

Wooded Island Bird Walk Report for Saturday, June 21, 2014

Hello to All,

Creatures and structures other than bird-made, are a source of interest on our Walks. When we arrived on Darrow Bridge *four Grey Squirrels* were scampering along the temporary wooden rail. Intricate, dinner plate size *cobwebs* were anchored to the under rail of the original Darrow Bridge. Others were seen at the end of tree limbs in the northeast corner of the Rose Garden. *Balls of baby fish*, a yard across, were seen swarming from the bridges. The pond in the Japanese Garden hosted a swarm of two inch *catfish*. *Two bullfrogs* provided background commentary to a preacher and his followers, who occupied the pavilion in the Japanese Garden.

Mallards are common, and beginning to enter their eclipse molt, yet are still able to fly. A group of a dozen ducklings were bunched tightly together near the soccer field shore, without parental supervision. Left to themselves, the siblings began to squabble and take a poke at one another. Actually, there were only two trouble makers in the crowd. Being a middle child in a large family, the scene was familiar to me. Later a pair of adults came from under the brambles along the shore of Wooded Island. Perhaps they needed a break from childrearing, and were keeping watch from a distance.

Of particular happiness was to see *the female Canada Goose with the partial white head and neck* in the company of her mate and two goslings! I always worry about those with special markings that make them stand out from the rest. Will they be able to mate and live happily ever after? Well, in this case, our local female Canada Goose, with the white head wash, did mate and produce a set of twins. Happy endings are a pleasant surprise.

BIRDERS: 10. Kurt, Caroline, Leo, Rick, Jennie, Karin D., Patti, Eric G., Mark W., and Pat.

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

PLACES: Wooded Island and Bobolink Meadow

WEATHER: Fog. Mist. Temperature 64 – 71 F. Light variable wind.

TOTAL SPECIES COUNT: 36

X = commonly seen and/or not counted.

Mark Webster provided his personal list for this report.

This is a group report, with many birders contributing to the list. Most of the birds were seen by a least several or all the birders.

1. Canada Goose – X. More than 200 were afloat in the North Lagoon upon our arrival.
2. Wood Duck – 4. One male/three female.
3. Mallard – X.
4. HOODED MERGANSER – 1. Female. East Lagoon. Alone. Diving for food.
5. Double-crested Cormorant – 3.
6. Great Blue Heron – 1.
7. Green Heron – 3. Active, well hidden nest in Japanese Garden.
8. Black-crowned Night Heron – 5. Two juveniles. Three adults.
9. Ring-billed Gull – X. Occasional single fly overs.
10. Caspian Tern – 2.
11. Monk Parakeet – 2. Fly overs. Reported by Mark.
12. Chimney Swift – X.
13. Ruby-throated Hummingbird – 1. Buzzed by Mark.
14. Downy Woodpecker – 1.
15. WILLOW FLYCATCHER – 1. Facing us from small islet south of Heron Island. No doubt on identification after it called out “a sneezy *fitz-brew*” as described by Roger Tory Peterson.
16. Eastern Kingbird – 2.
17. Warbling Vireo – 1. Heard.
18. Red-eyed Vireo – 1.
19. Purple Martin – X. Giving flying lessons to their youngsters. Perching on snag near the Japanese Garden.
20. Northern Rough-winged Swallow – 1.
21. Cliff Swallow – X.
22. Barn Swallow – X.
23. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher – 5. Adults feeding young in two active nests.
24. American Robin – X. Feeding fledglings.
25. Gray Catbird – 3.
26. European Starling – X. Small flocks.
27. Cedar Waxwing – 8.
28. Yellow Warbler – X.

29. Song Sparrow – 2.
30. Northern Cardinal – 1 male seen. Others heard.
31. Indigo Bunting – 3. Two males. One female. Rose Garden and south of Japanese Garden.
32. Red-winged Blackbird – X.
33. Common Grackle – 3.
34. Baltimore Oriole – 4. Feeding young.
35. American Goldfinch – 2. Males.
36. House Sparrow – 1. On Purple Martin House.

For 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.

Recordings are not used to attract birds.

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 near Darrow Bridge at the start times. Newcomers are warmly welcomed.

Note: Darrow Bridge has been barricaded by the Department of Transportation but there are openings at each end that allows for foot traffic. The Bridge has been deemed unsafe. Birders continue to meet on Darrow Bridge and scan the lagoons and trees while the group comes together.

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 57th Street (labeled Science Drive on a small blue street sign). There is a Stop Light at 57th 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