

Wooded Island Bird Walk Report for Saturday, July 2, 2011

Hello to All,

We had quite a migration of summer birders to Wooded Island this morning.

Deni joined us from San Francisco, CA. She gave a wonderful report on the bird colonies that have reclaimed Alcatraz Island. No, not jail birds, but gull colonies. And, yes, our dear Ring-billed Gull was a nice treat for Deni to see.

Donna, now a Hyde Parker, after a thirty-three year hiatus in Alaska, brought along two friends, Randy and Marilyn, from Palm Springs, CA.

Matthew is on loan to us at the University of Chicago from Nottingham, England. We skipped past the Robin Hood references quickly after Matthew first joined us last summer. Matthew spent a lot of his precious early morning hours with the Bird Collision Monitoring group amidst the downtown skyscrapers during migration this past year.

Tom, a visitor from Fort Worth, TX joined the Wednesday morning bird walk group this past week. He wrote to me that he had a great time, including coffee with his new birding friends at Bon Jour afterward. Tom is looking forward to a return trip to Chicago and a return to the Wooded Island Bird Walks.

Of course we are very lucky to have Hal and Joanne join us for the summer, from southern California. Hal has added so very much to our walks. He may not have wrote the book on birding, but he surely wrote the college level syllabus on the subject. It is always great fun to walk around our beloved Wooded Island and learn with such fine friends.

Our HAIRY WOODPECKER couple appears to have decided on a tree hole rental in the snag at the south end of the Rose Garden. We did not see them until we had reached the South Bridge and looked back. We saw a mate making bug deliveries to the bird confined to the hole every few minutes. A great place to view the action from a safe distance is to stand at lamp post #11 and look east at the snag. For Wooded Island, these birds are Big Celebrities; our own Royal Couple.

BIRDERS: 19, including Karin C., Hal and Joanne, Jennie, Jean, Raman, Matthew, Caroline and Leo, Sally, Jennette, Amy, Donna, Randy, Marilyn, Shawn, Karyn, Deni, Pat.

TIME: 8:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

PLACES: Wooded Island, Soccer Field which was void of humans but with a massive migration of WANDERING GLIDER DRAGONFLIES underway, and Bobolink Meadow.

WEATHER: Sunny. Hot. Humid. Temperature ranged from upper 70's to 90 degree F. A slight NE breeze was felt crossing the border of the Soccer Field. There was no visible damage noticed from last Thursday's storm with high winds and hail.

TOTAL SPECIES COUNT: 37

Now for the birds:

Double-crested Cormorant – 1 flyover of Wooded Island.

Great Blue Heron – 1, East Lagoon.

Green Heron – 3. One was in the West Lagoon and seen from the North Bridge. The other two are on the East Lagoon shore.

Black-crowned Night-Heron – 1 adult seen on Wooded Island at the shore of the East Lagoon. It was south of the Japanese Garden and east of the Cedar Waxwing nest.

Canada Goose – 94 on the south Museum steps. Counted by Hal.

Mallard – 11. Eight young and one female were together in the North Lagoon. A male/female pair were east of the South Bridge.

Ring-billed Gull – occasional single flyovers.

Caspian Tern – 2, entertaining us over the East Lagoon.

Monk Parakeet – heard near the Boardwalk near the golf shack.

Chimney Swift – 8 counted by Hal. BTW, there is a great article in this month's Audubon Magazine about a couple in TX that have constructed towers for these birds. The architectural designs are interesting and varied.

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD – 1. A quick sighting by Hal and a few others confirmed this jewel of a bird is still with us on Wooded Island. It was seen near lamp post # 38.

Downy Woodpecker – 2. On Wooded Island and one near the South Bridge.

HAIRY WOODPECKER –2, hopefully procreating.

Eastern Kingbird –1, reported by Hal.

Warbling Vireo – heard and reported by Hal.

Red-eyed Vireo – as above.

American Crow – reported by Hal on Wooded Island.

Purple Martin – at home in and around their condos.

Tree Swallow – 2, spotted by Hal. One was near the southeast end of the East Lagoon. The other was near Heron Island.

N. Rough-winged Swallow – 2 near Heron Island.

Cliff Swallow – near the North Bridge.

Barn Swallow – Hal counted at least seven nests under the North Bridge.

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH – heard by Hal at the south end of Wooded Island.

House Wren – heard and seen near the east entrance to the Rose Garden.

American Robin – 8 counted by Hal on Wooded Island.

Gray Catbird – heard more than seen on Wooded Island.

European Starling – around here and there in small groups.

Cedar Waxwing – on nest. Quiet please. Babies being fed.

Yellow Warbler – seen and heard on Wooded Island.

Common Yellowthroat – heard on Wooded Island. Low in the shrubs where they nest.

Song Sparrow – 1 reported by Karin and Peter on Wooded Island.

Northern Cardinal – 4, One was seen and heard south of the boardwalk. One was along the shore of the Soccer Field. Two were seen on Wooded Island.

Indigo Bunting – 5. Four males and 1 female. We all stopped to get the group on a bird that Jennie spotted on Wooded Island. Great fun!

Red-winged Blackbird – found in the Rose Garden and in the Meadow. We saw a female in the open in Bobolink Meadow. Until you get to know her it can be a challenging identification.

Brown-headed Cowbird – 7. Males. On Wooded Island and in the Meadow.

Baltimore Oriole – 4. Three on Wooded Island. One in the Meadow.

American Goldfinch – 1 male seen on Wooded Island.

OTHER CREATURES:

10 SPOT DRAGONFLIES – identified by Hal. Of note, dragonflies hold their wings out at rest.

WANDERING GLIDER DRAGONFLIES – in migration. They have a pale green and light brown markings.

POND SLIDER TURTLE – one on a log in the sun near Heron Island. This is the most common type of water turtle that is kept as a pet.

By the end of the walk we were beginning to melt and sought air conditioned comfort.

Hope to see you next Saturday.

Best of birding to all,

Pat Durkin
Chicago Audubon Representative
Wooded Island Bird Walks