbird – 1.
20. Warbling Vireo – 1.
21. Red-eyed Vireo – 1.
22. American Crow – 7.
23. Tree Swallow – 1. Reported by Hal.
24. Barn Swallow – X
25. Black-capped Chickadee – 2.
26. WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH – 3. Calling heard
27. VEERY – 1. Reported by Randy in the grove SW of Darrow Bridge.
28. SWAINSON'S THRUSH – 1 seen and another heard in the same grove as the Veery.

29. American Robin – X
30. Gray Catbird – 3.
31. European Starling – 1.
32. Tennessee Warbler – 1. Reported by Eric and Tobias at the south end of Bobolink Meadow.
33. CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER – 1. Immature. Confirmed by several birders.
34. Magnolia Warbler – 10.
35. CAPE MAY WARBLER – 1.
36. BLACKPOLL – 2. Immature. Confirmed by Hal and Mark.
37. American Redstart – 10.
38. OVENBIRD – 1. Near Turtle Island.
39. Wilson's Warbler – 8.
40. Sparrow Species – 1. Reported by Mark, near Turtle Island. Had white outer edge tail feathers. Possible VESPER.
41. Northern Cardinal – 5.
42. Indigo Bunting – 1.
43. American Goldfinch – X

For twice a week pictorial reports on birds, bugs and plants, as well as the disturbance and change in habitat on and near Wooded Island, please visit a blog maintained by Hal Cohen, retired college professor of ecology and biological sciences. Hal visits Wooded Island several times in the week has a lot of information to share. Look for **woodedisland.blogspot.com**

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.

We love our poets. The Irish lost a Voice this week with the death of Nobel Laureate *Seamus Heaney*. He was a poet attuned to the natural world. The following is a poem on birds. Read it once, and then again. Soar on the spoken words.

St. Francis and the Birds

When Francis preached love to the birds
They listened, fluttered, throttled up
Into the blue like a flock of words
Released for fun from his holy lips.
Then wheeled back, whirred about his head,
Pirouetted on brothers' capes.
Danced on the wing, for sheer joy played
And Sang, like images took flight
Which was the best poem Francis made,
His argument true, his tone light.

Seamus Heaney

1939 - 2013

Seamus will live on as long as words are spoken.

Ar dheis De`go raibh a anam

May he Rest in Peace

Best of Birding to All,

Patricia Durkin

Chicago Audubon Society Representative

Wooded Island Bird Walks